

Omya Community Stakeholder Team Meeting Notes

Date: November 10, 2022

In Attendance:

Alicia Malay – Chair of Pittsford Select Board
Bev Peterson – Florence resident
Bonnie Stewart – Pittsford resident
Dan Firliet – Assistant Plant Manager, Omya
Elizabeth Simpson - Florence resident
Heather Fowler – Safety, Environment & Quality Coordinator, Omya
John Lapre – Florence resident
John Schell – Plant Manager, Omya
Mark Winslow – Pittsford Select Board
Mike Laurent – Wet Area Manager, Omya
Sharon Carpenter – Florence resident

Absent:

Brenda Fox-Howard - Pittsford Town Manager
Butch Shaw – Florence resident and State Representative
Cheryl Hooker – Rutland District State Senator
David Markowski – Florence resident
David Mills – Local resident & VP of Pittsford Planning Commission
Dennis Carroll – Safety Environmental Manager, Omya
Jon Keith – Pittsford resident and local business owner

I. Welcome

John Schell welcomed team members. The evening’s agenda was reviewed.

In a brief business performance update for 2022, John noted the following:

We had a very strong first half of the year. In the last couple of months orders have slowed down but overall it is still a good year. The recent and earlier than expected lull in sales is in line with the fragile economy and rising prices. The construction market has realized lower revenues as material costs (concrete, brick, insulation, petroleum based materials, etc.) continue to increase. Companies are searching for different ways to maintain margins by prioritizing efficiency and cost saving opportunities to remain viable.

Our employee number remains steady (approx. 130-135 employees). Both entry level and professional personnel recruitment remains a challenge and innovative ways to hire and retain talent will become a higher priority. YTD, we have hired **20 employees** at the Verpol plant.

Investing in aging infrastructure and enhancing processes to reduce operating costs remain the focus.

Omya Community Stakeholder Team Meeting Notes

Community Update – Event Sponsors (April – October)

- Brandon Emergency Food Shelf
- **Pittsford Food Shelf**
- HOPE Food Shelf
- Vermont Farmers Market
- Middlebury Area Land Trust
- **Pittsford Historical Society**
- Otter Valley Football Club
- Proctor Youth League – Baseball/Softball
- Mill River Union High School
- Middlebury Festival on the Green
- Green Up Day
- **Pittsford Day – Satin Steel**
- Town of West Rutland - Memorial Day Parade
- Paramount Theatre
- **Town of Pittsford – Police Car**
- **Town of Pittsford – Memorial Day Flags**
- Otter Valley - Yearbook Ad
- Mount Saint Joseph Academy – Yearbook Ad
- Educational Scholarships
- Castleton University
- Wheels for Warmth
- **Maclure Library – It’s a Crime Not to Read**
- West Rutland Food Shelf
- **Pittsford Christmas for Kids**
- Brandon Toy Project

Community Events

- Omya will provide Thanksgiving turkeys to all employees
- Omya holiday party - dinner / service awards / music @ Rutland Moose Lodge
- Omya holiday luncheon for employees and contractors
- Otter Valley Technical Education
 - Omya Employees attended the Otter Valley Tech Ed Council Social on Thursday, October 27th in Brandon and discussed what employers are looking for in future employees and what skills students/employees need to join the work force. Omya is looking forward to working with Otter Valley teachers and students to build a working relationship through possible internships in our Maintenance Department. Omya is donating the following to the Tech Ed Area: Lathe machine & Milling machine.
- Maclure Library – It’s A Crime Not to Read Program
 - Omya is a proud sponsor of this event. Our donation will help provide books for grades Kindergarten -3rd Grade.
- Green-up (May 6 & 7) at Omya and with the Town of Pittsford. We had 26 employee volunteers collect 44 bags of trash.
- Middlebury Quarry Open House (Sept 24) was a success with over 700 visitors.

Omya Community Stakeholder Team Meeting Notes

II. **Progress Report**

Noise

- One noise concern reported in June. It was found to be a back-up alarm on a temporary rental forklift. All Omya forklifts are equipped with white noise alarms.

Trucks

- Lost trucks continue to be a challenge. A majority of trucks continue to travel Whipple Hollow Road.
- Efforts continue;
 - Omya corporate has contacted trucking companies directly.
 - Police continue to patrol roads coming into the plant and ticket drivers.
 - Need to continue to follow-up on Legislature revisiting a discussion on regulating commercial GPS systems for trucks. It is not only an issue for Omya but other companies around the state.

Tailings

- Omya is nearing the end of the 10-year certification for onsite tailings management. The re-certification application preparation has commenced and will be submitted by the end of 2022 in advance of the current certification expiration date of October 2023.
- Omya will continue to monitor ground water & surface water with 3rd party independent engineering inspections and reporting.
- Act 250 and solid waste is all part of the permitting process. Each will include public comment periods and public meetings.

Verpol Projects

- We have silos on the East Plant side that will come down this year. Work to begin soon and commence by year end.
- Raw Product Silo demolition was completed over spring and summer. There are no plans for replacement in current location.
- The Tank 21 demolition has expected completion by year end. The tank is being demolished in anticipation of a newly constructed tank in its place tentatively scheduled for 2023.
- A new storage building for consumables is planned to go up in the shipping parking lot. This will allow for better inventory management and more space for finished product.

Florence Substation Replacement – **VELCO Project**

- VELCO is replacing outdated equipment and looking to improve remote monitoring.
- The project is moving and commissioning of new substation is planned for June 2023.

Omya Community Stakeholder Team Meeting Notes

III. New Ideas / Topics

- Nothing new reported

IV. Next Steps (Action Items) –

- Results / responses from survey sent out in June 2022:
 1. **How often do you want to meet annually?**
Majority = (2) times / year
 2. **Is there a time/season that DOES NOT work for you?**
Majority = I am available year round
 3. **Does the current meeting time work with your schedule (6pm – 8pm)?**
Majority = Yes, 6pm-8pm
 4. **What other topics/activities would you like to discuss at these meetings?**
 - **problems / issues in the town**
 - **future of Hogback Quarry**
 - **water quality / chemicals**
 - **noise**
 - **trucks**

V. Wrap-Up

- The date for the next Stakeholder Team meeting is to be determined.