HISTORY OF VALPARAISO
WATER RECLAMATION DEPARTMENT/
VALPARAISO CITY UTILITIES

1893

October 20 — A resolution was adopted by the City Council to extend a sewer outfall from Water Street and Valparaiso Street to Salt Creek through Charles H. Parker's land. (City Council minutes)

1917 — It is reported on June 28th that Gerald McGillicuddy, contractor on the big 'West End' sewer that is to cost $25,000 has the work well started. Nearly a score of men are busy on the same and considerable pipe has been received. (VM– 06/28/32 – '15 Fifteen Years Ago')

1927

July 8 — City Health Board advises the City Council that "Valparaiso is sitting on the edge of a volcano." Those were the words of Dr. A.P. Letherman, secretary of the city Board of Health. Dr. Letherman was referring to a survey taken by the Indiana Board of Health of the sanitary conditions and water purification of the city and the northern lake area. The health officials were concerned about the possibility of a typhoid outbreak. Recommendations are to develop a suitable provision for a water supply and that the water must be kept pure. The survey found that outdoor toilets and drains from homes were close to the pumping station and also were draining back into the lake.

Further, it is recommended that improvements be made to the Flint Lake area to make the chain of lakes one body of water. It was also stressed that Valparaiso needed a modern sewer system both sanitary and storm. It was stated that in areas of the city, sanitary and storm sewers were used interchangeably for convenience which causes sewer backups and odors coming from storm impact. Also, concern was expressed that many sections of the city were without sewers. (VM- 07/09/27)

August 26 — Resolution No. 403 was approved by the City Council. The proposed sewers were to 1) adequately provide sewers for both storm and sanitary waters (combined sewers) for both abutting lots and adequate drainage from all streets and alleys lying on and along the main line and its branches and 2) furnish an adequate and efficient outlet for all sewers (storm and sanitary) both existing and future within the city limits except for an area served by the 'West End' sewer having a separate and distinct outlet (area includes lands west of Campbell Street, north of Main St (Lincolnway), south of GTRR – Chautauqua Park area) and Forest

Park subdivision which from its location and elevation cannot drain to or be served by District No. 1. (taken from Council minutes - map may be found in City Engineer's Office Drafting Room). District No. 1 includes the following sewer lines:

- Main Line runs from Outlet – Salt Creek to McKinley Street 12,000 feet.
- Branch A – From Main Line to South and Spring Sts. 1800 feet.
- Branch B – From Main Line to a point east & south of Branch A. 99 feet.
- Bronson Branch – From Branch B. 275 feet.
- Branch C – From Main Line to Smiths Addition. 2575 feet.
- Lateral 1 – Branch C – From Branch C to Axe's Addition. 528 feet.
- Lateral 2 – Branch C- From Branch C to Council's Add – 339 feet.
- Lateral 3 – Branch C – From Branch C to Axe's Add. 200 feet.
- Erie St Lateral – From Main Line to Erie/Lafayette Sts. 2537 feet.
- East End Branch – From Main Trunk to Wood St. 3250 feet.
- Wood St Lateral - South Side – from East End Branch along the south side of Wood Street. 1100 feet.
- Institute Lateral – Fr East End Branch west along Institute 1100 feet.
- Limit Street Lateral (Roosevelt Road) – from East End Branch running South 766 feet.
- Lateral A – East End Branch – from East End Branch running North 740 feet.
- Beech Street West Lateral No. 1 – 600 feet.
- Beech Street East Lateral No. 2 – from Lateral A East End Branch 469 feet
- Elm Street Lateral 1 – from Lateral A East End Branch 900 feet
- Bush Street Branch – Main Line to West – 1341 feet.
- Beulah Heights Branch – Main line West 3907 feet.
- Evans Street Lateral – Beulah Heights Branch – 1290 feet.
- Total length of District No. 1 sewers – 35,816 feet (6.8 miles)

(Taken from Council minutes C Book N page 484)

1928

January 27 — Mayor Wm. F. Spooner urges the city in his second annual report to, among other issues, to carry out the Putnam sewer construction project. "No city can make progress without the proper means of sanitation." The mayor reviewed the efforts of the administration to bring about a solution of what he termed: "one of the most vexatious and annoying problems – a question mooted for the past 18 years, but without definite action" – that of an adequate and efficient sewer system. The system is proposed to cost $400,000. (VM-01/28/28)

Assistant City Engineer A.R. Putnam advised the City Council that combined sewers would be more economical than building separate sanitary and storm sewers as the existing sewers have been used for both purposes. (VM-01/28/28)

March 9 — The City Council approves the Putnam sewer plan, which has been endorsed by the Chicago consulting engineering firm of Pearce, Hanson and Greeley. (VM-01/10/28)

March 14 — The City Council accepts the bid of Carl D. Traxler for the construction of District No. 1 Sewers – Resolution No. 403. The contract was approved. (taken from council minutes) The project was projected to cost $400,000. This project suffered from legal controversy from the beginning. The project was finished by Pennsylvania Surety Co, Pittsburgh, Pa., after Carl D. Traxler defaulted on his contract. (VM-01/15/28)

March 23 — Bids were opened for the Milton Street sewer (Resolution No. 408) Foster Lumber & Coal was the low bid at $6,390. Paul Marks also submitted a bid for 6,537. Foster's bid was approved. (taken from council minutes)

1930

November 27 — The City Council unanimously approved a resolution to finalize payment of Resolution 403 sewers. This comes after a lengthy period in which sewer defects were found and repaired, and issues around the city's indebtedness were resolved. (VM-10/5/31; 10/13/31; 10/24/31; 11/4/3; 11/11/31; 11/28/31)

December 26 — The City Council adopted a resolution approving the assessment roll for the improvement known as District Sewer No. 1. Assessments ranged from $3.98 to $343.60. The assessment roll included 277 assessments.

1932

January 8 — The City Council considered an ordinance to require anyone connecting to the sewer system to first acquire a permit. The cost of said permit is $75. Monies collected will be placed in the sewer maintenance fund. (VM 01/09/32; 01/29/32)

January 22 — City Engineer Charles M. Dickover, in his annual report, announced that a sewer plat atlas has been created showing locations of sewers and service connections. (VM-01/23/31)

August 22 — Louis Geupel, chief engineer of the Bureau for Sanitary Engineering, Indiana Division of Public Health sent a letter to Mayor Schenck appealing to him to speed action on the pending sewage treatment plant estimated cost of $100,000. Geupel advised the mayor that plans and specifications have already been drawn up by Nolan Engineering, Indianapolis. The plans have been approved by the State Board 0f Health. Causing the holdup were concerns

about irregularities relating to the contracting of the consulting engineer. (VM- 08/22/1933)

1935 — Mayor Charles L. Bartholomew created the first sewer department. The department's budget was $3500.00. (VM- 08/16/35)

July 8 — Mayor Bartholomew submitted a list of six sanitary engineering consultants to be considered for the construction of a sewage disposal plant. The consulting engineers are to be interviewed by the city council. The cost of the proposed plant is estimated at $112,000. If a government grant is obtained, the city's cost may be reduced to $70,000. The mayor stated he was in favor of accepting a federal grant and loan to finance the plant. Councilman Stoner remarked that if the city had constructed the plant when the new sewer system was constructed, they could have built it on South Franklin Street and avoided the marsh that the present outfall is located in. The mayor stated that the 6,000 feet of corrugated pipe that lies within the marsh is out of alignment at present. (VM- 07/09/35)

August 12 — The City Council informally polled the city's residents concerning whether they were in favor of constructing a sewage treatment plant valued at $100,000 to $120,000. The poll was taken by sending out 2000 post cards to water customers. The tally was 276 in favor and 585 opposed. Under the plan adopted, it was decided to count as favorable to plant erection, all persons not voting on the proposition. The council did not comment on the next step. (VM- 08/13/35)

August 16 — The advertised city budget included the following for the Sewer Department:

Services Personal	
Salaries, regular	$1,200.00
Salaries, temporary	$1,200.00
Services Contractual	
Freight and express	$ 50.00
Repair and equipment	$ 100.00
Replacement of equipment	$ 500.00
Supplies	
Gas and oil	$ 100.00
Tires and tubes	$ 50.00
Materials	$ 265.00
Current Charges	
Insurance	$ 35.00
Total	$3,500.00

(VM- 08/16/35)

August 26 — The City Council by vote of 3 to 2 decided to halt the sewage treatment plant project. Leading the fight against the project was

Dr. G.D. Conover, second ward councilman. The reasons for the vote to stop the project ranged from the recent informal poll taken, in which the responders voted 2 to 1 against proceeding and also concern that by accepting construction funds from the PWA (ed. note: federal Public Works Administration), the city would lose control of the project, which may mean higher costs. Many councilmen suggested that the city should wait until the state forced the building of the sewage plant. (VM- 08/27/35)

October 16 — With the assistance of the 80 WPA (ed. note: Works Progress Administration) workers, the sewer department will be relaying many sewer lines. (VM-10/16/35)

December 10 — Sewer Department Head Edward Deu, in the first sewer department annual report which covers the period of August 1st to December 1st, stated that the new department cleared out 350 clean-outs, added a new manhole to the system, salvaged 142 feet of 20 inch tile, flushed 12 sanitary sewers, flushed 10 inlets, constructed 10 catch basins and repaired 2. (VM-12/11/35)

1948

June 29 — The city of Valparaiso (Elden Kuehl, Mayor) received an order from the State Stream Pollution Control Board to cease and desist polluting Parker Ditch (Salt Creek). The findings included the city was discharging untreated domestic sewage and industrial waste into Parker Ditch, the sewage was of such character as to prevent the growth and propagation of normal fish and plant life, such waste would render waters unsuitable for use by livestock, the said waste in said waters is a hazard to public health and said pollution is occurring from the point of entry for a distance of at least nine miles downstream. The order directed the city to cease from causing pollution on or before June 1. (taken from Stream Pollution Control Board (Indiana) Final Order and Determination, signed by B.A. Poole, Technical Secretary, dated July 29, 1948) The order caused the city to begin to study the feasibility of constructing a sewage treatment facility.

1949

March 17 — The City employed O. M. Leonard, a Michigan City, IN consulting engineer to “make an investigation and report on the necessary and desirable improvements for the collection and treatment of the sanitary sewage and industrial wastes.”
Leonard reports that the city has 11 industries manufacturing “vulcanized fibre and phenolic electrical insulting materials, permanent magnets, magnetic recording accessories, ball

bearings, bronze castings electrical goods, women's wearing apparel, flour, insecticides, electrical welding equipment, paint, food processing equipment and research and product development laboratory."

The report states that the estimated population of Valparaiso was 11,500. The report also states that the Valparaiso population was 8,079 in1930; 8,737 in1940. It estimates that the population will be 11,600 in 1950; 13,800 in 1960 and 15,800 in 1970. The estimates of sewage flow rates are: 1934 – 0.8 mgd; 1940 – 1.0 mgd; 1949 (design year) – 1.48 mgd; 1950 – 1.48 mgd; 1960 – 1.81 mgd and 1970 – 2.2 mgd.

O.M. Leonard reported that "the original sewer system….. was started as a separate system in which domestic sewage and trade wastes were carried in one set of conduits and the storm water drainage and roof waste was carried 9 another set of conduits. Over a period of years, many sewers originally constructed for carrying domestic sewage only were tapped and utilized to receive roof drains and storm drainage. Also, many of the storm drains originally designed to carry storm drainage only were tapped for sanitary drainage of domestic waste.

"The growth of the city and the inadvisable practice of connecting drainage of any character to the most convenient sewerage system has resulted in many of the storm sewers (ed. note: sanitary sewers) being surcharged with storm water, causing sewage and storm water to back up onto basements, even in the higher elevations of the city. Likewise, many of the storm drains were extended, together with new inlet connections increasing the inlet capacity beyond the carrying capacity of the conduits resulting in many of the storm sewers backing up carrying the polluted wastes into basements. The major growth of the city has been to the north and northeast and the extensions of the drainage systems have been connected into the existing system. As a result, in many areas of the city the storm sewers and sanitary sewers do not furnish satisfactory drainage.

In 1928, the construction was started on a system of combined interceptors, trunk and outfall sewers to relieve the surcharged conditions of the sewerage system. The construction of this converted the major separate systems into the present combined sewerage system now serving the City of Valparaiso.

Capacity of Existing Main Interceptor - Leonard reported on the adequacy of the then existing 84" man interceptor. He stated that "On the basis (of his estimates), it would appear that the existing 84" main sewer has a capacity of about one-third of the required capacity for the drainage of the (then) present area, based on a three year storm."

Northeast Section - Drainage -The report looked at the drainage of the northeast part of the city, namely the capacity of Smith Ditch. The report states that due to the rerouting of the ditch over time, the inadequacy of culverts in Beech, Oak, Institute and Roosevelt Streets and the silting of the culverts, the ditch cannot handle the flows from heavy rains experienced in the area. Leonard recommended that Smith Ditch be relocated to run parallel to Roosevelt Road at the GTRR. An alternative (and more expensive) solution would be to enclose the ditch in a conduit inside the city. Both solutions would require an extensive cleaning of the ditch outside and downstream of the city. Also, separated sewers would be necessary to relieve the existing combined sewers of surcharging during heavy runoff.

Forrest Park Subdivision - The report went on to recommend a sanitary sewer system be constructed for the Forrest Park Subdivision area. This subdivision is served by septic tanks and cesspools which discharge in a ditch running through the municipal golf course. The report recommends the construction of sewers and a forced main/lift station. The sewers would be routed to a proposed treatment plant.

North Side Development – OM Leonard states that the area north of McKinley Street, bounded by Campbell, Calumet and Glendale Sts. is prime for residential development and is anticipated to have a population of approximately 1,000 persons. He believes that with proper engineering, this area can easily be served by the city.

University Development – Due to the expansion of the university into the “Brown’s Field” area (area east of Linwood Avenue/Garfield Street), OM Leonard advises that a lift station will be needed to serve this area.

Collection of Sanitary Sewage and Treatment Site – OM Leonard recommended that the site for the proposed treatment facility be located on the west side of Salt Creek (Parker Ditch) south of the Nickelplate Railroad (south and east of the actual treatment plant site) due to soil conditions and close proximity of the existing 84” interceptor main and existing utilities.

The improvements contemplated by the OM Leonard report include

1) the construction of an interceptor connected to the 24” sewer at the Pennsylvania RR (presently Conrail) west of Chicago Street to run to the 84” interceptor sewer.

2) Also planned are a main diversion chamber, which will contain an adjustable weir so that as the population grows, the flows can be appropriately controlled.

3) Treatment facilities will be designed for the design year of 1970. Facilities will include a grit chamber, screening and grinding mechanism, a raw sewage lift station, primary sedimentation process, secondary treatment, digestion tanks and sludge drying

beds. Part of the solids from the secondary treatment would be returned to the primary settling tanks.
A control building will house raw sewage pumps, sludge gas space and digestion heater, raw sludge and return sludge pumps, blowers, laboratory, electrical equipment, toilets and operating offices.
Design data is as follows: Present Average Daily, Dry Weather Flows : 0.9 mgd; Present Minimum Dry Weather Flow: 0.65 mgd; Design Basis (1970) Average Daily Flow: 1.6 mgd.
Estimated Average Present BOD (Biological Oxygen Demand): 200 ppm; Estimated Average Present BOD – Primary Settling Tank Effluent: 160 ppm.

Estimated project cost estimate:	
Preliminary Expenses	$ 4,000
Land and R/W	$ 10,000
Construction	
Forrest Park Lift Station, Force Main & App	$ 34,000
West Side Diversion Sewer	$ 32,000
Sewage Treatment Plant	$500,000
	$566,000
Construction Contingency	$ 21,000
Engring & Inspection	$ 33,900
Interest (during construction)	$ 27,600
Legal & Administrative	$ 12,000
Total Estimate Project Cost	$675,000

Estimated Annual Costs:	
Plant Operations and Billing:	$ 15,000
Annual Depreciation and Maintenance:	$ 5,500
Average Bond and Interest:	$ 40,434.
Total Estimated Operation, Maintenance, Bond and Interest Payments	$ 60,934

Proposed Schedule of Rates and Charges

Schedule "A":	
Minimum Monthly Charge	$1.20
First 1,000 CF	$0.25 per 100 CF
Over 1,000 CF	$0.20 per 100 CF
Over 5,000 CF	$0.15 per 100 CF

Unmetered services to be 85% of the water bill.

1951
April 7

Mayor Elden Kuehl received a check in the amount of $5,700 from the Federal Housing Authority and Home Finance Agency as the first installment of a $23,400 loan for the construction of the proposed sewage disposal plant.

December 11 — City Attorney Royal L. Lease reported that the city completed purchase of 20.92 acres for a sewage disposal plant. The Council approved the action of Mayor Elden Kuehl, Councilman Frank Ferguson and City Attorney R. L. Lease (Members BOPW&S) to purchase the land for $7,000.

1953

March 28 — The City Council conducted a public hearing attended by 10 citizens, passed on third and final reading the sewage disposal ordinance. The city is now in the position to advertise for bond bids in the $725,000 project which the Indiana Stream Pollution Control Board has ordered the city to construct.

April 22 — Waste water flowed into the new waste water treatment plant for testing purposes. This was the first full scale test of the plant, reported James Sipe, Superintendent.

August 13 — Ordinance No. 18 was passed setting the new quarterly sewage rates for Valparaiso. The minimum quarterly rate is set at $3.00. The adjusted rates are for the first 1500 CF - $0.25 per 100 CF to over 600,000 CF - $0.12 per CF. The rates have seven tiers.

1954

April 23 — Wilbur Gartner of W. H. Gartner and Sons, South Bend, IN, a consulting engineer, made a presentation to the Board of Sanitation. The board was holding a public hearing for affected property owners concerning the construction of the Forest Park (subdivision) sanitary sewer project. The project cost is estimated at $19,100. The cost to the property owners is estimated at $275.00 per lot and $43.75 per tap. The project will be funded through the assessments with Barrett Law, which allows the property owner to pay in cash or opt to pay the assessment over a five year period. Each payment would be for principal and 6% interest. The contractor is paid as the proceeds of the cash payments and bond payments are made.

April 23 — The Valparaiso Board of Sanitation awarded a contract to Schumaker Construction, Inc., Michigan City, for the erection of a 28 foot by 60 foot steel building to be used as a garage and storage building. The bid was for $10,860. The building is the last facility to be constructed as a part of the wastewater treatment plant project.

May 1 — The Valparaiso Sewage Plant begins operations. (Valparaiso Dept. of Sanitation Annual Report 12/31/54)

September 16 — 2000 citizens viewed the operation of the newly constructed sewage treatment plant at an open house. (Valparaiso Dept. of Sanitation Annual Report 12/31/54)

October 11 — Valparaiso experienced an unusually large rainfall totally 8 inches over October 10 & 11. While the sewage treatment plant faired fairly well, the Forest Park pumping station was flooded one foot above the top of the station. The motors and equipment required removal, cleaning, repair and replacement at the cost of $575.00. (Valparaiso Dept. of Sanitation Annual Report 12/31/54)

December 31 — The Valparaiso Department of Sanitation published its first annual report to Mayor John Wiggins and the Board of Public Works and Safety (also the Board of Sanitation). Superintendent John W. Sipe was the author. The department was staffed with five fulltime personnel, including 3 operators and 2 part time staff consisting of 2 watchmen. The report gave design data, operating data and financial data. The department ended the year with revenue of $82,325.75, expenses of $73,142.31 leaving $9,183.44 to start 1955. (Valparaiso Dept. of Sanitation Annual Report 12/31/54)

1959

April 16 — Work on the city's $1.4 million sewer improvement program is behind schedule due to the severe winter weather. Rights of way for 3,670 feet of sewer were purchased. Smith Ditch has been cleaned northwest of Roosevelt Road has been deleted from the contract due to difficulties in obtaining rights of way. Bridge construction has begun. (VM- 04/16/59 – 'Ten Years Ago')

June 25 — The $1.4 million sewer improvement program has been modified to include a $25,000 change order to allow for low spots along Glendale Boulevard to be drained to Valparaiso Street. The project was downsized from the originally proposed $120,000 project The change order now includes approximately 800 feet of 48 inch pipe. (VM- 06/25/69 – 'Ten Year Ago')

October 25 — Mayor John Wiggins reported that the $1.5 million sewer improvement project is nearing completion. The hook-on charge for this sewer will be $100.00 while the regular hook-on fee is $50.00. (VM- 10/25/69 'Ten Years Ago')

1967?

(Date unknown) Indiana Stream Pollution Control Board lodged an urgent demand with the city (Don Will, Mayor) to construct a Chlorine Contact Chamber with the installation of modern equipment. This follows an original order dated June 4, 1964. The SPCB found that the original plant's chlorination facilities were insufficient in providing adequate mixing.

The city had contracted with Leonard and Associates (O.M. Leonard). The consultant submitted plans to the state and they were approved in December 1964.

After one bid failed as it was considerably over the engineer's estimate, the consultant and contractors worked to revise the plans to reduce the costs. No progress being made, the City Engineer's Office took over the project. In the spring of 1966, Mr. Thomas J. Pappas was hired by the City Engineer to design chlorination equipment, housing and installation along with full time inspection of the construction.

The work was completed in order that there be "ample time for the 1967 season at a cost somewhat under $45,000". (Taken from a report by W. E. Morthland, City Engineer - undated)

1969

April 11 Valparaiso Waste Water Treatment Plant was disrupted by the flow of an estimated one to two thousand gallons of fuel oil into the sewer system. Supt. Tom Pappas stated that on Tuesday afternoon (4/7) an oily substance passed through the plant and is causing a problem similar to one that occurred an earlier in the year, when industrial metallic waste that killed plant's bacteria, which is vital to the treatment process. He had no idea where the oily waste came from.

August 3 Mayor Bryce Billings announced that the City Council would hold a special meeting on Monday to make application for federal funds for the expansion of the sewage treatment plant. The matter at hand is to adopt a letter of intent. Billings anticipated that construction would begin in 1971. The 1953 plant was constructed for the amount of $725,000. The city population was about 13,000 at that time. If the proposed annexation goes through, the population would be about 22,000. (VM- 08/03/69)

September 11 Mayor Bryce Billings promised citizens at the Board of Public Works and Safety meeting that "everything possible is being done" to correct the odor problem at the waste water treatment plant, which he noted has prompted "more calls than anything else since I've been mayor." The odor was blamed on an overloaded plant and the presence of toxic material in some industrial wastes

damaging to the biological organisms which play a key role in the treatment process. Plans are presently being drawn to expand the plant and improve the treatment process, reported Sami El-Naggar, Engineer with Peller, Tanck, and Gertsmeier, a local consulting engineering firm.

October 26 — Valparaiso hosts a semi-annual meeting of the Great Lakes Commission. The meeting was attended by Governor Edgar D. Whitcomb and former State Senator John Van Ness (both former Chairs). B. A. Poole, SPCB Technical Secretary was a featured speaker at the event.

November 14 — The Board of Sanitation accepted the lone bid of $2,650 on a re-odorization system designed to counteract plant odors in warm weather. (VM- 11/29/69)

1970

May 14 — An 84" combined sewer main was washed out near the Anderson Company and Campbell Street. Approximately 236 feet of the sewer was destroyed. An emergency was declared by the Board of Sanitation. Kanschat Excavating, a local sewer contractor, was hired to repair the line. Total rainfall on May 13-14th – 4 inches; 2 ½ in. in less than 3 hrs.)

May 22 — Mayor Billings ordered enforcement of an ordinance prohibiting downspout connections to sanitary sewers. A particular area of concern is the Forest Park area as the fear is for the overloading of the Forest Park lift station. The Board of Works authorized the expenditure of $12,000 for the repair of the 5 foot sewer which collapsed on May 14. (VM- 05/23/70)

June 17 — A 60" combined sewer main was washed out in another heavy storm (2nd in 5 weeks time) located in Don Will Park located off Morgan Blvd. south of Brown Street. Emergency repair procedures were declared by the Board of Sanitation. Kanschat Excavation was employed to repair the work. Approximately 200 feet of sewer main was repaired. (1.46 in. rainfall in 1 ½ hours; 3.95 inches for May 16-17) (VM- 06/18/70)

June 22 — The City Council is considering the establishment of a cumulative sewer fund which might raise $100,000 per year. This action is in consideration of the several days of severe rainfall in May and June. A public hearing is scheduled for July 13, 1970. Mayor Bryce Billings is recommending a $.25 tax rate starting in 1971. Emil Beeg, Jr., City Engineer reported that the 60" Will Park sewer that collapsed during the June 17th storm is operating a 10%

capacity and that the 84" sewer at the Anderson factory has been replaced. (VM- 06/23/70)

September 5 — Within the next two weeks, plans for enlarging the sewage disposal plants will be submitted to the Indiana Stream Pollution Control Board. The proposed plans call for the plant capacity to be increased to 6.0 million gallons daily. (South Bend Tribune – 09/06/70)

December 11 — Bid will be opened next month for a 24 inch sanitary sewer to serve the new high school. The line is proposed to be 1600 feet long. The cost is to be shared by Cormac, a developer planning a condominium complex near the school and Forest Park golf course, the school corporation and the city. (VM- 12/12/70)

1971

February 17 — Van Keppel Construction Co, DeMotte, IN, is the low bid for the expansion of the sewage treatment plant. Van Keppel's bid was $1.695 million. The next low bid was submitted by Larson-Danielson Construction Co., LaPorte, IN at 1.7+ million. 11 bids were received. Specifications call for the project to be completed by September 1972. Charles G. Peller of Peller, Tanck and Gertsmeier, Valparaiso, IN, assisted in the bid opening. February 26th was set as the tentative date for award of the bids. (VM- 02/18/71)

February 23 — A hearing is scheduled for today in Indianapolis concerning the sewage disposal plant pollution to Salt Creek. Bids were taken on February 17th for the expansion project.

April 26 — The City Council gave final passage to an ordinance that will raise sewer rates by 55% in order to pay off revenue bonds to be issued for the sewage disposal plant construction. There were no remonstrances filed at the meeting. The sanitation rate increase means the bill for an average residence will go up $1.74 a month or $21 per year. The minimum rate of $1.80 per month will be raised to $2.79. Sanitation bills are based on water usage. This is only the second rate increase since 1953, the year the sewage disposal plant was built. The project is scheduled to begin July 1, 1971. (VM- 04/27/71)

June 14 — For the first time in 15 years, the city won't be operating its insect-control "fogger" on streets this summer. Mayor Billings made this announcement at the City Council meeting when it was decided to discontinue the program until a Purdue University entomology

expert makes a survey to determine the best program for mosquito abatement. (VM- (06/15/71)

July 14 — The recently closed city garbage dump on SR 130 at Indiana State Board of Health orders has become the site for sewage sludge placement. Placement of 3 feet of sludge dies to about 9 inches and becomes a good fertilizer to grow plants. (Post-Tribune – 07/14/71)

1972

June 30 — Mayor Elden Kuehl pushes the start button for one of three new pumps in the newly expanded waste water treatment plant. (VM- 06/30/72)

August 11 — Superintendent Tom Pappas announced that the sewage utility purchased 113 acres south of the present sewage plant for $197,000. 56.9 acres were purchased from Keith Brown ($99,000) and 56.3 acres from Peter Lasko ($98,000). The acreage was purchased for future sludge drying beds.

August 11 — A petition was filed in Porter County Circuit Court to form a conservancy district known as the Lake Area Conservancy District, located north of the Valparaiso City Limits. Among other duties, the district is to be formed to provide for sewage collection. The district proposes to have sewage flow to the sewer system of city of Valparaiso. The Valparaiso Lakes Area Conservancy District (VLACD) becomes one of the largest customers of the Valparaiso sewage utility.

August 28 — The U.S. EPA has completed its review of the city's sewer use ordinance "and cannot conclude that it will provide an adequate foundation for an industrial waste cost recovery system". EPA stated that exclusion of certain industrial wastes should be specifically stated and/or limits be put in place, no charges are put in place except for BOD and suspended solids, and provision be made to monitor industrial wastes. (VM- 08/29/72)

September 7 — An ordinance governing the discharge of industrial wastes is introduced at the City Council meeting. Among the key provisions of the ordinance is a surcharge for wastes not meeting certain standards on biological oxygen demand (BOD) or chemical oxygen demand (COD). Tap charges and sewer fees for all users are also set in the proposed ordinance. Certain wastes are prohibited to be discharged in the system altogether.

October 18 — The Indiana Stream Pollution Control Board has ordered an investigation of Salt Creek in the aftermath of a fish kill. It was discovered that Chinook salmon weighing 10 to 20 pounds during their first spawning run up Salt Creek. The first fish kill was reported on October 4th. An investigator found 60 fish had been dead for some time. On September 29th, a heavy rain was experienced and a combined sewer overflow was experienced. The investigator found that there was a depression in the dissolved oxygen content on October 5th. The kill took place in the area of five miles from the Valparaiso sewage outfall downstream to South Haven. (VM/Ken Dowrill/10-18/72 & South Bend Tribune/10/18/72)

November 14 — John Winters, a member of the State Stream Pollution Control Board survey team stated yesterday that it may be impossible to isolate all the factors that could have contributed to the fish deaths. He went on to say "we have little doubt that the Valparaiso sewage plant effluent contributed to the kill because the fish died downstream of the plant and not anywhere else." (VM/ 11-14-72)

December 5 — A fuel oil spill is caused hundreds of gallons of oil to enter the city sewer system, which has smothered digesting bacteria in the aeration tanks at the city's waste water treatment plant. Superintendant Tom Pappas indicates that the normal 90 % efficiency of the plant has been reduced to 70%, and it will take approximately three weeks to bring the plant back to normal. The dump apparently occurred sometime Saturday (Dec. 2th). The source of the spill has not been identified. Pappas stated that the city will introduce an ordinance will be introduced in the next few weeks. (Vidette Messenger/12/05/72)

December 18 — An ordinance to govern industrial waste discharges was introduced to the City Council. The ordinance set limits on BOD and COD and other types of industrial waste. The ordinance will set surcharge fees for industrial discharges that exceed the limits. The Council members gave final approval of the ordinance at its January 8, 1973 meeting. The vote was 6-0 With the passage of the ordinance, the city qualified for an additional $200,000 grant for its sewage treatment plant expansion which is nearly final completion. (VM 12/18/72; 01/09/73)

<u>1973</u>

May 6 — Mayor Elden Kuehl reported that the construction of new sewage treatment plant is now 7 + months behind schedule. The original completion date was September 15, 1972. Only 60% of the plant is now being used. The delay is being blamed on major problems at

the lift station, grit chamber and in the blower building. Kuehl noted that a 200 hp blower motor burned up after only an hour of operation. Peller-Tanck-Geiersmeier-Reinert, Inc, Valparaiso is the engineer and VanKeppel Construction of Demotte, IN is the general contractor. It is reported that the new plant is operating satisfactorily during normal flow, but problems arise during peak flows or heavy rainfalls. Kuehl said he set June 1st to be the date the "bugs" were to be worked out, but the contractor now says that date will not be met. (South Bend Tribune/Thomas Gruber/May 6, 1973)

August 23 — John Winters, an official of the Water Pollution Division of the Indiana Stream Pollution Control Board advised that waste loading would continue to rise in Salt Creek until waste treatment is improved at the Valparaiso and South Haven treatment facilities. This report is made at a July 25-27 hearing of the SPCB and the Environmental Management Board. The Water Pollution Control Division made the following recommendations: 1) Valparaiso should provide advanced waste treatment to reduce BOD and ammonia concentrations in the sewage plant effluent, 2) in the interim, Valparaiso should make adjustments by adding polymer to reduce BOD and ammonia, 3) the city treat or control its combined sewage overflow, 4) other treatment plants in watershed upgrade to advanced treatment, 5) additional studies be made to model the watershed to more accurately predict effects of future waste loads and determine how Salt Creek could be used as a salmonid fishery, and 6) until the model is developed, no new waste discharges be allowed. Said study is anticipated to be completed by July 1, 1975. It was noted that at times the discharge from the Valparaiso plant contains sufficient concentrations of BOD and ammonia to degrade Salt Creek to the point that it is not safe for migratory salmon to swim in the vicinity of the treatment facility at low flow. Special regulations were adopted by the SPCB on February 11, 1972 in order to protect the state's migratory fish program. In the fall of 1972, a large number of Chinook Salmon died in Salt Creek. Salt Creek begins at a spring 2 miles South of Valparaiso and runs a distance of 21 miles Northwest to its confluence with the Little Calumet River. Its watershed is approximately 80- square miles in Porter County. The population of the watershed is 39,000 (Valparaiso population is about 20,000). In addition to Valparaiso's plant, there are 9 other semi-public plants along Salt Creek. (V-M/Ruth Ann McWhorter/August 23, 1973)

1982

January — The $1.75 million Valparaiso East Side Extension project is slated to begin during the summer months. The project is the first phase

to serving the entire east side of the city including approximately 2,500 acres. The full project is expected to be built in three phases to be completed within 10 years. The first phase is planned to serve the industrial park located south of US 30 and East of SR 49. The Indiana Department of Commerce plans to assist the Valparaiso Sewage Utility in funding by providing a $250,000 grant and $100,000 loan. Another $900,000 is expected from private sources as local industrial and commercial business line up to connect to the system once built. A $500,000 revenue bond funded by future connections is planned. The project is being engineered by Bonar and Associates, Fort Wayne, who is also instrumental in obtaining the financing for the project.

January — The city is beginning plans for a west side sewer which is planned to serve Oakwood Estates. The project estimate is $503,000.

August 2 — Work begins on a $20 million project to expand the Waste Water Treatment Plant. The project includes the construction of additions to the nitrification aeration and clarification systems, dual media filtration, chlorination and de-chlorination facilities, new control building, influent pumping station and modifications to the existing plant process. The project is funded by U.S. EPA, state and local funds. EPA contributed $15.5 million, the state is paying $2 million and the sewage utility is financing $3 through revenue bonds, which will raise utility rates by 166 percent. Cole and Associates, Inc, South Bend is the design engineers for the project. (VM- 08/02/82)

1983

November 20 — The Post Tribune reports that the Waste Water Treatment Plant construction project is on track to be completed by its deadline of July 1984. The project is 62.2 percent complete reports Dick Kraus, Cole Associates project manager. Brant Construction, general contractor has four buildings under roof, which will allow for the project to go on unimpeded during the winter months. The $22 million project is reported to be the largest public building project in Porter County to date. ((Post Tribune/ Charles Kingsbury/ November/20/1983)

December 31 — Tom Pappas, Waste Water Treatment Plant Superintendent, retires from a position he held since 1966. He also was in charge of the Sewer Department. Pappas is 59 years old. He was originally from Valparaiso, but was raised in Ottawa, Illinois and graduated from Valparaiso High School. He graduated from Valparaiso University as a civil engineer in 1953. Assistant Plant Manager Richard Condon is elevated to the roll of interim Superintendent. (Post Tribune/ Charles Kingsbury/ November /20/1983)

December 31 — Mayor Elden Kuehl ends is three term tenure as Mayor of Valparaiso. This was Mayor Kuehl second stretch as Mayor having served one four year term beginning in the late 1940s. Mayor Kuehl was well known for his active involvement in the construction of infrastructure. In his first term, much of the city was served by water mains built during this time. However, his first love later in life was the sewage treatment plant. He was instrumental in the construction of the 1972 and 1982 waste water treatment plants. Later, he would be honored by the naming of the plant the 'Elden Kuehl Pollution Control Facility'.

1984

January — WWT Plant Assistant Superintendent Richard Condon was appointed by newly elected Mayor David Butterfield to serve as Superintendent. Condon was serving as acting superintendent from December 1, 1982. Mr. Condon has a waste water Class 4 operator certification. (Post Tribune/ Charles Kingsbury/ November /20/1983)

February 3 — City Engineer John Hardwick announced that construction will be begin on Monday, February 6, 1984 on the Industrial Park Sanitary Sewer Project that will serve the industrial area southeast of Valparaiso and will be the trunk line to serve much of the eastside of the city. The city's Board of Sanitation awarded the contract to SBG Construction of Wixom, Michigan. The award was for $1.48 million. (V-M/Pat Randle/February/4/1984)

1998

January 25 — The sewage and water utilities announced that EMA, Inc. would be hired to develop recommendations to make the water and sewer departments more efficient and effective. John Hardwick, water General Manger, indicated that the two guiding principles of the program would be that customer service would not be compromised and that no employees would lose their jobs. Reductions in force would come from natural attrition. The program would take three to five years to complete. (Post Tribune/Joseph Conn/January/26/1998)

March 4 — A sewage rate study by HJ Umbaugh was released. The report recommends that sewage rates be increased by 31 percent. The rates should be implemented over a two and one half year period. The first increase will be 10 percent and begin in July of this year. The second increase of 10 percent would begin in January 1999 and the final increase would begin in January 2000 and increase by 11percent. (Times/K. Peterson/03/04/98)

1999

January 16 — The city is considering a plan to use methane gas from wastewater sludge to power the plant. Methane is a byproduct of the sludge digestion process. By a process called co-generation, the gas can be used to create heat and electricity. The study is being performed by Malcolm Pirnie, an Indianapolis consultant engineering firm. (NWI Times- 01/16/99)

September 22 — A public hearing was held to share with property owners the city's plans to improve Valparaiso Street, by widening the street, providing for separating sewers and providing improved storm drainage. The city believes the project will reduce basement backups and flooding in the area. The storm sewers will be built to provide storm sewers in the Valparaiso Street area and connecting streets including Glendale Blvd. The project is planned to be built in 4 phases running from Evans Avenue to Burlington Beach Road. The work should be completed in 4 years. It will be a joint project between the city and the Indiana Dept. of Transportation and is expected to cost $10.4 million. The first phase is to run from Evans Ave. to Glendale Blvd. and is expected to cost $2 million. (Post Tribune – 09/22/99)

2004

January 18 — The Indiana Stream Pollution Control Board has ordered the city sewage facility to develop a public notification system by November to warn all those affected by discharge of untreated sewage into Salt Creek. The state rule is a part of the program to eliminate discharges into a receiving stream. There are only three homes in the area included in the program. All recreational, environmental and community groups have been contacted to see if they are interested in being notified. 13 such groups have requested notification. The utility is required to make notification by posting a sign. Also, the utility will be using its reverse 911 telephone notification system to notify affected and interested parties. (NWI Times – 06/18/04)

2005

January — The City Council approved an ordinance that merged Water and Wastewater Departments to form Valparaiso City Utilities (VCU).

2007 — The City Council approves an ordinance to merge Storm Water Department with VCU.

VCU Water Reclamation Department initiated the implementation of the Cartegraph Work Management System as a pilot project.

VCU is one of the first utilities in the State to launch INWARN – Indiana's Water & Wastewater Agency Response Network.

2009 — Water Reclamation Department improvements were completed.

December — VCU introduces its Strategic Plan for 2010 – 2015.

2011

July 12 — The VCU Board of Directors ratified the appointment of Steve Poulos to Assistant Utilities Director.

VCU received a Gold Peak Performance Award for its Elden Kuehl Pollution Control Facility, presented by the National Association of Clean Water Agencies to recognize 100 percent complete and consistent National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System compliance for the 2010 calendar year.

Cartegraph Work Management System has been fully implemented throughout the Utilities and has expanded to the Engineering and Public Works Departments.

Combined Sewer Overflow Disinfection Facility is currently under construction and is scheduled for completion in 2012.

During 2011 VCU has studied the full operational integration of the Water Distribution Division and the Sewer Division.

VCU is conducting a CoDigestion Study to investigate the feasibility of accepting high organic strength waste material at the Elden Kuehl Wastewater Treatment Facility from sources in and around the Valparaiso community, to identify advantages and disadvantages associated with adding high organic strength waste material.

2012

May 24 — A ribbon cutting ceremony was held at the Water Reclamation Department for the new Combined Sewer Overflow Disinfection Facility.

September 10 — John Hardwick retires and Steve Poulos becomes the new Utilities Director.

2015 The Water Reclamation Department begins work on upgrades to its ultraviolet disinfection unit and its headworks. The work is funded by a $___ million bond issue. The projects are being built as a guaranteed savings project and is designed by ARCADIS, Indianapolis and built by Bowen Engineering, Indianapolis. The ultraviolet disinfection unit replaces the existing unit. The headworks project replaces existing pumps with four new Flygt pumps rated at six mgd each with Square D variable frequency drives. The headworks building roof is being replaced, sealing it from corrosive gases and painting below ground piping with epoxy paint. (P. Scott/ Wastewater Operations Leader/10-16-15)