

TROY TAKES ON WHAT SEEMED AN INSURMOUNTABLE PROJECT

The city of Troy lies off the beaten path of U.S. Highway 36 in Doniphan County in extreme northeastern Kansas. The town, incorporated February 24, 1860, has a present population of 1,011. Troy was once a booming town with apple orchards galore in the surrounding countryside. Its history boasts of Abe Lincoln spending a night at the Baker-Tenant House. The Pony Express route crossed just west of the community. Troy is the home of the county seat for Doniphan County where the courthouse can be found in the middle of the square and the “Tall Oak” Peter Toth sculpture stands proudly on the courthouse lawn. At one time, Troy was home to the oldest newspaper in the state, *The Kansas Chief*. In December 2006, the new owners moved the newspaper production nine miles east to the city of Wathena.

Very early in 2009, Mayor Terry Simpson and the city council of Troy came to the conclusion that the city was facing a dilemma. The old U.S. Highway 36, now known as Locust Street, ran smack dab through the center of town while the new route skirts by on the north. The old street needed a new overlay from the intersection of Last Chance Road to the east edge of the city limits. But where is such a small town to obtain such a huge financing needed for the project? The governing body decided to seek bids from private contractors and to sell general obligation bonds to pay for the street improvements. The 80-year old water main that runs under that stretch of street was also in much need of repair.

Repair clamps almost touch!

The old water main is a combination of 8- and 6-inch cast iron pipe; it's been bandaged with many repair clamps. Utility Supervisor Mark Morgan says that he can recall four repairs in a ten-foot section just in the years of 2008 and 2009. Mayor Terry Simpson comments, “There were two repairs in 2007 and actually the city has lost count to the number of repairs made on that line. Most of the repairs can be anywhere from Liberty Street west to the Troy Medical Clinic.” The governing body recognized the city would have to repair at least three blocks of the water main from Main St. to Clinton St.; the search was on for funding.

After consultation with the city's engineering consultant, Brian Kingsley of BG Consultants Engineering of Lawrence, it was agreed the city propose the use of “stimulus” funds



Troy, Kansas is noted for having the monument “Tall Oak” on the grounds of the Doniphan County Courthouse. Created by Hungarian-born Peter Toth in 1977, this 27-foot tall burr oak sculpture is part of the collection known as the “Trail of the Whispering Giants”. Toth created the collection to raise the nation’s conscience to the plight of the American Indian.

through Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT) for the street improvements. With “plan in hand” the street project was somewhat ready to roll; the city council decided to defer issuing bonds and instead to apply to KDOT for the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act (ARRA) funding. On March 10, 2009 the city signed a Request for Construction Project using ARRA funds for 2009. City Clerk Jane Boeh reports that the city was notified on March 23, 2009, of an award of \$763,902 of KDOT ARRA funding. Engineer Kingsley also explained to the governing body that additional stimulus funding for water and wastewater improvements though USDA Rural Development’s loan/grant program and Kansas Department of Commerce grant programs were available.

Soon, the city contracted with Donna Crawford, owner of Government Assistance Service of Lawrence, KS, to help with the grant applications. Donna is a certified grant writer and very experienced with federal and state program requirements. It was Donna’s suggestion that Troy conduct a low- and moderate-income survey of the citizens. A door-to-door survey was completed. It was not a difficult process. City Clerk Boeh suggests that communities can accomplish such a task on their own if necessary. The survey questions asked for the following information: 1) number of residents in the household; 2) annual income; 3) number of families living in the residence; 4) the nationality of residents living in each household; 5) head of household-male/female; and, 6) if there were handicapped residents in the household. Fifty-one percent or more of the residents were found to be



Mayor Terry Simpson, Water Utility Supervisor Dennis Smith, and Utility Supervisor Mark Morgan review plans for the CDBG/KDOT ARRA Project in Troy.

low- to moderate-income. The city pursued an application to the Department of Commerce Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG) for financial assistance to help replace the aging waterline. The city was successful. On August 5, 2009, Troy was awarded \$379,800 in CDBG funds.

The Kansas Department of Commerce CDBG grant will fund the water distribution project that consists of replacement of the entire water main – a total of 3,425 linear feet or ten (10) city blocks with 8-inch C900 PVC pipe. Not only will the water main be replaced it will also be installed behind the curb, within the street right-of-way. Eight (8) new fire hydrants; 28 valves, and 22 full replacements of meter services are included. Supervisor Mark Morgan says that eighty percent of this project is the “boring” that will be necessary under Locust Street. Each block will have 16 “spurs” of new service line. Spurs consist of approximately 15 feet of new connecting line, depending on the location of the connections. The new service lines will be encased, so that if the service leaks, the pipe can be pulled and repaired.

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I encourage you to attend the 2010 KRWA conference, March 30 - April 1 in Wichita. I especially would like to draw attention to these sessions that will help any city or RWD plan for and develop project funding.

Going to construction

Bids for the project were taken this past fall. On November 19, 2009, Banks Construction from Holton, KS was awarded the contract at \$232,055 for the water line phase of the project. BG Consultants engineer, Jason Hoskinson, had estimated the costs at \$364,614. This was a cost reduction of \$132,556 for the city. Project consultant Kingsley reports that most bids for water or wastewater projects have come in below estimate; that is a good thing for the project owners. The total funding Troy received in stimulus money is \$1,143,702. The cost to the city is only \$53,925. Engineering, grant administration and inspection design costs were the only costs the city had to assume. Mayor Simpson, the city council and citizens all cheer the idea of receiving nearly \$1.15 million with



Former employees Jared Jeschke and the late Paul Keller repeatedly cut through the asphalt and concrete to access another waterline break.

a local share of only \$54,000. That is one heck of a deal!

Construction on the project began November 30, 2009; the time of completion was to be in only sixty working days. However, with the inclement Kansas weather this winter, the inspector for BG Consultants halted work as of December 8, 2009 until the weather improves. It's been a tough winter in northeast Kansas.

Troy, Kansas is similar to many communities I have visited with across the state. The need to make an improvement is very evident; good leadership and the right team players can help make it happen.

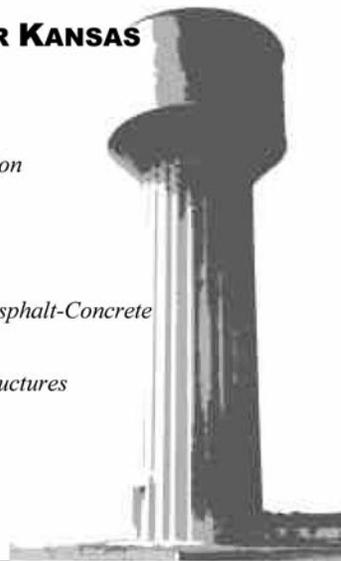
Rita has extensive municipal experience with the city of Troy, KS for 11 years. She was a certified EMT and served as the Ambulance Director for two years and supervised the volunteer staff. Rita also worked on or completed most water and wastewater utility reporting requirements. Her focus at KRWA is to provide assistance with applications for funding for community facilities.



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