

## Heber Valley Special Service District Public Meeting Notes

Feb 27, 2024

### Public comments:

- Commenter 1:
  - Has lived in the community since 1998 in the Fox Hamlet and has noticed since 2020 that the smell has gotten bad and each year it's been worse.
  - They are hoping new equipment will help with odor control.
  - They also noted that with the population growth in the area the smells has gotten worse and wonders if the infrastructure is going to be enough to keep up with the city's growth.
  - They also noted that the smell is worst during the spring.
- Commenter 2:
  - Commenter has been a resident of Midway for 13 years and has noticed the odor getting worse in the spring; March - April (of 2023) was almost unbearable. At that time they also became ill with intestinal issues for a couple weeks. They noted that when they left town they got better and when they came back they felt sick again.
  - Indicated that they live less than a mile to the north (of the ponds).
  - They had concerns about off-gassing based on some of the data that they've read; mostly with the turnover in the spring.
  - They also have concerns about plant maintenance.
  - They are concerned that chemicals in the air are a health hazard. They noted that they are also concerned about the long term health impacts even when they can't smell it.
- Commenter 3:
  - They have lived in the community for 30 years.
  - They have had a similar experience as a previous commenter.
  - They and their children experienced GI issues, in particular diarrhea
  - They noted that between 5:00 AM and 6:00 AM they could smell it in the morning; and almost daily through the summer.
  - They are worried that if you can smell the ponds you are ingesting it (bioaerosols); they are worried about airborne viruses and bacteria.
  - They have had health issues and think it is because of the odors from the pond.
  - They asked if DHHS is tracking doctor visits and how it's going to be tracked.

- They sent out a survey to the community and had ~100 people respond.
- Commenter 4:
  - They live directly north of the lagoon ponds; live with husband and two children; purchased a house almost 8 years ago.
  - Concerned about health and safety of families
  - They stated that not enough studies have been done and they think it's a public health concern.
  - Noted they have extensive medical records of visiting doctors and concerned they might have to move out of the valley because of the plant.
  - Stated that the odor is an indicator and proof that the air is reaching the homes.
- Jenny:
  - They have been here for 20 years; not sure how the public was notified of the meeting.
  - They noted that the information is hard to find and they need more information.
- Rachel Blossy:
  - They live directly across from the lagoons right on Fox Den
  - The biggest/worst thing is the lagoons; they have not been maintained and the permit has been renewed (Utah DEQ).
  - They have reached out to the EPA for assistance.
  - They shared concerns about the water being safe (Provo River).
  - We (DHHS) are not doing enough & [they] need answers & better communication.
  - Worried about the water being sprayed on hay and then selling it to farmers. Worry over any food that's being produced (from this hay or land cultivated using this water).
- Katherine Larson:
  - They live in the Fox Den community for 3 years;
  - They have experienced gastrointestinal issues. This is not just an odor issue, it's a health issue. If it's not the ponds, what is it?
  - They don't feel well and have legitimate health concerns..
  - They raised questions about heavy metals in wastewater effluent.
- Mark Austin:
  - They live approximately 3 ½ miles away.

- They explained how they have been working in low income countries and are surprised that this type of conversation is happening in the United States. Stated that this is the type of issue that developing countries have to deal with.
  - A little bit of a ping pong of issues; this is a non-negotiable and we need to figure out the problem
- Stated that he believes the state, the county and the local health department are carrying a huge liability.
- They stated that this is a serious issue that has impacts on local businesses and the potential to impact the community.
- They want a commitment to a resolution and a timeline of when things will be resolved.
- Lindon Stead:
  - They stated they echo what everyone else has said.
  - This has been an issue before now, but really ramped up since 2020.
  - They were called by their neighbors saying they got sick.
  - They are worried about the resale of the homes.
  - There was a letter from a local physician about the uptick in health effects.
- Ben Seaversen:
  - They tried to do community studies, but these don't really capture the extent of the issue.
  - The odors could be detected up to a mile in a radius from the lagoons.
  - There's an elementary school and another new school within this radius.
  - They have suggestions on how to better communicate.
- Sarah Seaversen:
  - They want to know if information from the public health assessment will be shared with the HVSSD.
- Allen Bingham:
  - Brought up drinking water contamination from Provo River
  - Recreational exposure to HABs a concern

### **Gilbert Notes:**

Public commenter 1: Lives in Hamlet townhomes since 1999. PC1 mentioned growth has quadrupled in the area since then. Their concerns started in 2020 when the smell got really

bad. Each year it seems like it is getting worse. Came to Dennis in 2020 and he stated new equipment was needed to mitigate the smell. PC1 said it got better, but after more growth the worse and more prolonged the smell became. Commented it is worse in the spring. Said if there is all this construction, infrastructure for building, sanitation, roads, etc. are their funds to keep up with odor mitigation.

Jim Goodley introduced himself and provided his phone number and email address at HVSSD. First day on the job.

Public commenter 2: Resides in Midway, Utah. Odor becomes worse in the spring. Said the spring of 2023 around March and April were the worse which coincided with the start of the spring thaw. Said they became ill with intestinal issues for a couple weeks. When they left town, they got better and when they returned to Midway, they fell ill again. Does not think it is coincidental. Said they lived less than one mile to the north of HVSSD. They did research on off gassing. They wanted to know how long the plant has been maintained. Concerned with chemicals being released in the air are a health hazard to people living around HVSSD. They are concerned with the smell and can a person experience health hazards even when you can't smell it. PC2 mentioned they are grateful DHHS is here at the meeting. Also mentioned they do not see this as adversarial.

Public commenter 3: Said they had a similar experience to PC2. They have three children who all developed diarrhea. The family would wake up in the middle of the night with the smell infusing their home which would last through the rest of the summer. They experienced bad smells from 5am-6am and it would last between 5 and 45 minutes. PC3 believes if you can smell it then you are ingesting it. They are concerned about viruses and diseases which can fester in ponds. They are also concerned that there is no disinfection at HVSSD. PC3 asked if DHHS is tracking doctor visits.

Public commenter 4: They live directly north of HVSSD. They expressed gratitude that DHHS came to the meeting. PC4 bought their house 8 years ago and love living in Midway. They are concerned about potential health effects as well as safety for their family and neighbors. Stated there hasn't been any scientific studies on odors from facilities and believes there are significant health problems caused by the odors from HVSSD. They mention they have significant medical records to prove how the odors are affecting them. PC4 is concerned they may have to leave the valley due to the odors from HVSSD. PC4 asked if DHHS can look into the odors.

Public commenter 5: Concerned about being notified about meetings and how are citizens being notified about future meetings. Expressed that the information about this meeting was difficult to find. They want information that is easier to find. They would like information about the study. They would like better advertised meetings. PC5 is concerned about the hay watered by HVSSD and if it is contaminated. They also are worried the hay is contaminating the food supply since it is a source of food for the cattle.

Public commenter 6: Lives directly across from HVSSD. Mentioned they love Midway and their neighbors. The biggest and worst thing about living in Midway is the lagoons. They believed the permits were expired. They have gone so far as to contact the EPA. They worked for months trying to get information on HVSSD. PC6 believes people are very sick. Her family, a husband, child, and two dogs have GI issues. Wondered if the water was safe. Mentioned there are studies done on the Provo River nearby. PC6 said they believe DHHS is not doing enough.

Public commenter 7: Said they had bad diarrhea. Took a survey last year. They believed something was going on at HVSSD. They commented that they and the community are not feeling well. PC7 is concerned about what is going on in their bodies and are worried about legitimate health concerns.

Public commenter 8: Lives about 3.5 miles from HVSSD. Talked about how they worked in low-income countries and is shocked that this conversation is happening in the United States. Mentioned there is ping pong communication between HVSSD and the public. Said that public health and safety is a non-negotiable item and we are carrying a lot of liability on our shoulders.

Public commenter 9: Lived in Midway for about 13 years. Mentioned since 2020 the odors have gotten worse. They feel sick and their husband has suffered worse than they have. Said 100 people filled out a survey about the pond turnover. Worried about the resale values of their homes and the taxes on the homes. Also said in 2020 the smell started to ramp up and the 2023 turnover was the worst out of any year. Stated there was an uptick in ENT problems. They are willing to write letters to whoever gets this issue fixed. PC9 asked questions about turnover and explained they know that turnover is temperature dependent.

Public commenter 10: Said they tried to be involved with the neighbors. They thought the meeting was short notice. Even though two dozen people attended, there are more people out there that the odors are affecting. Believed only a quarter of the people affected by odors showed up. Said strong odors can be detected for a mile. Raised concerns about the schools in the area: Midway elementary school and the Rising Star Academy Montessori School. Expressed the need to have an accurate representation of people in the community.

Public commenter 11: Asked about the public health assessment that would be done on HVSSD.

Public commenter 12: Asked for clarification on where the form on the website goes. Wants DHHS to share with HVSSD. They would like HVSSD to check everyday.

Public commenter 13: Asked about the timeline and the assessment.

There was a public discussion after everyone expressed their concerns about odors potentially stemming from HVSSD. Everybody in the room concluded May was a bad month for the turnover, but one person expressed that March was when it started. Most people in the room did agree that the turnover happened in May every year.