

Minutes of 1/14/20 Sewer Commission meeting –DPW Conference Room –520 Chase Road

Attendees: Chair- Joan Pease, Vice-Chair- Ryan Stober, Clerk- Carl Luck, Members: Dave MacDonald, Mike Nault, DPW Manager-Jack Rodriquez, Business Manager-Barb Lefebvre, Minutes Clerk- Jane Ranley

Guests: Michael-Ray Jeffreys (1176 Mass Ave), Woodward & Curran team – Scott Medeiros, Lauren Hertel, David Moering, Peter Jandrisevits, and Kellie Messer

Joan opened the meeting at 6:30 pm.

ANNOUNCEMENTS – Ryan announced that he is stepping down from the committee and that this would be his last meeting. Joan, on behalf of the Commission, thanked him for his service.

APPOINTMENTS –

Michael Ray Jeffreys-1176 Mass Ave- sewer connection discussion – Michael passed out a map of his property which he inherited from his father. The property is landlocked with a driveway by easement and cannot be connected to sewer. However, he has been charged a sewer betterment which will be paid off in 2028 and is asking what can be done. Carl asked if he would like to connect to sewer if he could and he replied he would but the people that own the right of way do not want to connect. In order to access sewer, he would need to run pipe on his own which would be too expensive. It would be more cost effective to keep the septic and upgrade. Barb has talked to town counsel and they are investigating it. The Commission discussed possible options but will need to wait for an opinion from legal. Michael added that he is not looking for past reimbursement but would just like betterment charges to stop. Barb added that in 2008 the Sewer Service Area (SSA) was drawn to include the property. Carl stated that the Commission has already been advised from previous inquiries that the state law does not allow the Commission to abate a betterment. Michael inquired if the Commission could pay the balance and take the property out of the SSA. The Commission further discussed development options for that area. Joan asked Barb to check with legal as to whether they can pay off the betterment and told Michael the Commission will have him come back to a future meeting. Michael asked if the property stays in the SSA, if he would be subject to future betterment and Carl replied no.

Lauren Hertel, David Moering, Kelly Messer, Pete Jandrisevits and Scott Medeiros--- Woodward & Curran – Inflow/Infiltration (I/I) 3rd Party Review kickoff – After introductions, Carl explained that the Commission has found a disconnect between what is going into the houses and what is going out through the sewer, which equates to about 30-50 % Inflow/Infiltration (I/I). The Commission found an area that contributed 70% -80% of the I/I during a 2011 study done by Weston & Sampson and spent \$100,000 to correct the problem but they are not sure how much they lessened the I/I. In addition, Weston & Sampson calibrated the pump stations and did pump down tests. Carl added that they would like to have a way to look at the 10 pump station areas to determine the best use of resources to lessen the I/I. The meters are maintained by Flow Assessment and soon the Commission will be billed by the meter for actual flow to Leominster. Dave suggested looking at the accuracy of the billing data. Joan added that the data is provided by the water district and have no control or method to have it verified. Scott replied that they will be doing a comprehensive data evaluation. The Commission discussed the area where work was done to replace some of the old clay pipes and areas that were camera-ed. Scott said their job is to recommend what to do and where to go next. Pete added that they will also look at the meter data from the pump stations. Carl added that the flow meter data is very detailed, but the pump stations data is manually recorded, with a lot of inconsistencies. Joan suggested talking to SWSS to make sure data is accurately recorded. Scott replied that they can work with SWSS and could give them a tablet application to record data accurately. Barb can provide the contact information. Carl added that they will want to have SWSS continue to give automated data in the future. Lauren outlined the project schedule: an interim meeting in March, a draft report, a draft review meeting, a final report and then training for Barb. Scott suggested having the final presentation of the report televised and they will give the Commission recommendations. The group discussed the meters and past work done on manholes to reduce I/I. Lauren said they will develop a model to see what is coming in and out of the 10 pump stations. Kelly passed out a list of data requests needed for the project and the group reviewed the list. Barb will check if we have the 2011 meter data in electronic format. Woodward & Curran will send Barb a list of items that they still need to complete the data analysis. Joan suggested Barb send an email to Flow Assessment, Wright Pierce, Weston & Sampson and SWSS, granting Woodward & Curran permission to contact them for information. Lauren will provide a bi-weekly update and will give a monthly written progress report. They will review the tablet data collection with SWSS. Barb suggested having the Commission provide the tablets if Woodward & Curran is providing the software for the tablet. Joan asked for a motion to purchase a tablet, but Carl suggested talking to SWSS first. The group discussed information

they will gain from the tablet app. Lauren will put together a list for required data and Barb will be the conduit to those companies for information.

PUBLIC COMMENT- Dave thanked Ryan for his work on the Commission. Joan also announced that this will be her last meeting as she is having surgery and other family commitments. She had already planned not to run when her term is up in May. Barb said that now there will be 4 slots open on the May ballot and that Ryan and Joan will need to submit letters of resignation to the Sewer Commission.

CURRENT BUSINESS –

FY21 Budget preparation discussion – Barb passed out copies of the budget worksheet for FY21. The Commission discussed the fringe benefits cost and capital expenditures. Dave inquired about the \$134,000 loss figure and Barb replied that the figure includes the \$30K debt service and the increase for Leominster's use of flows vs water billing data. The Commission discussed rate increases and how to notify customers. Mike added that when increased the rate 6 years ago, they gave a presentation to notify customers. Joan noted that they don't know what Woodward & Curran will find, and what the Leominster increase will be, so they should make sure the increase covers everything. Carl pointed out that they need to increase I/I budget from \$10K to \$60K and would need to make a decision of what to do before the budget is completed for Town Meeting. Dave suggested tabling the budget discussion. Barb added that revenues should be similar to past year, but the additional billing for Leominster will be \$120,000 for the year. FinCom presentation will be March 5th or 19th. **FY20 Budget/Spare parts status**— Barb reported that the Leominster Road seal will cost \$2,200 and the seal for Dana St. will be about that or less. Joan encouraged the Commission to continue to purchase spare parts for the pump stations. Ryan asked about the solar for the pump stations and Barb will check for an update. The Commission agreed to purchase the seals. Barb said that they are still waiting for the new Meadowwoods pump to come in. The Commission discussed whether to order a new Meadowwoods pump. Barb added that she verified that no money is left over from the Meadowwoods grant.

Motion: Carl L.

Second: Ryan S.

To buy the seals for Leominster Road and Dana Street to not exceed \$2,200.

Vote: Unanimous

Regarding ordering a new Meadowwoods pump, the Commission decided to talk to SWSS when they come to the 2/11 meeting.

Review SWSS invoices - Barb reported that the new vendor, Weld Generator, submitted quotes to Jack (DPW) and that Jack talked to Albe (SWSS) and that all the generator invoices were approved by Jack. Infrastructure costs for FY20 are over budget. Mike asked why they were not brought to the Commission first and Dave had questions with the invoices. Commission reviewed the invoices and discussed the overcharges. Joan noted that Town Counsel said they need to pay the bills and dispute them after when they attend the meeting. Barb added that Jack was planning to talk with Town Counsel about the SWSS contract and Commission asked Barb to attend also.

Motion: Dave M.

Second: Ryan S.

To have Barb assist Jack in working with Adam (Town Counsel) in the definition of the SWSS contract.

Vote: Unanimous

The Commission discussed having a liaison to talk with Jack (DPW) and Dave volunteered to be the liaison.

Lunenburg Middle & High School- Request for Exception to Irrigation Policy- Barb summarized that the cost of upgrading their meters was too much for their budget and that they offered to continue to read them manually. Ryan added that they have a new Badger pump. The Commission discussed the request and decided that they could not approve the exception.

Motion: Dave M.

Second: Ryan S.

To deny the request from the Lunenburg Middle & High School for the exception to the Irrigation Policy.

Vote: Unanimous

Privilege Fee assessments – 10 Whiting Street – Barb reported that the owners had previously declined having access to sewer and paying the betterment. Now that they are ready to sell the property, they wanted to connect to sewer and have made the necessary connections to the sewer and therefore must be assessed a privilege fee. The Commission agreed to vote.

Motion: Carl L.

Second: Ryan S.

To assess 10 Whiting Street for a betterment of \$11,551.47.

Vote: Unanimous

Privilege Fee Lien document—944 Mass Avenue – Barb noted that they were already assessed \$11,551.47 last month, but since it was not paid, it must be added to the FY21 tax bill and a lien recorded at the Registry of Deeds. Additionally, the recording fee of \$105.00 was added to the lien document since it was not paid by the property owner as requested and Barb requested that the Commission vote to add a recording fee.

Motion: Carl L.

Second: Dave M.

To add \$105 recording fee to the 944 Mass Ave's lien amount

Vote: Unanimous

Annual Report FY19 – Barb noted that the annual report was due to the Selectmen's office in mid-February and asked anyone wished to volunteer to write it. If not, she will do up a draft for Commission review.

Minutes- 12/10/19—

Motion: Dave M.

Second: Carl L.

To approve the minutes from 12/10/19.

Vote: Unanimous

Business Manager Report – Leominster IMA discussion- Barb reported that the meter billing will start in July and the Debt Service will be billed at beginning of the fiscal year. **Maintenance Plan-** Carl had a conference call with Kevin & Matt concerning his list. Barb will check to see when they will meet with Jack. Barb reported that the Commission does not need to do the I/I annual state report noted in the Plan because the state is still reviewing the report submitted in December 2017 and spring of 2018. **Elizabeth St.**—Barb reported that Jack went out a couple times but found no one home. They had discussed Barb sending a certified letter to 33 Elizabeth St. to get access to the cellar to run a camera. Dave suggested checking with Adam (Town Counsel) about a law that homeowners are responsible for their pipe running to the main and must fix it. Carl added they can notify them, give them a chance to fix it and could shut off sewer if necessary. Barb worked with Munis to add the Irrigation Fee to the Q2 bills, but it did not work. She will work with them to get it on the Q3 billing. **1st Tuesday report**—everyone is all set. There have been 2 restaurants that have closed - Simon Pure & Dragonfly Café. **Invoices-** Fitchburg \$13,003.92 and Wright Pierce \$4,721.32. The balance on the Wright Pierce purchase order is approximately \$2,000. **SWSS meeting/ report**—They confirmed their attendance at the Feb 11 meeting. The November pump station report is on the shared drive. Barb has updated the **Website** with current news. Town Meeting warrant opens 1/14.

Member Agenda Inputs for Future Meetings- Sewer Policy change for pro-rating of fees.

Public Comment – Dave said he is sorry to hear that Ryan & Joan are leaving. The Commission thanked Joan and Ryan for their service. Ryan asked about the extension on Cross Road. Carl said he is concerned that no engineered plan has been submitted. Joan recommended that they send their engineered plan and that they speak to Jack (DPW) to find out the appropriate connection. Carl said he would like to go to BOS budget review on 1/28 and asked to move the next meeting. The Commission tentatively reschedule to 1/21 and Carl will be the temporary chair.

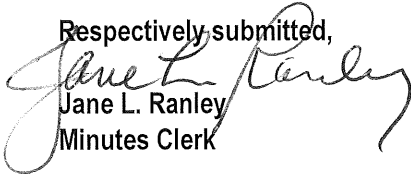
Motion: Dave M.

Second: Ryan S.

To adjourn: 9:08pm

Vote: Unanimous

Respectively submitted,



Jane L. Ranley
Minutes Clerk

Handouts-- Property map 1170 Mass Ave.
Woodward & Curran list of data requirements for the I/I 3rd party review
FY21 Budget Review worksheet