

Minutes of 9/26/23- Sewer Commission meeting– via Zoom (Video Conference)

Attendees: Chair- John Reynolds, Vice-Chair- Brett Ramsden, Clerk- Mike Nault, Member: Mike Mackin, DPW Director- Bill Bernard, Business Manager-Paula Bertram, Minutes Clerk- Jane Ranley

Absent: Dave MacDonald

John opened the meeting at 6:15pm and did a roll call of attendees.

PUBLIC COMMENT & ANNOUNCEMENTS -none

APPOINTMENTS-

Lawrence Lagoy – The Reboot Restaurant - Paula reported the restaurant opened in December 2022 as LaBalena but is now called The Re Boot. The requirement is to have the interceptor cleaned every 6 months and was due for a cleaning in June, with a report due in 30 days. She has communicated with Mr. Lagoy who reported he has had the interceptor cleaned twice since opening but was unable to obtain the reports from the company. Mr. Lagoy said that he offered to submit the invoices from the pumping company but Paula replied it would not suffice according to the agreement with the town. Mr. Lagoy stated he emailed the forms to the pumping company but they have not sent the completed forms or responded to him. He is asking for help to obtain the reports and noted he used Arrow Septic (contact - John Whittemore). He added that he is looking to use a different company in the future. Paula clarified that the reports show the amount of grease, sludge and FOG in the tank and he is technically non-compliant now. The invoices would show he had it pumped but they do not show the condition of the trap. Paula asked the Commission to decide what to do. Mr. Lagoy noted the trap was last pumped in June and the tank is 4,000 gallons. The invoice shows 4,000 gallons were pumped but no data on the condition. Paula noted 4,000 gallons is a large tank. Mr. Lagoy said the new company he contacted stated they had pumped 3,000 gallons out of it in 2016. Mike Nault suggested getting the invoice to show the pumping and asked to reach out to the company, since they are the ones who are negligent. Mr. Lagoy contacted Wind River Environmental and they will do the next pumping. He added they are aware of the forms needed and Paula said they pump for others in town. The tank is due to be pumped in November/December, but John asked to have it pumped earlier. Mr. Lagoy noted it costs \$1,500 to pump, which would be a hardship and asked if he can pump it late October/early November. Brett suggested reaching out to the pumping company for the forms and if they do not get a response, at least make sure it is clean. Mike Mackin suggested letting the process go until the next pump company is able to provide the details. John stated that Mr. Lagoy is not able to get a permit without the forms and the Commission would need to vote to extend the permit.

Motion: Mike Mackin

Second: Mike Nault

To extend the permit, with the stipulation that they expect when the next pumping is done, the Commission will get a full report.

Discussion: Paula requested, as a condition, they receive copies of the invoices. Mr. Lagoy stated he will email them to her. Brett also asked to continue to get the information from Arrow Septic and Mr. Lagoy said he will continue to do that.

Amendment to the motion: John requested to make it conditional that the permit will be issued once the invoices are received. **Mike Mackin accepted the amendment to his motion. Mike Nault seconded the amendment.**

Roll Call Vote: Mike N.-aye, Mike M.-aye, Brett-aye and John-aye.

Alan Wernick – Bad Larry’s – John stated his greatest concern is to protect the system and recently there was an issue with grease in the line, which appears to be coming from Bad Larry’s. Wind River supplied reports on 9/21/23 and Paula did a summary of the reports which was sent to the Commission. Alan said when he took over Bad Larry’s, there was no functioning grease trap and the baffles were removed. The pipe coming from the building had a quarter size hole with the rest of the pipe clogged with grease. He has been working for 7 years to correct the mess he walked into. Being proactive, he has hired a company to clean the grease trap every 3 months. He also has his pipes routered once a year and started a jetting program years ago, which has been getting a huge amount of old grease out of the pipe. John noted Wind River recommended Alan do repairs internally and replace the internal grease trap. Alan said he put in a new grease trap 7 years ago when he took over. John stated there were

discussions in 2015 and the sewer lines were cameraed, showing no evidence of grease in the lines. John read from the 5/16/15 Commission minutes, when Carl Luck was Chair, Dave MacDonald-vice-chair and Mike Nault present. The meeting guests were Alan Wernick and Daisy. John read *"Carl Luck opened the meeting at 5:35pm. The issue of whether the owner of 1 Main St. is required at this time to install an external interceptor was discussed. After the discussion, a motion was made by Dave MacDonald, that as a result of videos of the waste pipes at 1 Main St., an interceptor was not required at this time. If at any point in the future it is deemed necessary by the Sewer Commission, to keep the pipes free of obstruction, caused by fats, oils and grease, an interceptor will be required to be installed. It was seconded by Mike Nault and a vote was taken, which was unanimously approved."* John added back then, the reason the interceptor was not required was the lines were clear. After much discussion, the lines were cameraed in May 2015 which showed the lines were clear of grease. The Commission met and decided not to require the interceptor. Alan asked how far up they went and Bill said it looked like they went manhole to manhole. Alan said he was building at that time and had not looked at the grease trap. He had a plumber install a new grease trap. The line comes out of the end of the building, through the parking lot to a retaining wall where there is a cleanout. It then goes 10 feet, takes a sharp 90-degree turn, goes 100 ft. toward the rear parking lot and then takes a turn into a main pipe which goes to the back manhole-not the front manhole. Alan said he is not arguing about the external grease trap – he thinks he has cleaned out the lines in his building and has jetted lines to remove grease from the previous owner. He does not want to be responsible for a blockage from other sources. He added if the Commission wants an external grease trap put in, they need to talk with the landlord. Alan noted the lines from the building to the manhole were not scoped and were blocked with grease. John said he and Bill saw chunks of grease at the last jetting and asked if the grease was getting past his trap. Alan replied it takes several jettings to get it loosened up and clean. He will also get it scoped out. He has told the landlord that the Commission may require an external grease trap. Mike Nault recalled a similar nasty clog when he was on a past Commission. They had looked at an external trap but did not recommend it, after cameraing the lines because they were clean. Alan said if the Commission votes to require an external trap, he will bring the paperwork to the landlord. Brett said he was confused why the property did not need an external trap back then. Mike Nault replied that the recommendation from the DPW at that time was an external trap was not needed. Paula said initially the Commission required the external trap but changed their mind after the cameraing was done. Paula confirmed Bad Larry's is compliant with paperwork and they are not the property owner. Brett recommended requiring an external trap and reaching out to the property owner. (Brett left meeting.) Alan stated if the Commission requires an interceptor and the landlord won't do it, they are at an impasse. Paula noted the permit goes to the establishment – not the property owner. Mike M. stated he would approve the permit and hold the property owner responsible. Paula pointed out that clearing this clog was extremely expensive, and they need to make sure it does not happen again. Alan said they can do a more aggressive cleaning and scoop grease weekly into the outside grease pit. Bill stated they are still finding grease in the lines, which points to Bad Larry's and he recommends going with an external trap. Alan will check if his guys are not disposing of grease properly. Bill noted a company came to jet the lines, 2 weeks ago, and found grease in the line. Alan questioned if homes in the area are dumping grease into the line. Bill said the manhole is 100 feet from Bad Larry's and grease was found getting into the trunk line. John suggested postponing a decision and talking to the landlord. Paula said his permit was still in place. Alan will contact his landlord and both will attend the October 10th meeting. Mike N. suggested noting in the letter to the landlord the seriousness of the situation and that the Commission wants an external grease trap. Paula will send a draft to Bill and John.

CURRENT BUSINESS -

Minutes of 9/12/23

Motion: Mike Mackin

Second: Mike Nault

To accept the minutes of 9/12/23.

Roll Call Vote: Mike M.-aye, Mike N.-aye and John-aye.

(Bill left the meeting.)

Leominster Intermunicipal Agreement Negotiations – nothing new

Damages from 9/11/23 storm- Paula noted there was significant damage to washed out roads and drainage. She also looked at flows and saw a peak between the 11th & 13th. She calculated they incurred about \$2K in added costs for the extra flow and Bill has incorporated it in his MEMA request.

Appointment of Enforcing Agent – Paula reported they have a high delinquency rate of 21% on the first quarter bills. The demands were sent on 9/19 and some amounts are substantial, with a few owing over a year. Paula, John and Bill spoke to town counsel about options to collect those funds. Under the regulations, they can employ non-criminal disposition, which is a ticketing process and is useful if they need to go to Court. The Commission will need to name someone as the Enforcing Agent to issue those tickets. The Commission does not have a fining option but they need to work on that. John said they need to vote to appoint Bill or Paula.

Motion: Mike Mackin

Second: Mike Nault

To appoint Paula as the enforcing agent.

Roll Call Vote: Mike N.-aye, Mike M.-aye and John-aye.

Business Manager Report –Update on System Maintenance & Upgrades- New Technician – Paula reported CTE emailed that Robert Lilley will be the new Technician for Lunenburg. She did not receive his resume but received his application which notes he has Waste-Water and Construction Supervisor licenses. Robert came in with Albe to introduce himself. Paula suggested having Robert attend a Commission meeting. John noted Robert can't work Monday, Wednesday and Fridays, so he assumes someone covers. Paula will also ask Wade (CTE Business Manager) to attend the meeting. **Alarms/Clogs** – Paula noted there was an issue on Francis St. which was handled by Albe, along with Robert. **Line Jetting-** Clean Basins did line jetting and will do more later this week. Paula recommended increasing line item for jetting to do at least 3 miles each year. **Demand Mailing Update** – went out on the 19th. **Rating & Classification of Sewer Business Manager Position** – Paula stated the Personnel committee is looking at all the positions under the salary plan, which includes the Sewer Business Manager. Bill and Paula have concerns about the rating given to her position as a 10 but it should be a 7, which is a higher level. Paula gave a statement to the Personnel Committee prior to this meeting. She is working with Bill on a modified job description because there are a lot of duties that are not included or defined in the job description. She is much more involved with the technicians and field operations. John said he supports getting the rate changed because there is much more involved. Mike Nault asked if the Commission can do something. Paula suggested the Personnel Committee reach out to the committees for input on the ratings. John will keep it on future agendas.

Assistant to the Sewer Business Manager Position- Paula reported the individual that was interested has decided to not go back to work. There is another strong candidate, who has broken her arm, but she is still interested in the position. There has not been a lot of response. Bill and Paula looked at the rating on this position and it was rated a 6. They will still need to work on the rating for this position as well as the Sewer Manager.

PUBLIC COMMENT – none

UPCOMING SCHEDULED SEWER COMMISSION ACTIVITIES:

October 10, 2023 @ 6pm – Regular Meeting, Remote Participation

November 14, 2023 @ 6pm – Regular Meeting, Remote Participation

November 28, 2023 @ 6pm – Regular Meeting, Remote Participation

December 12, 2023 @ 6pm – Regular Meeting, Remote Participation

Motion: Mike Mackin

Second: Mike Nault

To adjourn at 7:29pm.

Roll Call Vote: Mike N.-aye, Mike M.-aye and John-aye.

Respectfully submitted,

**Jane L. Ranley
Minutes Clerk**

Handouts: John read a portion of the minutes from the 5/16/15 meeting.