

Minutes of 3/10/26 Sewer Commission meeting– Hybrid in-person and Zoom

Attendees: Vice-Chair- Scott Dall, Clerk- Dan Proctor, Members: Arthur Katis and Chip Wilson, DPW Director- Bill Bernard, Sewer Business Manager- Andrew Valliere, Minutes Clerk- Jane Ranley

Absent: Chair- Brett Ramsden

Scott D. opened the meeting at 6:06 pm. and did a roll call of attendees. The Commission began the meeting by saying the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Ian Brennen noted he is a builder and a friend of the family is potentially looking to sell the driving range near Whalom and build duplexes. He handed out information on the project and said they are asking about running sewer up Pond Street. They could connect Lots 1, 2 & 3 perpendicularly into sewer, but one small section would need to be considered under future expansion of the Sewer Service Area (SSA). Bill stated they would need to put in a warrant at a Town Meeting to add it to the SSA. Ian noted the sewer is at the circle and could be run to the 3 duplexes. Scott asked if there were plans for future expansion. Ian replied there could be 3 or 4 ANRs on Carr Ave. but he is just looking at the 3 on Pond St. He is open to feedback on the plan from the Commission. Bill noted that if Ian wants this to happen soon, he will need to get the warrant article to the Town Manager by 3/16 to get it on the May 2nd Town Meeting. Bill added he should schedule to come back for the March 31st meeting so they can vote on it. They are not able to vote at this meeting because it was not on the agenda.

CURRENT BUSINESS –

---Minutes of 2/24/26 and 3/3/26 Joint Select Board Meeting

Motion: Dan P.

Second: Arthur K

To accept the minutes of the 2/24/26 Meeting and the 3/3/26 Joint Select Board Meeting.

Roll Call Vote: Arthur-aye, Dan-aye, Chip-aye and Scott-aye.

ANNOUNCEMENTS- The Demand fees will be mailed out the week of March 16th. If anyone has not paid their sewer bill, please send in payment by Friday and they can also pay online.

---DPW Director/Sewer Business Manager Updates--

--User Rates FY27-Andrew stated the new rate will be increasing 16% to \$18.38/cubic feet and the minimum charge will increase by 5% to \$139. Scott noted they are held to how much Fitchburg & Leominster charges Lunenburg to discharge.

--Town Meeting FY27 Budget Presentation- Bill will do the budget presentation 3/12/26 at 7pm. to FinCom. Scott told Chip that they voted to accept the FY27 budget proposal at last meeting. Bill reported they will not be using any Retained Earnings this year, as they had in recent years. Scott noted that receipts next year will be lower because betterments are being paid off. Andrew reported that nothing is dramatically changed from last year. Dan asked if they have figures for how much customers are billed for flows vs how much they are being billed from Fitchburg and Leominster. He noted that there could be leaky pipes and cracks causing groundwater to enter the system that is not billed to a customer. Bill clarified that the manhole repair project will be targeting the manholes suspected of having I/I (Inflow/Infiltration). In 2014, there was a report of lines that were looked at with a camera to look for leaks. Flow Assessment also does a calibration twice a year on the meters for Fitchburg and Leominster, to insure they are accurate. Bill added they can put the wireless unit in manholes where they suspect I/I to get data. Scott stated the Budget presentation recording will be on the town's YouTube channel.

--Town Warrant Article Waivers bylaw wording – Bill reported the Town Manager reviewed and tweaked the wording. Scott added the Town Counsel rewrote it so the sewer bylaw would have consistent language with the new ADUs. It will be voted on at the Town Meeting.

--Sewer/Stormwater- Bill reported they can combine Sewer and Stormwater but will need to get approval from the state first. The bylaw to be voted on at Town Meeting is to establish the Stormwater Utility and will state that the Select Board will oversee it. The combined Commission would need approval at a future Town Meeting after the state approves. Bill clarified that there is a Federal mandate clean up water before it goes into streams or they could be fined. They have been talking about the Stormwater Task Force for 10 years and are close to setting it up now.

Residents will pay a Stormwater fee which will be used to pay for street sweeping twice a year and cleaning out drains, in order to be in compliance.

---Future Agenda Items- Ian's presentation, FY27 Budget, Town Warrant, Manhole contract work.

PUBLIC COMMENT – Scott saw an article about the Fitchburg mayor looking at bringing the old sewer plant back online. Bill said they have not been contacted yet. Dan asked if there is still capacity for flow to Fitchburg and Andrew replied they still have some available.

UPCOMING SCHEDULED SEWER COMMISSION ACTIVITIES:

March 31, 2026 @ 6pm – (Zoom) Meeting

April 14, 2026 @ 6pm – Regular (Hybrid) Meeting

April 28, 2026 @ 6pm – (Zoom) Meeting

May 12, 2026 @ 6pm – Regular (Hybrid) Meeting

Motion: Dan P.

To adjourn at 6:49pm.

Second: Arthur K.

Roll Call Vote: Chip-aye, Dan-aye, Arthur-aye and Scott-aye.

Respectfully submitted,

Jane L. Ranley

Minutes Clerk