

BOARD OF SEWER COMMISSIONERS

5 MILLBURY STREET

AUBURN, MASSACHUSETTS 01501

MEETING MINUTES

March 12, 2020

The Auburn Board of Sewer Commissioners held a regularly scheduled meeting on Thursday, March 12, 2020 in the Conference Room at 5 Millbury Street, Auburn, Massachusetts 01501.

ITEM ONE-CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Healey called the meeting to order at 4:45 p.m.

Those in attendance were:

Board Members:

Mr. Thomas J. Healey, Chairperson
Mr. Wayne Belec, Vice Chairperson
Mr. Mark E. LaPlante, Secretary

Department Staff:

Ms. Joanna Paquin, Sewer Superintendent
Mr. William Coyle, D.P.W. Director/Town Engineer
Mrs. JoAnne Donahue, Principal Clerk

ITEM TWO –APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. The Board reviewed the minutes of the January 23, 2020 regular meeting. Mr. LaPlante motioned to approve the minutes of the January 23, 2020 regular meeting, as amended. Mr. Healey seconded and it was so voted. Mr. Belec abstained due to his absence from the January 23rd meeting.

ITEM THREE– NEW BUSINESS

A. Drainlayer License Applications: No new applications received since the last meeting.

B. Fiscal Year 2019 Sewer Use Abatement Applications: The Board reviewed the abatement application that was filed since the last meeting for the Fiscal Year 2019 Sewer Use bills. After a brief discussion, Mr. Belec motioned to approve the first and second Installment Sewer Use Abatement Applications for 11 Hilltop Farm Road for fiscal year 2019 in the amount of \$569.92 each. Mr. LaPlante seconded, Mr. Healey voted in favor and it was so voted. There was a brief discussion about senior residents that were just recently approved for exemptions on their real estate taxes through the Assessor’s office, which then qualifies them for a 20% discount on their sewer bills. The Board agreed that since the bills for Fiscal Year 2019 cover the period that ended on 6/30/2019 and they were not

approved for the Exemption by the Assessor's office until 2020, they would not qualify for the 20% discount until the Fiscal Year 2020 sewer use bills are issued.

C. I&I Fees: Ms. Paquin informed the Board while she was looking for a full set of Sewer Regulations, she noticed that there were I&I Fees that were included in one of the amendments to the regulations, but was not aware any I&I fees being charged by the Sewer Division. Ms. Paquin asked the Board if they knew why the fees were put in the regulations but had not been implemented. Mr. Coyle mentioned that in his experience, the I&I fees were charged when there was a moratorium on sewer connections due to limited capacity. Mr. Coyle also mentioned that the amendment to the regulations that Jeff Mitchell had filed regarding the advertisement of the regulation changes had finally been approved. Mr. Healey stated that he recalled that they had struggled with the idea of collecting the I&I fees, and that they also wanted to make sure that if the fees were collected that they would be used solely for I&I work. He also stated that the topic had not been discussed in quite a while so he was glad that the subject was being brought up again. Mr. Belec mentioned that the fees would be helpful for the funding of the I&I work that is being mandated. Everyone agreed that the Sewer Regulations needed to be reviewed completely and possibly updated or amended, including the section on the I&I fees. Mr. Coyle stated that the I&I fees that were established needed to be looked at to see what the impact will be on new developments and new businesses coming to Town, and also to determine when and if the fees will be charged going forward. He stated that checking with other towns to see what they are charging for I&I fees would also be helpful. Ms. Paquin stated that she would get more information on the I&I fees for the next meeting so that they can discuss it further.

D. Ethics Training – Ms. Paquin informed the Board that they needed to complete their requirements for the Ethics Training mandated by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

ITEM FOUR – I & I SEWER REHABILITATION

A. Ms. Paquin provided the Board with a copy of the bid results for the flow monitoring that she had received from Environmental Partners Group, showing that EST Associates, Inc. of Needham, MA was the low bidder. She advised the Board that Environmental Partners had reviewed all of the bids and checked the references for EST Associates, and subsequently a recommendation to award was provided. Ms. Paquin stated that they had issued the notice to proceed so that EST Associates can process the contract and begin the flow monitoring which is scheduled for March 30th – June 5th. Ms. Paquin and Mr. Coyle briefly talked about their relationship with Mr. Dave Boyer from DEP and mentioned that they would be working closely with DEP to stay on top of what their requirements will be in regard to I&I.

ITEM FIVE - U.B.W.P.A.D./UPPER BLACKSTONE CLEAN WATER

A. Mr. Coyle stated that as mentioned at the last meeting, the rate increase for the Town's assessment will be 11.1%, in addition to increased flows from the Town. He also stated that the Upper Blackstone expects fees to increase in the future as they will begin work on reducing phosphorus levels (being mandated by the EPA).

ITEM SIX - APPROVAL OF BILLS

A. There were no bill schedules to approve. Mr. Coyle mentioned that moving forward, copies of the Bill Schedules that were processed during the previous month will be provided to the Board for review.

ITEM SEVEN - NEW SEWER CONNECTIONS

A. The Board reviewed the updated sewer connection list as of March 12, 2020.

ITEM EIGHT – SEWER DIVISION/D.P.W. WORK LOG

A. Mr. Coyle stated that they did not have an updated work log but that the Highway Division was still working on clearing the sewer easements and that they had accomplished quite a lot over the winter months. They will probably start working on Highway projects with the good weather.

ITEM NINE - BUDGET REVIEW

A. Ms. Paquin gave the Board copies of the updated monthly budget report through March 10, 2010 for their review. There was a brief discussion about some of the line items/account balances on the report. Mr. Healey stated that he would like to have more columns showing the monthly deficit balances in the accounts.

ITEM TEN – CAPITAL PLANNING

A. Update on Current Projects:

Pinrock Road Bypass project – Ms. Paquin stated that the easement documents for the properties on Rose Lane were drafted and had been sent to the Upper Blackstone for review. Mr. Coyle stated that he would check with Karla Sangrey from Upper Blackstone to find out the status of the easement documents. (Mr. Coyle exited the meeting at 5:52 p.m.)

Bancroft Street Bridge Sewer Line Replacement – Ms. Paquin stated that the survey had been completed and that Onsite Engineering was planning to have the design completed by the beginning of May. They are also currently working on the traffic management plan for Mass DOT Access permit.

Jerome Avenue Sewer Station – Ms. Paquin updated the Board on the control panel issues that have been ongoing. She stated that Joe Cusson, the Operations Foreman, has been working on getting the issue resolved, but that they were also holding back retainage payments until everything has been completed and is working properly.

ITEM ELEVEN – OLD BUSINESS

A. Blaker Street 40B Development Project: Ms. Paquin informed the Board that Jeff Mitchell had given the developers (Eastland Partners) a proposal from Environmental Partners Group for the sewer system capacity review and that the developers have asked for an updated quote.

ITEM TWELVE – DATE OF NEXT MEETING

A. The next regular meeting was tentatively scheduled for Thursday, April 16, 2020 at 4:30 p.m.

ITEM THIRTEEN – ADJOURNMENT

A. The meeting was adjourned at 6:15 p.m.

DOCUMENTS:

The following documents were part of the Board of Sewer Commissioner's Meeting on March 12, 2020, and are maintained in the Sewer Division office:

- Agenda
- Minutes of the January 23, 2020 Regular Meeting
- FY2019 Sewer Use Abatement applications received through March 12, 2020
- Base Bid Tabulation for Auburn Sewer System Flow Monitoring from Environmental Partners Group, Inc.
- Updated Sewer Connection List as of March 12, 2020
- Monthly Departmental Budget Report as of March 10, 2020