

BOARD OF SEWER COMMISSIONERS

5 MILLBURY STREET

AUBURN, MASSACHUSETTS 01501

MEETING MINUTES

September 24, 2020

The Auburn Board of Sewer Commissioners held a regularly scheduled meeting on Thursday, September 24, 2020 remotely via <https://global.gotomeeting.com>

ITEM ONE-CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Healey called the meeting to order at 4:42 p.m.

Those in attendance remotely were:

Board Members:

Mr. Thomas J. Healey, Chairperson

Mr. Wayne Belec, Vice Chairperson

Mr. Mark E. LaPlante, Secretary (4:46 p.m.)

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. (This item was handled out of order after Item 3D). The Board reviewed the minutes of the August 27, 2020 regular meeting. Mr. LaPlante motioned to approve the minutes of the August 27, 2020 regular meeting. Mr. Healey seconded and it was so voted. Mr. Belec abstained due to his absence from the August 27, 2020 meeting.

ITEM THREE– NEW BUSINESS

A. Drainlayer License Applications: No new applications received.

B. Fiscal Year 2019 Sewer Use Abatement Applications: The Board reviewed the abatement application for 3 Jade Hill Road that was filed due to the installation of a well meter. (Mr. LaPlante entered the meeting at 4:46 p.m.) After a brief discussion, Mr. Belec motioned to approve the first and second installments of the Fiscal Year 2019 Sewer Use Abatement Applications in the amount of \$685.18 for each installment. Mr. LaPlante seconded, Mr. Healey voted in favor and it was so voted.

C. FY2020 Sewer Use Commitment: The Board reviewed the Fiscal Year 2020 Sewer Commitment for the sewer bills that have been issued for FY2020 totaling \$2,765,734.16. Mr. Coyle will check with the Town Manager to see if she wants to sign it, have Ms. Paquin sign it, or have the Commissioners come in to sign it.

D. FY2020 Sewer Use Abatement Applications: The Board reviewed the list of sewer abatements filed for the 20% discount, which were from residents that qualified for exemptions on their Real Estate Taxes. Mr. Belec motioned to approve the Fiscal Year 2020 abatements filed to date for the 20% discount in the amount of \$222.26 for each installment. Mr. LaPlante seconded, Mr. Healey voted in favor and it was so voted. The Board then reviewed the abatements and supporting documents for pool fills that had been filed to date. After review, Mr. Belec motioned to approve the Fiscal Year 2020 abatements filed to date due to pool fills totaling \$949.01 for each installment. Mr. LaPlante seconded, Mr. Healey voted in favor and it was so voted.

The Board reviewed the Fiscal Year 2020 abatement filed for 16 Mayfield Road. The resident had requested abatement due to a huge water usage that resulted from putting in a new lawn and using their irrigation system. The resident had installed a deduct meter in July. After a brief discussion the Board agreed to an abatement of the sewer bill based on an average of the regular (non-irrigation) quarterly usage history for prior years. Mr. Belec motioned to approve the abatement based on the agreed upon calculation. Mr. LaPlante seconded, Mr. Healey voted in favor and it was so voted.

The Board reviewed the Fiscal Year 2020 abatement and supporting documents filed for a pool fill at 63 Barbara Avenue. The abatement was for 11,708 gallons (1,565 c.f.) of water on 5/26-5/27/2020. However, the quarterly water usage from Auburn Water District for that period does not reflect enough flow to include 1,565 c.f. After a brief discussion, Mr. Belec motioned to deny the abatement application for 63 Barbara Avenue. Mr. LaPlante seconded, Mr. Healey voted in favor and it was so voted.

ITEM FOUR – I & I (INFLOW & INFILTRATION) SEWER REHABILITATION

A. Ms. Paquin informed the Board that there was nothing new to report because they had not received the final report for the I&I flow monitoring from Environmental Partners Group. She stated that the consultant had requested an extension from DEP until the end of September. She said she expected to receive the final report within the next few days.

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

A. Mr. Coyle stated the only thing to report was that with the lack of rain, the flows had been fairly low, and he hoped that would result in a decrease in the I&I.

ITEM SIX - REVIEW OF BILL SCHEDULES

A. The Board reviewed the Sewer Division Bill Schedules dated August 28, August 31, September 3, and September 11, 2020 that had been processed since the last meeting.

ITEM SEVEN - NEW SEWER CONNECTIONS

A. No new sewer connections since the last meeting.

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

A. Ms. Paquin stated that they did not have an updated work log again this month because the Divisions had still been pretty much working in their respective Divisions. Mr. Healey asked Ms. Paquin if she could still keep an active log to track the work being done between the different divisions, due to the Sewer Division being an Enterprise and having a separate budget.

ITEM NINE - BUDGET REVIEW

A. The Board reviewed copies of the updated monthly budget report for Fiscal Year 2021 through September 23, 2020, which was prepared for their review. They also reviewed the monthly CIP/Article budget report as of September 23, 2020. Mr. Healey requested that a column be added to show the percentage of the expended amount used to date rather than the expended and encumbered.

ITEM TEN – CAPITAL PLANNING

A. Update on Current Projects (Mr. Belec exited the meeting at 5:40 p.m.):

Bancroft Street Bridge Sewer Line Replacement: Ms. Paquin stated that the project was still in Mass DOT’s hands. She stated that she was advised that the 100% review of plans would be done by the end of October.

Pinrock Road Bypass project: Ms. Paquin stated that there was a meeting scheduled with the attorneys on October 1st to discuss the easement acquisitions. Mr. Coyle advised that they are anxious to get the easements takings completed as soon as possible so that the project can move forward.

ITEM ELEVEN – OLD BUSINESS

A. Blaker Street 40B Development Project: Ms. Paquin stated that they had received a partial draft report from the consultant and that they had met earlier in the day to discuss the handling of the possible flows from Oxford. Mr. Coyle stated that it appears that the Auburn Oxford sewer station may have the capacity to handle the Auburn portion of the development, but there would need to be improvements in order to handle the Oxford portion. They would prefer that Oxford handle the flow from the Oxford portion of the development.

B. I&I Fees: Ms. Paquin provided the Board with a spreadsheet showing the sewer fees being collected by surrounding towns in comparison with the fees currently in place for the Town of Auburn. There was a brief discussion of the I&I fees and the need to determine when the fees should be charged. Mr. Healey said that it would also be helpful if the user fees being charged by the Towns were also included in the comparison. The Board agreed that there needed to be further discussion at future meetings on the I&I fees.

ITEM TWELVE – DATE OF NEXT MEETING

A. The next regular meeting was tentatively scheduled for Thursday, October 22, 2020 at 4:30 p.m.

ITEM THIRTEEN – ADJOURNMENT

A. The meeting was adjourned at 5:56 p.m.

DOCUMENTS:

The following documents were part of the Board of Sewer Commissioner's Meeting on September 24, 2020, and are maintained in the Sewer Division office:

- Agenda
- Minutes of the August 27, 2020 Regular Meeting
- FY2019 Sewer Use Abatement Applications received through September 24, 2020
- FY2020 Sewer Use Commitment
- FY2020 Sewer Use Abatement Applications received through September 24, 2020
- Copies of Bill Schedules dated August 28, August 31, September 3, and September 11, 2020
- Monthly Departmental Budget Report as of September 23, 2020
- Monthly CIP/Article Budget Report as of September 23, 2020
- Sewer Fees by Town spreadsheet prepared by Ms. Paquin