

**BOARD OF SEWER COMMISSIONERS**

**7 MILLBURY STREET**

**AUBURN, MASSACHUSETTS 01501**

**MEETING MINUTES**

October 10, 2019

The Auburn Board of Sewer Commissioners held a regularly scheduled meeting on Thursday, October 10, 2019 in the Conference Room at 7 Millbury Street, Auburn, Massachusetts 01501.

**ITEM ONE-CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. Healey called the meeting to order at 4:43 p.m.

Those in attendance were:

**Board Members:**

Mr. Thomas J. Healey, Chairperson

Mr. Wayne Belec, Vice Chairperson (4:47 p.m.)

Mr. Mark E. LaPlante, Secretary

**Department Staff:**

Mr. Jeffrey C. Mitchell, Superintendent

Mrs. JoAnne Donahue, Principal Clerk

**ITEM TWO –APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A. The Board reviewed the minutes of the September 12, 2019 regular meeting. (Mr. Belec entered the meeting at 4:47 p.m.) Mr. LaPlante motioned to approve the minutes of the September 12, 2019 regular meeting. Mr. Belec seconded, Mr. Healey voted in favor and it was so voted.

**ITEM THREE– NEW BUSINESS**

A. Drainlayer License Applications: The Board reviewed the Drainlayer License Application and supporting documents submitted by Comeau Excavating, Inc. of Paxton, MA. They were previously licensed with the Town for many years, but had not renewed their drainlayer license since 2009. Mr. Belec motioned to recommend issuance of a drainlayer license by the Board of Selectmen to Comeau Excavating, Inc. of Paxton, MA. Mr. LaPlante seconded, Mr. Healey voted in favor and it was so voted.

B. Fiscal Year 2019 Sewer Use Abatement Applications: The Board reviewed the abatements that were filed to date for the Fiscal Year 2019 Sewer Use bills, which were mostly due to pool fills or the 20% discount. Mr. Belec motioned to approve the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Installment Abatements for fiscal year

2019 in the amount of \$3,607.23 each. Mr. LaPlante seconded, Mr. Healey voted in favor and it was so voted.

C. Deduct and Well Water Meters: Mr. Mitchell informed the Board that he felt it necessary to institute a new policy for deduct and well meters. He provided the Board with a draft of each of the new policies that he proposed to implement for the installation of deduct and well meters for sewer use billing purposes. As discussed at a previous meeting several months ago, many of the deduct meters and well meters that have been installed over the years (and purchased from the Sewer Division) have started to malfunction and many of the ones with the outside readers have stopped working. In a few cases, the newer meters without the outside readers have stopped reading completely. Because of the cost involved with the installation of the meters, which must be installed by a licensed plumber and inspected by the Town's plumbing inspector, it has been difficult to deal with the homeowners to try to get them to repair or replace the meters due to the cost of hiring a plumber. Mr. Mitchell stated that by not selling the meters any more, it would eliminate the Town's involvement and would place the responsibility for the installation and maintenance of the meters solely on the property owner. Mr. Mitchell stated that he is also possibly leaning towards having the responsibility for reading the meters placed on the homeowner as well. It has become a monumental task to have all of the meters read manually, compounded by the fact that some meters have outside readers and some need to be read inside the resident's home. Letters will be sent out to explain the new meter reading policy, and reminders will be sent when the readings are due. If a resident has difficulty in reading the meter, an appointment will be set up to have a Sewer Division employee do the reading. The meter readings can be mailed, faxed or emailed, and a form will be set up on the Town website for the readings to be entered on line. Mr. Healey asked Mr. Mitchell to include a statement in the policies that would say that the Town reserves the right to verify any readings that are submitted. Mr. LaPlante then motioned to approve the new Sewer Deduct Meter and Well Meter policies as amended (to include the statement that the Town reserves the right to verify any readings/usage submitted). Mr. Belec seconded, Mr. Healey voted in favor and it was so voted.

#### **ITEM FOUR – I & I SEWER REHABILITATION**

A. Mr. Mitchell provided the Board with copies of the response to Mass DEP entitled "Auburn Sewer Collection System Inventory of Existing Conditions" from Environmental Partners Group. The Board reviewed and discussed the report and the findings included therein. Mr. Mitchell stated that the flow monitoring would not begin until the spring, but that Environmental Partners will be coming in the following week with the contractor that will be doing the flow monitoring to inspect the locations and choose the areas for the rain gauges that will be installed.

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

A. Mr. Mitchell gave the Board copies of the minutes from the September 4 and September 18, 2019 meetings, as well as a copy of the monthly Flows & Temperatures report dated 10/9/2019 for their review.

#### **ITEM SIX - APPROVAL OF BILLS**

A. The Board reviewed the fiscal year 2020 regular bill schedule totaling \$25,915.07. Mr. LaPlante motioned to approve the regular bill schedule in the amount of \$25,915.07. Mr. Belec seconded, Mr. Healey voted in favor and it was so voted.

#### **ITEM SEVEN - NEW SEWER CONNECTIONS**

A. The Board reviewed the updated sewer connection list as of October 10, 2019.

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

A. Mr. Mitchell stated that there was no activity since the last meeting so he did not update the Monthly Equipment & Labor Work log that tracks the work being performed by the Sewer Division for the D.P.W./Highway Division and the work being performed by the D.P.W./Highway Division for the Sewer Division.

**ITEM NINE - BUDGET REVIEW**

A. Mr. Mitchell gave the Board copies of the updated monthly budget report through October 3, 2019, which he prepared for their review.

**ITEM TEN – CAPITAL PLANNING**

A. Update on Current Projects:

Pinrock Road Bypass project – Mr. Mitchell informed the Board that the appraisals for the easements had been completed and forwarded to the Upper Blackstone counsel, and that they will be preparing the easement documents. Once the easements are in place, the project will go out to bid. He stated that construction on the project would not begin until the spring.

Jerome Avenue Sewer Station - Mr. Mitchell stated that as soon as the permanent easement is approved at Town Meeting, National Grid should be able to move forward with installing pole and restoring power to the station.

**ITEM ELEVEN – OLD BUSINESS**

A. Bancroft Street Bridge Sewer Line Replacement: Mr. Mitchell stated that there is an article on the Town Meeting warrant to appropriate funds for the engineering for the sewer line replacement on the Bancroft Street Bridge.

**ITEM TWELVE – DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

A. The next regular meeting was tentatively scheduled for Thursday, November 14, 2019 at 4:30 p.m.

**ITEM THIRTEEN – ADJOURNMENT**

A. The meeting was adjourned at 5:42 p.m.

**DOCUMENTS:**

The following documents were part of the Board of Sewer Commissioner’s Meeting on October 10, 2019, and are maintained in the Sewer Division office:

- Agenda
- Minutes of the September 12, 2019 Regular Meeting
- Drainlayer License Application and supporting documents from Comeau Excavating, Inc.

- Sewer Deduct & Well Water Meter Policy Drafts
- Environmental Partners Group Memorandum to DEP dated 10/1/19 – Auburn Sewer Collection System Inventory of Existing Conditions
- FY2020 Regular Bill Schedule in the amount of \$25,915.07
- UBWPAD August 21, 2019 Meeting Minutes and Flows and Temperatures Chart dated 9/4/2019
- Updated Sewer Connection List as of October 10, 2019
- Monthly Departmental Budget Report closing out fiscal year 2019, and FY2020 monthly budget reports through 8/7/19 and 9/5/2019