

FINAL APPROVED
Water & Sewer Commission Minutes
Wednesday, May 8, 2019 - 3:00 PM

Members Present: Normand Houle, Chair, John Ireland Vice Chair, Walter Liff, Richard White, Steve Tabbutt DPW.

Also in attendance: Ben Jankowski, DPW, Christiane McAllister, Accountant, Anne Miller, Recording Secretary, Dave McGuckin.

Chair Houle opened the meeting at 3:04 noting the presence of a quorum.

1. Public Questions.

Dave McGuckin asked for the Water and Sewer Commission's position on the use of a DPW employee to devote a significant part of his time (25-50%) to the administration of the TAPP grant for the Safe Path expansion. This grant will be discussed and voted upon at next week's Town Meeting. He asked if the Commission was intending to make a statement or take a position at Town Meeting on this subject. Dick White stated that the DPW employees already work 40 hours per week, and didn't understand how one could devote 20% of their time managing paperwork for this project. Chair Houle noted that the Water and Sewer Commission have no control over their (DPW) duties. Until there is evidence of some adverse effect, there isn't any role for Water and Sewer to act or take a position. Chair Houle stated other than knowing that an employee (Ben J) was doing some training for the Safe Path Project, he knows nothing else. It would be up to Steve Tabbutt to raise any evidence of adverse effects. Steve noted a significant amount of time would be taken up with this project. Selectman Frampton noted his understanding was that it would be at least 10 hours per week for possibly two or three years. Ben confirmed this time amount and indicated that as the project gets busier, more time will be needed to put into it. Dick White wondered about the role of the Town Administrative Projects Coordinator. Damon explained it has to be a full time employee to manage the grant, which is one of the reasons Ben was picked for the position. John Ireland noted an eighth of the 80 DPW work schedule is being taken away from Roads, Water & Sewer and other DPW projects and tasks, were the Selectmen aware of this? And if so, that's a problem that needs a solution. He asked if it already was having any effect? Steve replied that DPW is falling behind and is backed up. Chair Houle suggested that Steve make this information known at Town Meeting. He stated that right now, to the best of his knowledge, Safe Path was from the Wentworth to the Common, working now from Wild Rose Lane to the Common. Then it is planned to go from Beach Hill Road to Pit Lane. What's it going to be next? Will it progress until it gets to the Sawtelle Bridge? Dave McGuckin pointed out that he feels we could reapply at a later date and still receive the money as the State likes what the Town has done. There were further questions and discussion about the funding of the full time position, and how long the Town has to file the mandatory reports. Christiane also spoke about the detail of the federal funds involved. Chair Houle thanked Dave for sensitizing the Commission to the issue.

2. Individual Applications and Petitions : None.

3. Approve Minutes of April 10, 2019.

After discussion and review, John Ireland made the Motion to Approve the Minutes as amended, which was seconded by Dick White. Motion Carried.

4. Financials

a. Review, approve, and sign checks.

The commitment was signed for \$93,385.70. This is for April (Dec 2018 through April 2019), Water and Sewer for the northern part of the Town and Coast Guard.

After discussion and review of the checks , (No Motion was made to approve)
The Commission proceeded to the next item which is the Accountant's report.

b. Accountant's Report.

Water:

Revenues: \$31,802.49 as of the end of April.

Expenditures: \$6,248.47

Checking Acct Balance: \$175,402.86 as of the end of April

Trust Fund Balance: \$144,286.55 as of the end of March

Sewer:

Revenues: \$63,027.90 as of the end of April

Expenditures: \$34,125.68

Checking Account Balance: \$222,315.69 as of the end of April

Trust Fund Balance: \$39,608.34 as of the end of March.

5. Selectmen's Report.

Selectman Frampton reported that Selectman Stewart is meeting this week with Portsmouth to discuss the water main from Pierce Island to the bridge, and how this will be paid for. The aeration will be fully on line by the end of September. We should quickly see a difference. The Memorandum will spell out when the meter pits come out. This may take a couple of years. It will depend on the sequencing and scheduling of the main project. Dick White suggested that we could pull the meters sooner, and install a spooling device to hasten the process.

Chair Houle noted as a point of information, that in looking on line at the Portsmouth budget, in the CIP section, replacement of the New Castle line is no longer listed.

6. Continuing Business.

a. Status of River Road hatch replacement.

Ben reported that we have the new hatch, but are having difficulty pulling out the old one. Chair Houle asked about the fiscal ramifications of this problem. Might it require something more and should that be a fiscal expense in FY 19 or FY 20? Discussion ensued, with Dick White providing some suggestions. Christiane explained about how portions of DPW and Town employees salaries are calculated and how this affects the Water & Sewer budget. If the extra amount needed is \$10,000 or under, there is not an issue.

7. New Business.

a. FY19 Budget Review and Trust Fund Transfer Estimate.: Budget Review postponed till next month or possibly July.

The new trust funds are being discussed and will be renamed. Chair Houle suggested "WSC Water/Sewer Trust Fund". Christiane assured the Commission that the name would clearly show that the Commission is the agent to expend from these designated trust funds for water and sewer.

Trust Fund Transfer to the Capital Reserve: Christiane provided hand outs to the Commission regarding this issue, and provided a detailed explanation of the process. She provided an explanation of an additional \$10,000 could be added to the capital reserve for water. As for sewer, it will be adding \$20,000 additional monies to the sewer capital reserve. The vote on this matter by the Commission will take place next month. This has been done with running scenarios for future, not for current action.

b. Asset Inventory: What's the Plan?

Chair Houle referred the explanation to Christiane, who has the sense of the larger picture. She provided the Commission with a history of how this issue was dealt with by the prior auditor. The new auditors took a dim view of this and removed the figures from the audit, which dropped the Town's net worth. What has to occur is an accurate evaluation of the Town's assets. Christiane provided an article to the Commission on this subject, and outlined her plan for an asset inventory as approved by the auditors. She will provide a report entitled Fixed Assets and Depreciation. She will submit to Select Board for their approval in FY 19 (End of June). The next step is the actual asset inventory, which includes pulling all of the inventory of the Town of the assets into a cohesive format. The next step is developing an Excel file to enter the relevant data. The next step is defining or

identifying the missing data. After the inventory is done, we will have a number to provide to the auditors. Once we have that information, we could look to software to capture all of this information. At that point we would be in a good position. We would have the policy in place. By 2021, we would have an asset management plan in place.

The Commission proceeded to discuss this issue, with Dick White providing some suggestions on how to approach the issue with respect to the types of helpful software. Chair Houle stressed the need to have the goal in mind of what we need and how the software as a whole could assist the Town in achieving its goals. Christiane pointed out the importance of securing the best possible software to meet the accounting needs of the Town, as well as other identified needs.

8. Any other business for the Board?

Chair Houle addressed the reappointments to the Commission. John Ireland and Richard White agreed to serve additional three year terms.

He also asked the Commission members if they were interested in finding out what the entries in the water sewer report actually mean. Chair Houle referred to a schedule of Town property listed in the Town Report, and pointed out some omissions.

9. Adjourn.

There being no further business to come before the Commission, John Ireland made a Motion to Adjourn, which was seconded by Dick White.

Meeting adjourned at 5:20 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Bette Jane Riordan
Secretary