



Chair/James Gmeiner
Vice Chair/Thomas Orcutt
Clerk/Thomas Hartnett

Town of Groton Sewer Department
173 Main Street
Groton MA 01450

Date: February 1, 2017

Time: 2:00 P.M.

Location: Town Hall/First Floor

Members Present: Chair/James Gmeiner
Vice Chair/Thomas Orcutt
Clerk/Thomas Hartnett

Others Present: Ann Livezey /Water & Sewer Assistant and Andrew Cann

The Meeting was call to order by James Gmeiner at 2:03 PM

#305 Main Street Abatement Request

Mr. Cann came before the BOSC requesting an abatement for his property located at #305 Main Street. The reason being is he stated that after his water meter was changed out, he received an excessive bill of \$2,450.30. Mr. Cann stated that when he moved into the property he did some landscaping and added some plants. He said at that time he received an escalated bill and he paid it and learned his lesson, so he is unsure on how his bill could be so high at this time. Mr. Hartnett asked if Mr. Cann had two separate meters on the property and Mr. Cann replied No. Mr. Orcutt mentioned he suggested this to Mr. Cann in the past and he refused. Mr. Gmeiner explained to Mr. Cann that having two meters would allow the inside flow to be calculated and the outside flow to be calculated separately. After reviewing the account Mr. Gmeiner noticed there had been five quarters of estimated bills and usually when this happens the customer is notified and will call and have an actual read done. Mr. Gmeiner asked if it was possible he had a leaky toilet and Mr. Cann replied No. Mr. Orcutt feels the water usage was used for irrigation, due to the condition of the lawn and shrubs on the property. Mr. Cann stated he did hydro seed the property last summer and shared the expense with his neighbor, but said he did not water it and said even if I did the sewer charges should not be that high. Mr. Gmeiner mentioned in a situation like this we recommend a 2nd meter be installed for outside flow and we will also review the prior usage. Mr. Hartnett asked how he could have used so much water in one ¼? Mr. Cann replied he was unsure

because he has not watered his lawn or his shrubs and does not even use sprinklers on the property. Mr. Gmeiner asked if the account was current and Mr. Orcutt replied yes, other than the catch up from the estimates. Mr. Gmeiner said at this time he will give Mr. Cann the benefit of the doubt and abate 199 gallons at this time for a sum of \$1,526.30. Mr. Orcutt thinks the abatement should be for the full amount of 214 units as requested on the abatement by Mr. Cann.

Mr. Gmeiner made a motion to abate (214 units) for the sum of \$1,641.38 for Andrew Cann of 305 Main Street, Mr. Hartnett seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

#212 North Street-Sewer Connection

Earl Wilbert of 44 Jersey Street, Pepperell MA is inquiring about connecting to the town sewer. Mr. Hartnett believes that the current house will be torn down and the land will be sold. Janet Cramb has been hired as the realtor and she suggested that the property be connected to town sewer. Mr. Orcutt spoke to Joe Jordan and he mentioned this is a high pressure dedicated line from the GDHS but, there is a manhole close by that he could connect too. The property currently has water coming from Pepperell. Mr. Gmeiner feels there may be boundary issues and that the line that runs through is dedicated to the GDHS and we did not pay for this line, the GDHS did. He also mentioned that when the GDHS voted, they voted that this would be a dedicated line for the pressure line there are physical limitations on it and he would be against it. Mr. Hartnett asked about the possibility of approaching Pepperell on it. Mr. Orcutt replied yes and Mr. Gmeiner said a municipal agreement would be needed.

Mr. Hartnett asked that a letter be drafted to Mr. Wilbert explaining the BOSC decision on this matter.

Town Charter Changes – Discussion

Mr. Orcutt recused himself from this discussion and feels that there may be a financial gain, so he should stay out of it and he also mentioned he would not be attending the evening meeting to discuss the Town Charter Changes. Mr. Gmeiner stated he read over the charter regarding the Sewer Commission and the Enterprise funds regarding that “No Municipal Employee Shall Serve on an Elected Board”. Mr. Gmeiner mentioned that since he has been on the BOSC there has been several who have served on two boards and feels that the voters should decide. Mr. Gmeiner feels that having a Municipal Employee on the board is beneficial especially for the knowledge they provide. Mr. Gmeiner stated he would be attending the meeting and he will address the issue. Mr. Hartnett feels that when this goes to the Town Meeting vote this will only be one little piece and they will not have all the necessary information.

Mr. Gmeiner made a motion to oppose the town charter proposal to exclude town employees from serving on an Enterprise Fund, Mr. Hartnett seconded and the motion carried. Mr. Orcutt was excused from the vote.

FY 18 Budget

Mr. Gmeiner mentioned the BOSC was asked to send a letter to the Selectman to pursue the 50/50 split of FY18 and moving forward to cover the Pepperell Sewer Upgrade Assessment that began in 2007 and ends in FY25. Josh Degen would like an official letter stating the town is to pick up the 2017 plant upgrade thru FY25. Mr. Orcutt suggested we honor the original vote to FY18 and moving forward then have the town cover, due to the new debt we will be obtaining with the new Pepperell Plant upgrade.

Mr. Gmeiner made a motion to reconsider and earlier vote taken by the BOSC regarding the assessment from the Town of Pepperell for 2006 waste water treatment plant upgrade. The previous action by the BOSC was to assume the entire assessment from Pepperell, the BOSC has reversed their decision and is only prepared to pay ½ of this special debt assessment for FY18 and the other ½ being the responsibility of the Town of Groton. Mr. Hartnett seconded and the vote carried 2-1 with Mr. Orcutt opposing

Mr. Gmeiner also made a motion that the Town honor its original commitment in the regard to the 2006 plant upgrade by paying ½ of the debt assessment from Pepperell for the 2006 plant upgrade for the balance of the debt assessment thru 2025, Mr. Hartnett seconded and Mr. Orcutt as well and the motion carried unanimously.

Pepperell IMA & Agreement

Mr. Orcutt feels that the IMA is heading in a positive direction and he will be meeting with Mr. Rafferty again on Friday, February 3rd. He mentioned Mr. Rafferty would be putting together our suggestions of what we want on an annual basis, also that moving forward we would like to pay for services as we go. Mr. Gmeiner expressed concern regarding the labor cost and it not being a flat cost. He also asked if the labor rate included the debt factor and it should not because we pay debt separate. Our contribution to overhead should be on straight time and not debt factor. We should be paying for treatment at the plant and we should not be paying for debt. Mr. Orcutt mentioned sewer rates should be less debt or deduction for debt because it should be in there and Pepperell rates should be paying for debt. Mr. Orcutt assured the BOSC that rates would be discussed and also the rates moving forward.

Four Corners Sewer Update:

Mr. Orcutt mentioned Ayer is currently looking for connection fee's and that this was not part of the MOU. Mr. Hartnett asked if it was in the original agreement, Mr. Orcutt replied that is was not mentioned in the MOU and it is just now popping up.

Ayer IMA:

No new information at this time

Other Business, Bills, Minutes etc. :

Next Meeting – The next meeting of the BOSC will be held on the February 15, 2017 @ 2:00 PM.

BILLS SIGNED

One set of Bills were signed at this meeting for FY-17, Expense Warrants (EW-017).

MINUTES: January 18th, 2017 minutes were approved.

ADJOURN – Mr. Hartnett made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 3:45 PM. Mr. Gmeiner seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Ann Livezey, Water & Sewer Assistant

APPROVED:
