

**GROTON SEWER COMMISSION
MINUTES OF APRIL 6, 2016 MEETING
2:00 PM – TOWN HALL**

MINUTES

Commission Chair James Gmeiner called the meeting of the Sewer Commission to order at 2:05 PM. Also present were Vice Chair, Thomas Orcutt, and Business Manager, April Iannacone. Minutes were taken by Ruth Stevens, Water/Sewer Assistant.

Pressure Transducer addition Discussion

Mr. Orcutt gave a brief update on the Pressure Transducer (see attached) that the BOSC is looking to acquire for Partridgeberry Woods. He reminded the BOSC that the function of the Transducer would be to send a signal in the wet well and let it know when to turn the pump on or off. He said this would reduce unnecessary service call-outs and also reduces the risk of potential flooding. The estimated cost of the Pressure Transducer would be roughly \$5K, maybe slightly higher. Mr. Orcutt made a motion to purchase the Pressure Transducer pending receiving the cut-sheet. Mr. Gmeiner gave his approval with the condition that Bob Rafferty of Environmental Partners give a final review of specs, and seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Discussion of Visual Screening @ Nod Road Pump Station

Mr. Orcutt told the BOSC that Carmen DeFillippo looked into getting pricing for the green mesh screening project in front of the Nod Road Pump Station as was discussed at the last meeting. Mr. Orcutt measured the area and found it to be 40 linear feet. Mr. DeFillippo was then instructed to order screening as follows: One 50 ft. roll x .89/linear foot = \$44.50 + tax + zip ties and 1 hour of labor. Mr. DeFillippo will notify Mr. Orcutt when screening comes in.

69 Champney Street – Capacity Discussion

Mr. Orcutt explained that it has come to the Sewer Department's attention that the bedroom count had changed in 2012, prior to the current owner, John Croteau's purchase of the property at 69 Champney Street. When that bedroom count changed, there was a failure in communication from the Assessor's Office to notify the Sewer Department so they could approve an increase in the amount of sewer capacity from 5 bedrooms to 8 bedrooms and charge the homeowner for the increase. As stated in a previous meeting's minutes dated 10/14/2014, Mr. Croteau had come before the BOSC to add 1 bedroom to what he believed to be an 8 bedroom house to make it 9 total bedrooms. The Sewer Commission approved an additional 1 bedroom, based on Mr. Croteau purchasing more capacity to accommodate 1 additional bedroom. At this time, the Sewer Department is only able to bill the current owner for 1 additional bedroom capacity due to the lack of communication during changes with the previous owner. Mr. Gmeiner responded that since the BOSC is losing capacity charges for the 3 bedrooms that fell through the cracks, he advised sending a memo to the Board of Assessors, reiterating the communication policy with regard to approving increases in bedroom count and the sewer capacity increase and charges associated with it.

Grinder Pump Discussion

Mr. Orcutt shared a letter that had been created in order to notify present and future Grinder Pump Owners of procedures to follow when their pump fails. Mr. Gmeiner made a few recommendations he wanted to see included in the letter, i.e. making the homeowner clearly aware that the life expectancy of the grinder pump will eventually dictate the inevitable failure and the need for maintenance or replacement of it. He also wanted to educate the homeowner on some of the indicators of a failing pump such as flashing lights, alarms sounding, etc. Lastly, he wanted to convey to the homeowner that they are ultimately responsible for taking the steps to dealing with a failing/failed grinder pump. Mr. Orcutt and Ms. Stevens agreed to work on finalizing the letter for the next meeting.

Public Hearing- 122 Old Ayer Road Sewer Extension @ 2:30 PM

The Sewer Commissioners opened the Public Hearing; Mr. Orcutt read the Public Hearing Notice for the Record.

Present from the Public were:

Judy Anderson of 270 Whiley Road

Richard Hassong of 78 Old Ayer Road

Scott Wilson 154 Lowell Road

Gary Shepherd representing Indian Hill Music, Inc. of 122 Old Ayer Road

Laurie Bonavita, Director, Groton Land Use Department

Mr. Gmeiner explained to the meeting that the reason for the Public Hearing is to answer any questions with regard to extending the sewer district to include just that parcel on 122 Old Ayer Road and any other questions they may have pertaining to such. He assured the meeting that research has been done and there is more than adequate capacity available to complete that extension. Mr. Hassong said that he was concerned with the welfare of his septic system, indicating that it was newly installed in 2000, but is now experiencing flooding. He wanted to find out what would be involved in connecting to Sewer on Old Ayer Road, since the issue is now in the forefront. Mr. Gmeiner informed Mr. Hassong that he had a Deed Restriction on his parcel and should his current system fail, he would not be able to upgrade it, but it would become a tight tank that would be required to be pumped out intermittently. He told Mr. Hassong that should Town Sewer ever become available to his property, then his deed restriction would require him to connect within 30 days. He said that the tricky part to all of this is that the proposed Sewer line from Indian Hill Music to Rte. 119, would not be the Town's Sewer Line, but a separate line that would be owned by Indian Hill, and if approved, Mr. Hassong would have to work something out with them in order to connect there. Mr. Gmeiner went on to inform Mr. Hassong that, at this point, the current town meeting article being discussed *cannot be amended* in enough time to appear on the Town Meeting Warrant Article. Mr. Gmeiner said that it is clear that Mr. Hassong has a valid issue and he would find out if the Article *could be amended on the floor* of Town Meeting from Mr. Doneski. Mr. Shepherd then had a chance to speak on behalf of Indian Hill

Music. He told the meeting that Indian Hill has invested a lot of time and money into determining what their options are with regard to their decision of whether or not to hook into Sewer. He wanted to clarify, that it is Indian Hill's intention to be "good neighbors" but should it become feasible for Mr. Hassong to connect to sewer through their separate sewer line, Indian Hill does not want to be held liable due to parts failures or issues that could arise to due to what should be the homeowner at 78 Old Ayer Road's responsibility, such as a not solid enough backflow preventer on that line. He suggested that an indemnification policy be a part of the potential arrangement to avoid any liability for them. The question arose of whether or not the vent on the Ayer Common could be used in this case. Mr. Orcutt thought that they would need a separate vent for their own line. Mr. Gmeiner said he would consult with Town Counsel on the easement issue as he remembered that there is a statute that does allow easements for utilities. Mr. Shepherd stated that Indian Hill is still looking into alternatives and has not yet come to a final decision but is hoping to have their decision before the withdrawal process. Mr. Gmeiner made a motion to continue the public hearing to 4/20/2016 @ 2:30 PM. Mr. Orcutt seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

Other Business - Mr. Gmeiner recalled that at the last Public Hearing on Rates, the BOSC had not taken a vote regarding PPA (sewer connection costs). He then made a motion to keep PPA at \$6500, Mr. Orcutt seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

Next Meeting – The next meeting of the BOSC will be held on **Wednesday, April 20, 2016 @ 2:00 PM** with a continuation of the **PUBLIC HEARING @ 2:30 PM** regarding the 122 Old Ayer Road Sewer Extension.

BILLS SIGNED

One set of Bills were signed at this meeting for FY-16, Expense Warrants (EW-21).

MINUTES of March 23, 2016 – Mr. Gmeiner made a motion to approve the previous meeting's minutes Mr. Orcutt seconded, and the vote carried unanimously.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Ruth Stevens,
Water & Sewer Assistant