

**GROTON SEWER COMMISSION  
MINUTES OF OCTOBER 28, 2015 MEETING  
2:30 PM – TOWN HALL**

**MINUTES**

Commission Chair James Gmeiner called the meeting of the Sewer Commission to order at 2:30 PM. Also present was Vice Chair, Thomas Orcutt, and Clerk, Thomas Hartnett. Minutes were taken by Ruth Stevens, Water/Sewer Assistant.

**Henry Albro/F.R. Mahoney**

Mr. Gmeiner opened the meeting at 2:35 PM. The meeting began with Mr. Gmeiner giving some background/history to Mr. Albro of F.R. Mahoney for Groton's past practices with regard to emergency grinder pump failures. In the past Groton had a few spare cores on hand that were used interchangeably to provide failed grinder pump owners with a temporary fix until other arrangements could be made. There are now no more grinder pumps and the new Pepperell Superintendent no longer wants his technicians to enter onto private property to assist our customers. He told Mr. Albro that the BOSC is currently looking into alternatives and wants to know their options. Mr. Henry Albro gave a presentation to the BOSC. He handed out a brochure to each BOSC member. Mr. Albro explained that F.R. Mahoney provides service contracts with 6 people on the road and 9 Service Technicians (in Southborough, MA). They have 24/7 call-in service available from 7:30am to 4:00 pm. (508)765-0051. He explained the process where a homeowner calls up and the service worker triages the call and schedules someone to come out. Conditions, address, method of payment are all worked out ahead of time. Should the emergency happen during the night, they can give the homeowner instructions to silence the alarm, conserve water and then F.R. Mahoney will send someone out to service them in the morning. If it is overflowing, they will try to get there sooner. Mr. Gmeiner said that Groton residents were used to having a quicker response time in the past when they had spare cores. Mr. Albro said that the rates can be formalized and to check out their web page. Mr. Orcutt said he thought a global policy for the Town of Groton instead of individually would be the way to go. He said it was important that the customer has a resource to rely on. Mr. Albro gave other scenarios about what other towns have done. He also stated that F.R. Mahoney can give "better pricing" for municipalities. Mr. Albro told the board that he would be amenable to any route they want to follow. Mr. Gmeiner said that for the very short term, he would like to give F.R. Mahoney's number to Groton Dispatch to offer to residents who might have failing grinder pumps. Mr. Gmeiner told the BOSC that we need to think things over, and sort out what we are going to do. He mentioned the loaner pump idea and taking the pump to try and fix it. He asked Mr. Albro if cores are fairly interchangeable. Mr. Albro responded that new cores are "backwards compatible" to the pumps. Mr. Gmeiner said compiling a Helpful Hints list for residents might be a good thing in order to educate them about the things that can affect their grinder pumps. He requested that the BOSC read over the information on the brochure and to plan to sort it all out at the next meeting and let Mr. Albro know what they decide to do.

### **Abatement Request 25A Blacksmith Row**

The homeowners (Mr. & Mrs. Brogan) were not present at the BOSC meeting. Mr. Gmeiner explained that the Water Commission had denied an abatement on the Water side of the bill and that The Brogan's were now appealing to the BOSC for an abatement on the Sewer side of the bill. He said there might have been a leaky toilet in the construction phase, and Mr. Orcutt added that the toilet could have been stuck open, but the contractor said that problem had been rectified a while ago. Mrs. Brogan was advised to use tablets in all of her toilets, but only used it in the toilet that had previously had a problem. Mr. Hartnett questioned how many people were residing in the house. Mr. Orcutt responded that there were 2 people. It was also mentioned that she had recently moved here from upstate New York and was not used to our tier system. Mr. Gmeiner proposed that the BOSC wait for the next bill to come out and see what the usage is and go from there at the next meeting. Mr. Hartnett seconded and the decision carried unanimously.

### **Discussion of Pepperell and Sewer Agreement**

Mr. Orcutt cited that Page 4, Sections 1-4 of the proposed Pepperell and Sewer Agreement regarding Operational Services was the area to hone in on regarding what might need updating. Mr. Hartnett thought the dollar value also needed to be updated on area 1-4.1. Mr. Orcutt mentioned that Mediation and/or Arbitration could be necessary in working out finalizing the agreement. Mr. Gmeiner asked Ms. Stevens to find a copy of the current agreement to be looked over. Mr. Orcutt suggested maybe considering a 2 year agreement going forward. Mr. Gmeiner proposed that once they determine their course of action on the grinder pump issue, they will be better able move forward with determining the specifics of the Agreement between Groton and Pepperell. He asked that the discussion be continued at the next meeting after reviewing current agreement.

**Next Meeting** – The next meeting of the BOSC will be held on **Wednesday, November 4, 2015 @ 2:30 PM.**

### **BILLS SIGNED**

One Set of Bills and/or Invoices were signed for payment at this meeting for FY-16, EW10.

**MINUTES of October 7th, 2015** – Mr. Hartnett made a motion to approve the previous meeting's minutes, Mr. Gmeiner seconded, Mr. Orcutt abstained and the vote carried by majority.

**ADJOURN** – Mr. Gmeiner made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 3:40 PM. Mr. Hartnett seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Ruth Stevens, Water & Sewer Assistant