

**GROTON SEWER COMMISSION
MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 18, 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 were Vice Chair, Thomas Orcutt, Clerk, Thomas Hartnett and Business Manager, April Iannacone. Minutes were taken by Ruth Stevens, Water/Sewer Assistant.

Discussion of Sewer Capacity – 128 Main Street

Rob Oliva from Ross & Associates and John Amaral from Omni Properties were present at the meeting. Mr. Gmeiner asked them what was going on in terms of the proposed Groton Inn construction. Mr. Oliva showed the BOSC a blue print of the proposed site and noted some changes from the originally proposed site plan. He told the BOSC that the biggest change from the original plan was that a new wing was added to the left side of the Inn. This would allow for 60 Guest Rooms and a Function Space inside the main inn building as opposed to the formerly proposed residential out-buildings. The former “Tavern” proposal was taken out of the main building and moved to a separate Restaurant building that would house 100 seats. He also stated that parking and layout would remain the same. Mr. Orcutt asked if there would need to be an on-site sewer manhole. Mr. Oliva said that they were not proposing a street cut to connect sewer. Mr. Gmeiner asked that Ross & Associates send a copy of the proposed sewer connection to Pepperell in order to make sure they are in compliance with the sewer regulations and to please give the BOSC a call should Pepperell not respond. With regard to Capacity, Mr. Gmeiner told the meeting that the BOSC is calculating the Inn’s need for capacity @ 10,100 gpd (6600 for the Inn and 3500 for the Restaurant). 5365 gpd is the additional capacity need for the property and the rate is \$6.58/per gallon, making their fee to cost \$35,301.70. Mr. Gmeiner also stated that an application fee of \$150 and an inspection fee of \$125 would also be required. Mr. Orcutt informed Mr. Oliva that the BOSC sends out a bill for Sewer Capacity at the same time that Ross & Associates applies for a Building Permit. Mr. Gmeiner asked Ms. Iannacone to run an estimate as to what the amount will be and send a letter to Ross & Assoc. and Omni Properties as to what the official capacity # is. Mr. Oliva asked the BOSC when Ross & Associates should send their plans to Pepperell. Mr. Gmeiner told him as soon as their final design has been approved.

Grinder Pump Service Contract

There was no new information regarding this topic, therefore, it was moved to the next meeting.

Discussion of Pepperell and Sewer Agreement

The BOSC briefly discussed other follow-up relative to the fee structure and charges that are being billed from Pepperell to Groton. Mr. Gmeiner questioned the BOSC if they thought it was worth looking into how Pepperell allocated the cost for treatment and how it is apportioned and calculated. Mr. Orcutt responded that he thought it was a good time to look into it, as Pepperell is considering a proposed upgrade in the near future. He suggested having Bob Rafferty involved as

well. Mr. Gmeiner agreed. Mr. Orcutt mentioned that he reached to Ken Kalinowski of Pepperell regarding the cost for the upgrade and was told it could potentially be \$1,250,000.00. A discussion of low interest rates was raised and that investigating it further would be prudent.

FY-17 Budget

Ms. Iannacone presented the FY-17 Sewer Budget (see attached charts) noting a 1.27% increase over the previous year's budget. She attributed the bulk of the increase due to the fact that the area of wages, salaries and intergovernmental had gone up. The reason for the intergovernmental increase is because Sewer is now paying part of her salary directly, instead of reimbursing Water for it. This means all of the benefits are being split now, as well, through Intergovernmental. Mr. Orcutt questioned that if the Sewer Budget is being increased, how come the Water Budget didn't go down? She responded that the calculations are based on salary as of 3 years ago, so it will be a while before water goes down. Mr. Orcutt then asked why Treatment was going down. Ms. Iannacone explained that a few years ago, Treatment was bumped up because of the change from Quarterly to Monthly billing from Pepperell and the unknown impact it would have on the budget. She added that now, it has been pulled back down and shifted the operations and maintenance costs which have been going up. Mr. Gmeiner asked what was categorized under System Maintenance and what does it include. Ms. Iannacone responded that it includes inspections (4 x a week), maintenance, supplies, dig-safes, any weekly visits, etc. She explained that in the past, manhole maintenance was separated from the Pepperell Bill in Quickbooks and by not categorizing it, it was slipped into Treatment & Maintenance. That line item for manhole maintenance was also decreased to allow the increase in Operation & Maintenance. Mr. Gmeiner asked what else on the expense side had changed. Ms. Iannacone responded that there was a line-item increase on water meter repairs due to the fact that the cost of all meter charges are now going to be split between Water and Sewer instead of tracking every meter change. She also mentioned a decrease in Legal Expenses, dropping from \$4,000 to \$3,000. Mr. Gmeiner noted that the GDRHS Treatment Bill went up and asked that Ms. Iannacone investigate as to why Sewer is budgeting less than other years. Ms. Iannacone then told the BOSC that she projected \$536K on income for rates, due to recent rate decreases settling out and was fairly certain that it is where it will stay. Ms. Iannacone also noted that she had been estimating the Groton Inn capacity to be paid in FY17, but since it is now going to be paid in FY16, she reduced the capacity income and increased a transfer from E&D for that purpose (from \$23,423 to \$52,226).

Mr. Orcutt made a motion to approve the FY17 Sewer Budget and submit it to Mr. Haddad, Town Manager @ \$671,559.00, Mr. Hartnett seconded and the vote carried unanimously.

Other Business

Mr. Orcutt made mention of the fact that in the area behind Cumberland Farms and Dunkin Donuts at 127 Main Street, they were called upon regarding a problem last Friday. Apparently the caps to cleanout pipes were broken and thus have allowed "stuff" to go in them creating problems. He told the BOSC that Pepperell was called and responded accordingly. A plumber was also called in and Rada snaked the line and the problem was fixed. Mr. Gmeiner recommended Mr. Orcutt draft a letter to the Owners, (Landmark Realty Trust) and tell them they need to fix caps. Mr. Orcutt

added that they also need Protective Bollards to prevent them breaking in the future. The BOSC agreed that the deadline would be by November 30, 2015. Mr. Gmeiner added to let them know, that if they don't follow through, they will be required to install a flow meter and will be charged for whatever goes down the pipes.

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

BILLS SIGNED

A second set of Bills and/or Invoices were signed for payment at this meeting for FY-16, EW11.

MINUTES of November 4, 2015 – Mr. Hartnett made a motion to approve the previous meeting's minutes, Mr. Orcutt seconded, and the vote carried unanimously

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

Respectfully submitted,

Ruth Stevens, Water & Sewer Assistant