

Groton Sewer Commission
Regular Meeting
Of the
Board of Sewer Commissioners
Tuesday, June 7th, 2021
2nd Floor Meeting Room

Minutes

Present are Town Manager Mark Haddad, Assistant to the Town Manager Dawn Dunbar, Superintendent Tom Orcutt, Chairman Jim Gmeiner, Vice Chairman Michael Bouchard, John Amaral of Omni Properties, and Water & Sewer Business Manager Lauren Crory.

Mr. Gmeiner called the meeting to order at 11:05am.

Extension of the Sewer District

Mr. Amaral said that an on-site sewer treatment facility at the NEBS building is cost prohibitive. There were 800 employees when connected to sewer originally so possibly 20,000 gallons per day assigned to property and his project would need 75,000 gallons / day. Mr. Haddad added that the septic and leeching failed and there is no proper disposal area. Mr. Amaral said building a sewer system for his project could cost \$2-\$3 million. Mr. Orcutt said that additional sewer capacity would need to be purchased from Pepperell. Mr. Haddad asked if the Nod Station Pump Station could handle more capacity and Mr. Gmeiner said it cannot. Mr. Gmeiner added that if we purchase more capacity, our capital cost share will go up. Mr. Haddad agreed but said that more usage will help the rate income so could offset the increase. Mr. Amaral understands that but said the Sewer Commission can't penalize this one new project for putting us over the 25% cost share. Many projects would have led up to that point.

Mrs. Crory said customers are currently charges a \$15 Capital Charge to help pay for the Treatment Plant Expansion and Upgrades. Mr. Orcutt said that may need to be increased to \$20 per quarter. Mr. Gmeiner said 300 residences at \$6000 per Sewer Connection would be \$1.8 Million.

Mr. Haddad said that if the Nod Road Pump Station needs to be updated – the Town has Covid-19 money that could be used to help, since it would lead to economic development. Mr. Gmeiner said the Board would not expect Mr. Amaral to pay for all system updates as well as the connection fees and we can talk about this. Mr. Haddad wants to know how much funding would be needing for the Pump Station upgrade and Mr. Gmeiner said about \$20,000 would be needed for Environmental Partners to start the plan.

Mr. Amaral said the big picture is that he would want to find a fair dollar amount that this project would pay.

Mr. Orcutt noted that Indian Hill has a storage tank and will be pumping it off peak hours

Mr. Gmeiner asked if this would be a 40B project and Mr. Amaral said that would be a last option. He asked if Pepperell has extra capacity and Mr. Orcutt said they do. Mr. Gmeiner added that NEBS has only used a small portion of their allotted capacity over the past ten years (approximately (2300 gallons/day). Mr. Gmeiner believes they paid for up to 10,000 gallons/day but will check. Mr. Amaral just wants an understanding that the Sewer Commission and Town will work with him on the project costs.

Mr. Haddad asked the Sewer Commission to request to purchase additional capacity from Pepperell. He will plan to put \$500K into the budget for the Nod Rd pump station (+\$20,000 for Bob Rafferty to create plans). He will need to get this approved by the Finance Committee. He added that this will help rate payers and tax payers if this project goes through. Mr. Amaral added that the project would result in more taxes than Groton Inn and Forge & Vine Restaurant. Mr. Gmeiner will reach out to Pepperell to find out what is going on.

Mr. Gmeiner asked for the project timeframe and Mr. Amaral estimated 9 months of permitting, 4 months for construction drawings, and tying in 12-18 months. Mr. Gmeiner said it may take the Sewer Commission 12 months to get everything upgraded and connected.

Mr. Gmeiner said we have 275,000 gallons/day authorized to Pepperell and we may be using 220,000 gallons/day right now.

Mr. Amaral asked if the Sewer Commission will meet with Town then come back to them to.

Mr. Haddad asked if the Sewer Commission can try to purchase more capacity. If so, he will try to will help with infrastructure and then the Commission can talk to the developer about the connection fee.

Mr. Gmeiner added that we may need state approval for more capacity and Mr. Orcutt said yes we may need Inter Basin Transfer approval.

Mr. Haddad made a motion to adjourn at 11:55am

Respectfully Submitted,

Lauren Crory

Business Manager