

Groton Water Commission
Regular Meeting of the Board of Water Commissioners
Tuesday, February 09, 2016
Groton Town Hall

Minutes

Present are BOWC's Chair David Crocker, Vice Chair James Gmeiner, Member John McCaffrey, Water Superintendent Thomas Orcutt and Business Manager April Iannacone.

Mr. Crocker called the regular BOWC meeting to order at 7:30 pm.

Boathouse Rd. Water Main Extension – Mike Rosa:

Mr. Orcutt informed the Commissioners that Mr. Mike Rosa had approached him regarding a parcel he owns on Boathouse Rd. He is looking to rebuild the deteriorating house and has received Zoning Board approval, but he has Board of Health (BOH) issues with the well and septic due to various property restrictions. The BOH is requiring that Mr. Rosa connect the property to town water in order to rebuild. Mr. Orcutt stated that everyone on Boathouse Rd. has well/septic Title 5 issues, but not everybody on the street wants town water. He reminded the Commissioners that Mr. Brian Barbieri at 49 Boathouse and Ms. Ann Cole at 69 Boathouse (across the street from Mr. Rosa), were both also looking for water at this time. Mr. Orcutt stated that Mr. Rosa is looking to have an article on the Town Meeting Warrant to have betterments issued to all property owners and bring the water all the way down Boathouse Rd. Mr. McCaffrey asked Mr. Orcutt if he knows how many people were opposed to the project and connecting, and how many were in favor of it. Mr. Orcutt replied that in 2009 when the issue was brought forth the majority of the street did not want the town water service. Mr. Orcutt stated that it was up to the Board whether they wanted to go to Town Meeting to extend the length of Boathouse Rd and assess betterments. The other option he recommended would be to have one of the property owners looking for water start the process with a license agreement to recoup costs, and then the Commission could possibly help towards some of the materials costs. With this agreement the Commissioners could set a longer term for the homeowner making the arrangement and doing the work in order to recoup some cost, but the others on the street would not be forced to connect and pay betterments. Mr. McCaffrey then asked what the cost difference was if the water line was extended to just this property compared to extending the entire length of the street. Mr. Orcutt replied that the cost to go to this property in question was approximately \$60,000 based on Ms. Cole's estimate a few months back. However if the Board were to issue betterments and go the whole length of the road it would have to be a public bid process with higher costs, so with the length difference and those factors it would be in excess of \$155,000. Mr. Gmeiner stated that if the Commissioners went through with a betterment process, they would also have to determine assessments for things like vacant lots on the street that could then become buildable if town water were available, which could mean that some homeowners could be assessed more than 1 betterment if they own other land. Mr. Gmeiner stated that due to past clients and interactions with homeowners on Boathouse Rd., he would have to recuse himself from any discussions on the subject as well as any votes. If the other 2 Commissioners went forward with a betterment situation, he could answer general questions with regard to the betterment process having gone through the process, but he could not get into any specifics on anything. Mr. Gmeiner also stated that in the past when the Sewer Commission had issued betterments for a project, it was only done when the extreme majority was in favor of the project. Mr. Crocker and Mr. McCaffrey both agreed that they would prefer to allow Mr. Rosa, or

one of the other 2 homeowners looking for water, the option to extend the water with a license agreement and a possible contribution towards materials.

Mr. McCaffrey made a motion to accept Mr. Orcutt's proposal to license the water main extension to one homeowner, and for him to negotiate the terms of the agreement for amount of repayment and term limit for recouping costs. Mr. Crocker seconded and the motion carried with 2 in favor and 1 recusing (Mr. Gmeiner).

Spring 2016 Town Meeting – Additional Articles:

Mr. Orcutt informed the Commissioners that at this time he does not see any need for any other articles for Town Meeting other than the 1 financial article that is always done in the spring.

Meter Reading Equipment – Fixed Network:

Mr. Orcutt informed the Commissioners that he and Ms. Iannacone had met with each of the 3 vendors again in order to get more specific questions answered with regard to each of their systems and costs. Mr. Orcutt and Ms. Iannacone gave a brief update on all costs, pros and cons that they saw associated with each vendor and each option. A spreadsheet was handed out to the Commissioners for their review. Mr. Orcutt stated that since the Water Department was awarded the State grant, this would be a good time to continue moving forward, going out to bid and making a decision to start the process. Mr. Orcutt stated that with the grant the water department had to provide a 20% match in expenses and services toward the project. If the department goes forward with the new metering system to improve operations and reporting in the department, the approximately \$10,000 towards the purchase of the system becomes about half of our match in expense and services. Mr. Gmeiner asked if the department was ready to go out to bid and how Mr. Orcutt expected to move forward at this point. Mr. Orcutt replied that he would begin writing out specs for the system bid. He expected to write things in a way that would allow each vendor the option to bid on a traditional fixed network, the cellular reading system, or both potentially allowing for 6 responses to the bid. Mr. McCaffrey asked how long costs were going to remain the same once the Commissioners commit to the project. Mr. Orcutt replied that the timeframe for pricing would be part of the specs and bid process in order to ensure that the prices are held until award of the contract and implementation.

Superintendent Update:

Mr. Orcutt led a brief discussion of the topics on his Superintendents Report to update them on the status of the office and well operations, upcoming projects and reports, and answered any questions they had.

Other Business:

Ms. Iannacone gave the Commissioners a brief update on the financials up through the end of January.

Mr. Orcutt informed the Commissioners he had drafted an informational letter with regard to lead and copper information that they had requested. The Commissioners reviewed the letter and after a few minor edits requested that the letter be added to the department website.

Minutes:

Mr. Gmeiner made a motion to approve the January 26th meeting minutes as drafted. Mr. McCaffrey seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Bills:

The bills presented to the Board were all signed and submitted for payment.

Mr. Gmeiner made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:41 p.m. Mr. McCaffrey seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

April Iannacone
Business Manager

James Gmeiner _____ Date _____

David Crocker _____ Date _____

John McCaffrey _____ Date _____