

Groton Water Commission

Regular Meeting of the Board of Water Commissioners

Tuesday, April 05, 2016

2nd Floor Lunch Room – Town Hall

Minutes

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

Mr. Gmeiner called the regular BOWC meeting to order at 7:33 pm.

Meter Reading Equipment

Mr. Orcutt informed the Commissioners that the department had received 3 bids on the Advanced Metering Infrastructure System, and the current vendor for our radio transponders (BluTower) had not submitted a bid. Mr. Orcutt stated that the lowest bid had come in as expected for Stiles Co. for their cellular radio option. At this time Mr. Orcutt was recommending the Commissioners vote to accept the bid from Stiles Co. and move forward with the process. Mr. Orcutt stated that he would also likely expend approximately \$5,000 on meters and radios in addition to the startup costs. His plan was to put complete new Badger meters with the tops and radios in new construction and renovations, and order additional radios to splice to our current Hersey tops for houses already in the system and requiring just a radio change.

Mr. McCaffrey made a motion to award the bid for the Advanced Metering System to Stiles Co. Mr. Crocker seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. McCaffrey asked if the department planned to announce the change. Mr. Orcutt replied that Mr. Brackett and Mr. Knox had suggested that the department work with Groton School and Lawrence Academy where we could gain access relatively easily to begin making the changes. Then we would work towards more of the businesses, some of the known customers and areas where we know we have failing radios and access. Mr. Orcutt stated that from there we would continue to work from our failed billing calls to make changes. Mr. McCaffrey asked how long Mr. Orcutt expected the conversion to take place. Mr. Orcutt replied that it would likely be 3-5 years. Ms. Iannacone stated that she could add an announcement on the webpage as well.

Baddacook Pond Update & Appropriation

Mr. McCaffrey gave Mr. Crocker a brief update on the discussion that had taken place at the Commissioners March 22nd meeting that he had missed. Mr. McCaffrey stated that he and the Great Ponds Advisory Committee (GPAC) was working with a vendor to do a trial removal process to determine the extent of the weed problem, and determine how long and how much a full pond removal operation would be. They believe that working with this vendor, there will be a significant cost reduction for the original GPAC quote for mechanical harvesting of \$440,000. This trial process will cost \$20,000 which will consist of 10 days and 80 hours' worth of removal. Mr. Crocker asked if this process had to go through the procurement and quote process before being approved to this vendor. Mr. Orcutt replied that Mr. Haddad, as Chief Procurement Officer for the Town, had determined that this was a sole source operation and that the quote process was not needed. Mr. McCaffrey was requesting from the other Commissioners a commitment and vote to help with some of the cost, as well as for them to attend the Selectmen's meeting next Monday night to help support GPAC's request for funding from the Town. Mr. Gmeiner stated that he was hesitant to fund the operation because as much as the pond is in a state of distress, it was not a detriment to the rate payers or the water supply. However he did believe that if the Commissioners were going to support rate payer funding for the study, the benefit to the rate payers would be that the study

would show that there was an alternative way to fix the weed problem without chemicals. Mr. McCaffrey asked how much the Commissioners would be willing to fund. Mr. Orcutt stated that in a discussion with Mr. Haddad, he was looking to see the Water Commission would come up with 20% or \$4,000 toward the project and then he would come up with the other \$16,000 from the Town budget. Mr. McCaffrey requested the other Commissioners consider opting to fund possibly \$6,000 instead of the \$4,000. After some discussion, Mr. Crocker and Mr. Gmeiner both determined that they were more comfortable with the \$4,000 request.

Mr. Gmeiner made a motion to authorize the expense of \$4,000 for Aquatic Vision for the actual removal of weeds as long as the Notice of Intent and work get approved. Mr. Crocker seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Other Business

Seasonal Water Main Flushing

Mr. Orcutt informed the Commissioners that the Spring water main flushing program would begin on April 13th and he expected it to be completed by the 29th.

Minutes:

There were no minutes approved at this meeting.

Bills:

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

Mr. Crocker made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:05 p.m. Mr. McCaffrey seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

April Iannacone
Business Manager
Water and Sewer Departments

James Gmeiner _____ Date _____

David Crocker _____ Date _____

John McCaffrey _____ Date _____