

**GROTON SEWER COMMISSION
MINUTES OF AUGUST 3, 2016 MEETING
2:30 PM – TOWN HALL**

MINUTES

Commission Chair James Gmeiner called the meeting of the Sewer Commission to order at 2:35 PM. Also present were Vice Chair, Thomas Orcutt and Thomas Hartnett, Clerk. Minutes were taken by Ruth Stevens, Water/Sewer Assistant.

436 Main Street

Mr. Bob Rafferty from Environmental Partners was present at this meeting. Mr. Gmeiner had offered to have the BOSC's engineer look at the potential site of connecting 436 Main Street (owned by Mr. & Mrs. Thibeau) to Sewer at their last meeting. Mr. Gmeiner referenced a map of the site location and asked Mr. Rafferty to take a look at it, specifically, where to put the manhole. He asked Mr. Rafferty if the asphalt area seemed like a good place to put it. Mr. Rafferty agreed with the spot due to the fact that it's a short drill, there's a gas line, a water line, a drain, a monitoring well and a bentonite dam at the location. Mr. Rafferty asked about a grinder pump and mentioned having a 1 & 1/2" stub with a "Y" off of each check valve gate or check valve. He asked if they were planning on going under the water main. Mr. Gmeiner responded that he was asking for a confirmation that the hatched area looks like a workable spot at this point. Mr. Rafferty said the BOSC could let him know what they want to do once they decide. He said he would do an 8 & 1/2" x 11" drawing. He also said they would need a MassDot and ConCom approval. Mr. Orcutt mentioned getting an LSP due to contamination and paying for those services when the BOSC gets 2 quotes. Mr. Rafferty responded that they would probably need a Notice of Intent (determination of contamination) and the use of hay bales around the drilling site. Mr. Orcutt also mentioned needing access to work in the road (in the right-of-way) and would need to look at drainage up and down. Mr. Rafferty asked if that was Mr. Thibeau's plan. Mr. Orcutt responded that the Thibeau's have hired Stan Dillis Engineering and they will send the report to Mr. Rafferty. Mr. Rafferty said he would talk to an LSP to make sure things are covered. Mr. Hartnett questioned how much this project was going to cost. Mr. Gmeiner said that the Thibeau's are not certain yet. Mr. Orcutt asked if they would also have to pay the PPA. Mr. Rafferty responded that they would not.

Inter-municipal Agreement Discussion

The meeting continued with Mr. Rafferty giving the BOSC an update on the IMA with Pepperell. He said he had converted the original contract to WORD and was working on the Table of Contents. He told the BOSC that he would have more specifics for them at the next meeting. He referred to a new agreement between the Towns of Easton & Mansfield where they had formed a new district and each town is paying a portion. He said he went through the proposed Pepperell Upgrades which would cost \$7.8 M as a baseline and \$3M in additional improvements. Those additional improvements included things like fixing roofs and such. He thought that those kinds of upgrades

would have already been taken care of by now. He added that Pepperell didn't alter a whole lot of things since the last upgrade. Mr. Gmeiner mentioned that their composting program is going by the wayside. Mr. Rafferty made the point that the BOSC has the right to require Pepperell to do "Value Engineering". He explained that anything over \$1M would require management approval and both parties would have to agree and an example of this would be with Tertiary Treatment. He explained that Pepperell might include improvements that would be nice to have but are not necessary for both towns. He also mentioned that by installing equipment such as new technologically configured filters, there could be a cost savings. Mr. Gmeiner agreed and noticed at the last meeting in Pepperell in regard to the press, their engineers strongly indicated that some other methods would be more cost effective. Mr. Orcutt told the BOSC that after talking with Joe Jordan, Pepperell DPW Director, Pepperell would be going before their Town Meeting and asking for Engineering Finances. Mr. Rafferty quickly advised that the Groton BOSC put in "Cost Effective Value Engineering" language before Pepperell's Town Meeting. He mentioned the need for a chart showing fixed vs. variable costs. Should Pepperell want to expand capacity and Groton does not, the chart would show flow cost as an actual percentage. Mr. Orcutt mentioned that the percentage is probably the same. Mr. Hartnett questioned if Pepperell was going to increase capacity. Mr. Rafferty responded no, but they have it available as their average flow is 1/2 M/gal/per day and it is a 1.1M/gal/per day treatment plant. He also suggested making sure their staffing makes sense for Groton because the BOSC should not be paying for staff that is not benefiting them. He also recommended ensuring that Pepperell is having their books audited and that information is being shared with Groton. He said the audit could be done by Wright Pierce. In addition, Mr. Rafferty suggested that an Alternative Cost Analysis should be done to allocate costs to the upgrade. Mr. Hartnett clarified that the top number for Pepperell is \$4M+ on top of other requests. Mr. Orcutt mentioned that the SRF rates are burdensome and perhaps \$2.7M could be carved off the total. Mr. Rafferty questioned the BOSC as to the financing of debt and whether the BOSC has to go along with whatever method Pepperell decides. Mr. Gmeiner responded that the BOSC is kind of stuck. Mr. Orcutt asked if the Groton Town Meeting would need to approve the debt financing. Mr. Gmeiner said no, but the BOSC could offer to pay a portion upfront. Mr. Gmeiner requested that Mr. Rafferty, when he talks with Pepperell, to ask them what they can cut out. Mr. Rafferty said that with regard to Capacity Groton currently pays a surcharge over the 3 month allotment. What is new on Pepperell's permit is an annual average/rolling average, based on a 1 month average with previous 11 months. He said it used to be a 30 day average. The BOSC agreed that they would like same deal as Pepperell has. Mr. Rafferty said he would put all the information together and present it at the next BOSC meeting on 8/17/2016. In addition he would do some sampling for flow which will cost \$2,500 for one day. He will be sampling phosphorous and other chemicals in case of contamination issues that would need to be brought to the forefront. It was suggested that they might want to wait until L.A. and Groton School start their school year. Mr. Gmeiner asked if iron and manganese is going up. Mr. Orcutt responded that he thought they were okay. Mr. Orcutt made a motion to have Mr. Rafferty do water sampling, date to be determined, for \$2500/per day in one day. Mr. Rafferty said he would provide the BOSC with a detailed quote in 2 weeks, along with another bill for the Pepperell I & I Plan. He also said he would give his opinion on an Alternative Analysis and recommended Wright Pierce again.

Next Meeting – The next meeting of the BOSC will be held **Wednesday, August 17, 2016 @ 2:30 PM.**

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Orcutt told the meeting that he received an e-mail from Russ Harris that stated he and his wife have decided not to offer an easement to Mrs. MacInnis of 37 Longely Road as it is not going to work for them.

Mr. Orcutt also let the BOSC know that the resident of 154 Main Street will be filing for a Sewer Abatement due to the fact he has planted a new row of shrubs and trees. He mentioned that he was given an abatement for 28 Units last year and recommended a second meter for non-essential outdoor water use.

Due to the fact that Ms. Stevens will be leaving her position effective 8/4/2016, Mr. Gmeiner wanted to ensure that she will be completing these minutes before she leaves. Ms. Stevens agreed to have them done in time.

BILLS SIGNED

One set of Bills were signed at this meeting for FY-17, Expense Warrants (EW-04).

MINUTES of July 27, 2016 – Mr. Orcutt made a motion to approve the previous meeting's minutes, Mr. Hartnett seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

ADJOURN – Mr. Orcutt made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 3:30 PM. Mr. Gmeiner seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Ruth Stevens,
Water & Sewer Assistant