



Chair/James Gmeiner
Vice Chair/Thomas Orcutt
Clerk/Michael Bouchard

Town of Groton Sewer Department
173 Main Street
Groton MA 01450

Date: March 20, 2019

Time: 2:00 P.M.

Location: Town Hall/Second Floor

Members Present: Chair/James Gmeiner
Vice Chair/Thomas Orcutt

Absent: Clerk/Michael Bouchard

Others Present: Ann Livezey/Water & Sewer Assistant, Lauren Crory/Business Manager and Judy Anderson

The Meeting was called to order by James Gmeiner at 2:00 P.M.

Rate Hearing Usage Fee Regulations and Wastewater System Costs

Mr. Orcutt read the following Public Notice:

In accordance with Chapter 83 of the Massachusetts General Laws, the Town of Groton Sewer Commission will hold a Public Hearing, Wednesday, March 20th, 2019 at 2:00 P.M. at the Town Hall, 173 Main St., Groton, MA to consider amending the "Usage Fee Regulations" and "Regulations for Payment of Wastewater Systems Costs" for the Center Sewer District. *See Chapter 396 Code Part 1 & Part 2.*

Groton Sewer Commission
James L. Gmeiner, Chairman

Mr. Gmeiner stated that the current regulations are antiquated and we need to update because we have gotten rid of some of this stuff. One Section that needs to be deleted is section 396-4 regarding abutting parcels. Mr. Gmeiner also suggested rewording the Groton Center Sewer Area District to the Groton Center Sewer District.

Mr. Gmeiner asked Ms. Crory if she ran some scenarios on the PPA and capacity fees and how it is calculated now in the Groton Center Sewer District versus the Four Corner Sewer Districts. Ms. Crory ran some comparisons and for a 2-bedroom in the Center Sewer District would be \$6,500.00 (PPA) + (220 x \$6.58) = \$7,947.00 and the Four Corners method would be $220/330 = 1$ (minimum) x \$8,000.00 = \$8,000.00. Mr. Orcutt asked if the new regulations would apply to the Four Corners District too and Mr. Gmeiner replied no just the Center Sewer District. Mr. Orcutt said according to the current regulations you can only assess a PPA once per dwelling. Mr. Gmeiner said if you have a connection fee that allows a

charge for change of use and to have additional fees. Mr. Orcutt asked if a property is 9 rooms and 4 Bedrooms and they want to add an additional room and a bedroom then I would assess a fee and a capacity charge. Mr. Orcutt said if you repurpose a house and are not adding a bedroom I would not. Mr. Gmeiner said currently under the MGL 83 once you charge a PPA fee you cannot do it again on the same property. Mr. Orcutt stated when he has a property served by a single water service now, if they want to convert the property to a duplex, they are required to have a 2nd water service installed. He suggested we make this clear in the revised regulations about repurposing a property. Mr. Orcutt suggested maybe the BOSC increase the current capacity fee's that we currently charge \$6.58/gallon.

Mr. Orcutt asked if we have a new customer do, we, charge the PPA of \$6,500.00 plus capacity. Mr. Gmeiner said that would be for residential and we need to talk non residential and suggested we incorporate what we have and eliminate the look back. He also suggested that we add on capacity charges and do not compare to what the current usage is. They would be required to pay for additional capacity times what that fee for increased use will be. Mr. Orcutt stated that application of current capacity needs to be spelled out. Mr. Orcutt asked that the abandoned church that has already paid a PPA and paid capacity charges is now being converted into units, so would they be required to pay a PPA for each new unit? Mr. Gmeiner stated the church is making (4) dwellings but has already been assessed a PPA so we could not charge a PPA. Someone outside the district converting and doing (10) condos would be required to pay (10) x \$6,500. Mr. Orcutt said what if we change PPA to connection charge and increase capacity, since once you keep as PPA you can only assess once. Mr. Gmeiner replied that we can do per change of use. Ms. Anderson asked about the property on Court Street that is connected within the District and now wants to add on, how would you handle that? Mr. Gmeiner said according to the current regulations all they would be required to pay for was the extra capacity. Ms. Anderson then stated that if they subdivide the property, they should be assessed a new fee. Mr. Orcutt suggested we do some research before we make a decision and to continue the Public Hearing.

Mr. Orcutt made a motion to continue the Public Hearing on April 3rd, 2019, Mr. Gmeiner seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Pepperell IMA

No new information

Mandatory Sewer Connection Bylaw

Mr. Gmeiner asked Mr. Orcutt if he had any suggestions on this letter and said we will put off to review at next meeting so we can get the letters out.

Sewer District Expansion Guidelines

Mr. Gmeiner said we will review the guidelines when Mr. Bouchard is present.

GDRHS - Pumps

Mr. Orcutt said they are looking into getting pumps at GDRHS in holes with rails, but they do not think it will be possible, so there may be an increase in the quote.

Other Business:

Mr. Gmeiner said he received an email from Mr. Bouchard stating that Mr. Haddad would like the BOSC's opinion on using Brooks and Derensis as Town Counsel. Mr. Gmeiner said in his opinion he used this Counsel on one occasion and found their advice helpful, he felt the cost was high and did include charges for research. He did not feel that a firm experienced in Municipal Law would have needed to do so much research. In his experience with K&P he feels his questions were answered for at least half as much. Mr. Gmeiner asked that his response be sent in writing to Mr. Haddad.

Mr. Orcutt made a motion to send a memo to the Town Manager about the new Town Counsel, Mr. Gmeiner seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Orcutt said he received an email regarding the Mass DOT Access Permit from EP and it has been submitted and we should have soon. They also submitted a few questions regarding the CCTV work.

1. Is there a location where Inland Waters can offload any solids that they vector out of manholes?
Reply: Mr. Orcutt did tell them there is no place to unload and solids.
2. Is there a location that Inland Waters can stage their vehicles overnight?
Reply: Mr. Orcutt said he would speak with GELD and see if they can use that location.
3. Will water be accessible for inland to fill their jet tank?
Reply: Mr. Orcutt said due to seasonal water main flushing they would have to find another location for water.

Mr. Gmeiner informed the BOSC that he would like a memo drafted to Mr. Moulton stating that we would like to see a Homeowners Association set up and an agreement for Annual Maintenance with a one-year contract (prepaid). A one-year prepaid agreement for the properties and start paying condo fees on that so they will be prepared for the next year. Mr. Orcutt said he would draft a memo to Mr. Moulton.

Next Meeting – April 3rd, 2019

BILLS SIGNED

One set of bills were signed at this meeting for FY19, Expense Warrant (EW-20)

MINUTES:

No minutes were approved at this meeting

ADJOURN –

Mr. Orcutt made a motion to adjourn at 3:25 P.M., Mr. Gmeiner seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Ann Livezey
Water & Sewer Assistant

APPROVED:
