



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

**Town of Groton Sewer Department**

173 Main Street  
Groton MA 01450

**Date:** September 8th, 2021

**Time:** 1:00 P.M.

**Location:** Town Hall/Second Floor

**Members Present:** Chair/James Gmeiner  
Clerk/Michael Bouchard

**Not Present:** Vice Chair/Thomas Orcutt

**Others Present:** Ann Livezey/Water & Sewer Assistant, Mark Haddad/Town Manager, Dawn Dunbar/Executive Assistant and Bob Rafferty/EP

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The Meeting was called to order by James Gmeiner at 1:00 P.M.

**Review Possible Center System Upgrade Study**

Mr. Haddad told the BOSC that there is \$500K set aside for upgrades to the sewer system, which in turn would allow the proposed 75K gpd requested for the 300-unit housing development. Mr. Haddad said he had Mr. Rafferty do a study of the current system and it appears the force main/gravity main can handle the additional capacity. Mr. Haddad said he was aware that Nod Road would require upgrades to handle the 75K gpd, but it could potentially end up being a complete rebuild. Mr. Rafferty replied "yes" it would cost about \$150K-\$200K in upgrades to handle the added capacity. Mr. Rafferty said that would max us out for the allowed capacity we can send to Pepperell and we would end up spending 4.2 million for a complete upgrade. Mr. Haddad said he has half a million willing to spend for the sewer system upgrades and the developer will have to pay connection fees. So, he feels our options would be to spend the half million and make the system better and not the 4.2 million for a complete upgrade or we just spend \$200K to upgrade the pumps.

Mr. Bouchard asked Mr. Rafferty if the flow calculations he sent included Indian Hill and he replied "No". Mr. Rafferty said that the average flows go up/down and then average thru the day, he said they designed it that way for peak flow. Mr. Rafferty referenced the report Mr. Gmeiner sent him with the 2018 flows and in November we almost hit the max flow and with this new proposed development being added, it would bump us over. He said flows will go up/down every year and they usually go up when the snow is gone. He suggested reducing I&I and that could potentially minimize the flows. Mr. Rafferty also said the pumps are limited to what they can pump, but if you were to put bigger pipes in that would be the difference between cost and that would require a new pump station.

Mr. Gmeiner said we are allowed to send 275k gpd to Pepperell and in 2018 the Groton Inn, restaurants and Indian hill were not up and running. Mr. Gmeiner said he does not see this fitting in with our current

agreement with Pepperell and it would also eliminate any further growth within the Center District. Mr. Haddad feels this is a great opportunity for the BOSC with 1.8 million in connection fees being 3 times the current operating budget. Mr. Haddad asked if the board could negotiate the fees based on the impact to the system and Mr. Gmeiner replied we collect fees based on the way our regulations are written. Mr. Orcutt said if we collect the 1.8 million in connection fees, that would go into reserves for any capital projects. Mr. Haddad told the BOSC that you will in return also gain 300 paying customers that would add to your revenue and as a Town Manager he feels this project would help the town financially moving forward.

Mr. Gmeiner said as far as the operating budget, these would be low end users and we could not bank on that revenue. Mr. Haddad said this is a unique situation for rate payers and it would help upgrade our system, it would be a half million they do not have to spend. He also said according to Mr. Rafferty's report Nod Road has to be upgraded anyway. Mr. Gmeiner asked Mr. Rafferty the cost to upgrade the pump station and he replied "couple of hundred thousand".

Mr. Rafferty also asked if this is a 40B project, you would be required to provide capacity. Mr. Gmeiner thought we could use some of this money for I&I. Mr. Gmeiner asked what we realistically could recover from removing I&I. Mr. Rafferty said peak is 4 times the average flow, so if we could cut down to 3 that would allow more availability. Mr. Gmeiner feels with these huge spikes and with the torrential rain we are having there is something we are not seeing. Mr. Haddad asked what kind of testing would be done and Mr. Gmeiner said there was a study done, but nothing jumped out. Mr. Haddad said that the BOSC would have enough money to upgrade the pump station and do the I&I study and also any monies that are leveraged from the developer.

Mr. Gmeiner said he is not seeing the ability to handle the capacity, when you look at all the starting numbers from 2018, plus the 75K gpd that would put us over. Mr. Haddad asked if the leaks are fixed would that make a difference and Mr. Gmeiner replied "maybe". Mr. Haddad suggested that the BOSC take the \$200K to fix the pump station and that would leave \$700K to buy extra capacity from Pepperell. He then said the BOSC could change the way they get billed from being limited to 275k gpd to the 12-month rolling average. Mr. Gmeiner said that is not part of the negotiation and if we buy more capacity, we would pick up a bigger part of the debt service in Pepperell. Mr. Bouchard asked if we change to annual flow from monthly, do we have to buy more capacity and Mr. Rafferty replied "no". Mr. Rafferty suggested that we continue the I&I work CCTV the rest of the system.

**Next Meeting** – September 15<sup>th</sup>, 2021

**BILLS SIGNED** – No bills were signed

**MINUTES:** - No minutes were approved

**ADIJOURN** – *Mr. Gmeiner made a motion to adjourn at 2:30PM. Mr. Gmeiner seconded the motion. Roll Call Gmeiner –Aye, Bouchard-Aye and Orcutt-Aye*

Respectfully submitted,  
Ann Livezey  
Water & Sewer Assistant