



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

Town of Groton Sewer Department
173 Main Street
Groton MA 01450

Date: March 9th, 2022
Time: 2:00PM

Members Virtually Present: Chair/James Gmeiner
Vice Chair/Thomas Orcutt
Clerk/Michael Bouchard

Others Virtually Present: Ann Livezey, Lauren Croy & Judy Anderson

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

29 Champney - Abatement

The BOSC was in agreement to abate 166 units (\$3,282.20) of the 174 units billed for 29 Champney, due to a burst pipe as discussed at the previous meeting. It was confirmed the The Fire Department was dispatched to remove the water by pumping to street catch basins.

Mr. Orcutt made a motion to abate 166 sewer units for 29 Champney Street, Mr. Bouchard seconded and the motion passed unanimously. Roll Call: Gmeiner - Aye, Orcutt - Aye and Bouchard - Aye

ARPA Funds

Mr. Gmeiner asked if the Select Board voted to remove all options of the ARPA Funds and Mr. Bouchard said "No" that they will be honoring promised commitments but all other funds will be dependent on the outcome of the Nod Road Land Fill.

Mr. Gmeiner said he reviewed part of the Select Board's meeting on the ARPA Funds and feels this may come up at the Hearing on Monday and also the small parcel for Mr. Brem. Mr. Orcutt said he would be at the meeting and he can speak about the Articles we submitted. Mr. Orcutt also suggested that we transfer \$75K from reserves to cover I&I & manholes in the event we do not get the ARPA funds.

Mr. Bouchard asked if we did the small pump upgrade to Nod Road as he understands that could cover the new Deluxe property, but not much more than that. Mr. Gmeiner said that Deluxe would not be dependent on the upgrade. Mr. Orcutt said the pump replacement cost would be \$250K and a complete upgrade would be 4 million. Mr. Orcutt also said that the pump replacement can handle part of the new project along with I&I removal. Mr. Gmeiner said the I&I removal would give us a capacity buffer.

Discuss the Increases for the Rate Hearing

Four Corners Sewer District:

Ms. Crory told the BOSC that rate income for FY23 was estimated rate income was \$27K and with just billing out Four Corners with a few new customers the total amount billed was \$7K and times that by 4 qtrs. that would be \$28K in income for FY23. Ms. Crory shared a spreadsheet of total income and expenses and is estimating the difference of \$14,888.00 that we would need to make up. Mr. Bouchard asked about the inspection line item and a suggested that be removed because those fees are paid by the applicant.

Mr. Gmeiner suggested using this sheet for the rate hearing and asked Ms. Crory to run a spreadsheet showing potential rate increase. He also asked that we check in with Ayer about the treatment costs and see if they anticipate an increase on this.

Center Sewer District:

Ms. Crory told the BOSC that there was a rate increase from \$1.10/unit to \$1.16/per unit for the Pepperell Flows which will result in a \$20K for treatment this fiscal year and suggested we increase the rates to cover that.

The new Pepperell Debt payment of \$71K/per year until FY25 (in FY26 the town will be splitting this cost) once the old debt is paid off.

Also, when we did the FY23 budget we increased the capital charge from \$15/qtr. to \$25/qtr. and that would bring in an estimated \$25K and the rest would be paid from our E&D fund as a transfer in FY23 \$39K. So, we will want to make that up in rates too. She also mentioned the higher flows in the first few months (which are thought to be I&I issues) and we may want to discuss and take care of these increased flows until the issues are identified and fixed.

Mr. Orcutt suggested that when we increase the capital charge, we should increase based on:

- Single family dwelling
- Small Commercial
- Large Commercial & Multi Family

He said that the Water Commissioners just increased their capital charge based on this and feels the small commercial business should not be paying the same as a large commercial business.

Mr. Orcutt said we look at the connection charges and other charges at the rate hearing and Mr. Gmeiner asked Ms. Crory to run numbers on the 4 million costs with a 20-year payout and add 1%-2% more for borrowing interest.

Town Meeting Transfers

Ms. Crory told the BOSC that the numbers for the transfers for FY22 would be:

Center Sewer: \$145K (\$10K meters, \$60K Pepperell and \$75K manholes & I&I)
Four Corners: \$10K (Ayer Treatment)

Mr. Bouchard asked if the rates in Four Corners are not covering the treatment costs and Ms. Crory said we are not short on the budget, just on the expense side.

Mr. Gmeiner asked the BOSC if there is a spot discovered on the I&I inspections that requires repairs, how will we cover that expense. Mr. Orcutt replied that we can use some of the \$75K that we are transferring for FY22.

Other Business: Bills Minutes Etc.

Mr. Gmeiner said we will hold a separate hearing to adopt the amendments for the Groton Center Sewer District Regulations and the Four Corners Sewer District Regulations. He asked Ms. Livezey to post in the Groton Herald on March 18th and 25th and we will hold the Public Hearing on March 30th.

Next Meeting – March 16th, 2022

BILLS SIGNED – No bills signed

MINUTES: - January 19th, 2022 as amended

ADJOURN – *Mr. Orcutt made a motion to adjourn at 3:30 PM Mr. Bouchard seconded the motion. Roll Call Gmeiner –Aye, Orcutt- Aye and Bouchard-Aye*

Respectfully submitted,

Ann Livezey
Water & Sewer Assistant