



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

Town of Groton Sewer Department

173 Main Street
Groton MA 01450

Date: May 3rd, 2023
Time: 2:00 PM

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

Others Virtually Present: Ann Livezey/Assistant and Lauren Croy/Business Manager

The Meeting was called to order by James Gmeiner at 2:00 PM

Mr. Bouchard asked Mr. Gmeiner about the District Expansion Policy and he said Four Corners is showing near capacity and he feels we are not there. Mr. Gmeiner said the catch is not so much we are at capacity but have a limited area approved by state and if we go outside those area's we need to speak to the state about the interbasin transfer. He said they look at the potential and we are roughly 40,500 gpd and that would be for that area and if anything, else would be considered in addition to that. Mr. Orcutt said the current flow is one thing and there is still build out at Shaws and Oriole Drive and asking for more could trip it. Mr. Orcutt said any flow outside the district would need to be approved by the Water Resource Commission.

Discussion of Adopting System Expansion Policy

2:15 P.M. Rate Hearing to Consider amending the wastewater rates & fees for the Center Sewer District and the Four Corners Sewer District

Mr. Bouchard read the following "Notice of Public Hearing"

In accordance with Chapter 83 of the Massachusetts General Laws, and the Town of Groton Usage Fee Regulations, the Groton Sewer Commission will hold a Public Hearing, Wednesday, **May 3rd, 2023 at 2:15 P.M.** via Virtual Meeting using Zoom Pursuant to the Governor's Executive Order to consider amending the wastewater rates and fees for the Center Sewer District and the Four Corners Sewer District. Please see Meeting posted at <https://www.grotonma.gov/events/> for details regarding Zoom meeting information.

Center Sewer:

Ms. Crory told the BOSC that we are exceeding our rates budget and that is due to the rate hearing we had last April, which allowed a \$60K increase and with the new addition of Groton Hills Music Center. Connection fees are on budget; we took in \$42K over budget and the GDHS billing change allowed \$40K over, so bottom line is \$200K over income budget and \$39K was a transfer so true earnings \$160K.

Expenses are within the budget with \$15K left, but we need to wait and see what Pepperell information comes in at. Mr. Gmeiner asked that with these numbers does it fit into the budget for FY24? She said we have a budget of \$653K of rate income and the forecast for next year is \$765K so we will be over rates. She said there is a higher connection fee built in \$52K and not sure if we took some of that this year because those fees were up. Expenses she thinks will be ok, but we will need to update once we get numbers from Pepperell on what the new monthly payment will be. Mr. Orcutt said the true up number is what we need. Expenses are the same for FY24 and for treatment we did factor in a 5% increase already for Pepperell bills.

Ms. Crory says she feels the Center Sewer is ok for now and does not need an increase.

Four Corners:

Ms. Crory said for FY23 we had inflated Shaws bills, we had to pay off the Ayer connection fees and we have a transfer which would show a shortfall, but we did address at rate hearing last year. This year she came up with \$144K for income and includes \$21K Ayer payment and \$12K transfer to offset budget and for expenses those look ok. The new connection fees exceeded the budget and we did take a transfer in the spring of \$75K to help cover. She is coming up with \$135K expenses and for the reserve fund that means FY23 \$426 and we have \$169K for 8 more of 10-year payments to Ayer. Took \$75K for transfer and probably will put back \$18K and income over \$32K and \$232K should be available and add in \$169K we are at \$400K so that's what we will see from Ms. DuFresne. Mr. Gmeiner said the \$169K is earmarked what we pay to Ayer and Ms. Crory said "Yes".

Mr. Gmeiner asked what the current connection fee is and Ms. Crory replied \$8,600.00 and we pay Ayer \$5,400.00 of that. Ms. Crory said the FY24 budget said we had rates \$38K and that looks good, she used last quarterly billing which was 621 units and broke out at tiers and that would bring at current rates \$42K for the year. Connection fees we had \$17,200.00 and Moulton owes one more. Mr. Gmeiner said everyone is connected other than Moulton with the one left. Ms. Crory said "yes" and Mr. Orcutt asked if he has paid all and she said all, but one. She did say Ayer is increasing the connection fee from \$5,400.00 to \$6,000.00 and the rates will increase from \$11.44 to \$12.01 5% increase. With using these figures, the increase in the FY24 budget will result in a \$1,400.00 shortage in rates.

Mr. Orcutt said we could consider adjusting the rates 5% and the connection fee \$600 to adjust with Ayers increases. Mr. Gmeiner said that would increase the connection fee to \$9,200.00 and the treatment increase to \$12.01. Mr. Gmeiner said 3% increase would cover the shortage with a total of \$1,786.00. Mr. Bouchard asked if we did 3% on Tier 1, 5% on Tier 2-4 what would that do and Ms. Crory said \$1,881.00/year.

Mr. Orcutt made a motion to close the Public Hearing at 2:53 p.m., Mr. Bouchard seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Orcutt made a motion not to raise the rates or fees for the Center Sewer District, Mr. Bouchard seconded and the motion passed unanimously. Roll Call: Gmeiner-Aye, Orcutt-Aye and Bouchard-Aye

Mr. Orcutt made a motion to raise the rates in the Four Corner Sewer District 3% Tier 1, 5% Tier 2,3 & 4 with no fee adjustment as of July 1, 2023, Mr. Bouchard seconded and the motion passed unanimously. Roll Call: Gmeiner-Aye, Orcutt-Aye and Bouchard-Aye

Mr. Orcutt asked to amend his motion to change the date to June 1st, 2023.

Mr. Orcutt made a motion to increase the rates in the Four Corner Sewer District 3% Tier 1, 5% Tier 2,3 & 4 as of June 1st, 2023, Mr. Bouchard seconded and the motion passed unanimously. Roll Call: Gmeiner-Aye, Orcutt-Aye and Bouchard-Aye

Mr. Orcutt made a motion to increase the connection fee for the Four Corner Sewer District to \$9,200.00 per ERU as of July 1st, 2023, Mr. Bouchard seconded and the motion passed unanimously. Roll Call: Gmeiner-Aye, Orcutt-Aye and Bouchard-Aye

Mr. Orcutt made a motion that all other fees remain the same in the Four Corner Sewer District, Mr. Bouchard seconded and the motion passed unanimously. Roll Call: Gmeiner-Aye, Orcutt-Aye and Bouchard-Aye

500 Main Street – Groton Farms

No Discussion

Pepperell IMA

No Discussion

201 Boston Road/Lindemer New House

No Discussion

Review I&I

No Discussion

Review Nod Road Pump Station and Flow Evaluation

No Discussion

220 Main Street (Parish House) – Capacity

No Discussion

Expansion Limits

No Discussion

FY22 & FY23 Budget

No Discussion

Commission Reorganization

No Discussion

Other Business: Bills, Minutes, etc.

Next Meeting – May 31st, 2023

BILLS SIGNED – *No bills signed*

MINUTES:

No Minutes were approved

ADJOURN – *Mr. Orcutt made a motion to adjourn at 3:10 P.M. Mr. Bouchard seconded the motion. Roll Call Gmeiner –Aye Bouchard - Aye*

Respectfully submitted,

Ann Livezey
Water & Sewer Assistant