

Groton Sewer Commission
Regular Meeting of the
Board of Sewer Commissioners
Thursday, August 7th, 2025
Virtual Meeting using Zoom

Minutes

Present are Chairman James Gmeiner, Clerk Darius Budrys Business Manager Lauren Crory, Resident Judy Anderson.

Mr. Gmeiner called the meeting to order at 2:02pm. He stated that we are being recorded and everyone introduced themselves.

FY25 & FY26 Budget Review

Mrs. Crory provided an update on the fiscal year 2025 budget for Four Corners, noting there were no major changes since the last review. She explains that while no construction income was received, as expected (since connection fees for two homes were taken in the previous fiscal year), this gap was covered by a \$20,000 transfer approved at the Spring Town Meeting. Mrs. Crory highlighted that interest income of nearly \$13,000 was added to the budget, which had been previously overlooked, and mentions that despite being about \$7,500 short on overall income, the transferred funds adequately cover the shortage. The major expenses of the year included an annual payment to Ayer and an intergovernmental overhead charge for staff salaries and insurance. She expects the Enterprise Fund Balance to remain around \$430,000.

Mr. Budrys asked about these numbers not being final and Mr. Gmeiner explained that the numbers are tracked in the Sewer Office, officially tracked in the accounting office, and then certified by the state by early September.

Mrs. Crory reports that the Center Sewer budget is in good shape, with rate income coming in about \$40,000 over budget. The high school contributes \$7,277 monthly for sewage, totaling \$76,000 for the year, while connection fees brought in \$92,000, largely from the Lawrence Academy dining hall renovation. Total income is \$125,000 over budget, and expenses are generally in line with projections, including a Pepperell true-up payment of \$33,000 against a \$60,000 budget, resulting in \$26,000 savings.

Mrs. Crory reported that general expenses were within budget, with engineering being under budget due to the completion of IMA, and meter costs being lower as 80% of customers now have new meters installed. Mr. Gmeiner pointed out that the \$14,500 excess from the Nod Road project will be returned to reserves since they did not borrow for it. She explains that despite taking \$250,000 from reserves for the Nod Road pump station project, they are recovering well with \$125,000 extra income and \$66,000 unspent expenses. She expects the reserve fund to be certified around \$530,000.

She also explained that an \$85,000 budget transfer in the FY26 budget should have been about \$50,000. The budget had to be revised and increased by \$35,000 after the town decided that they

cannot split the debt payment. The debt line was increased by \$35,000 and the income capital fee should have been increased by \$35,000 – not the reserve fund transfer line. The extra transfer will most likely go unused and flow back to reserved.

Other Business

Mr. Gmeiner mentioned that Nod Road flows are averaging 96,000 gallons per day, indicating infiltration issues.

Mr. Gmeiner discussed meeting with Mr. Brinkman from Pepperell DPW and wants to invite him to the next meeting to discuss the true-up numbers and dig safe procedures. Mrs. Crory agrees they need timely reconciliation before budget season, preferably by October rather than waiting until May of the following fiscal year. Mr. Gmeiner also mentions ongoing discussions about 468 Main Street, the former Bridal and Spur restaurant (previously known as Boots and Saddle) which will be demolished and the septic system will be removed.

Mr. Gmeiner explained that they need to find an on-call contractor for work at Four Corners since neither Ayer nor Pepperell operate there. They will likely need to incur engineering fees to prepare a request for quotes or proposals, keeping the cost under \$25,000 to avoid additional bidding requirements. Mr. Budrys confirms this is just to create a scope of work, and Mr. Gmeiner agrees to ask Apex Engineering for an outline of what is involved before bringing it back to the board.

Mr. Gmeiner mentions a call about grease traps at a new pad at 788 Boston Rd. Mrs. Anderson believes a restaurant may be going in.

Next Meeting August 20th, 2025. Mrs. Crory will inform Mr. Berg and Mrs. Livezey.

Mr. Gmeiner made a motion to adjourn at 2:45pm, Mr. Gmeiner seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lauren Crory

Business Manager