

**Commissioners:**

James Gmeiner/Chair
Eric Berg/Vice Chair
Bruce Easom/Clerk

Town of Groton Sewer Department

173 Main Street
Groton MA 01450

Date: August 19th, 2026

Time: 3:00 PM

Members Virtually Present: James Gmeiner/Chair
Eric Berg/Vice Chair
Bruce Easom/Clerk

Others Virtually Present: Lauren Crory/Business Manager, Ann Livezey/Assistant, Paul Brinkman/Pepperell DPW and Judy Anderson/Resident

The Virtual Meeting was called to order by James Gmeiner at 3:00 PM

100 Boston Road – Units A & C

Mr. Gmeiner said there are new tenants moving in and the space was previously occupied by Dr. Offices. The Title V flow for Dr. Office is 250/gpd and Mr. Brinkman said he thinks there were (3) Dr's with a couple of nurses and one floor was lab/radiology. Mr. Gmeiner said he would like to have them in to discuss their plans for use of the space and he has sent a letter to the Planning Board to let them know.

Weston & Sampson Contract

Mr. Gmeiner told the BOSC that this would be a consulting contract with Weston & Sampson more specifically with Mr. Rafferty as the main contact. He said this would mainly be to have a General Engineer to consult with for things that are above and beyond Mr. Brinkman. Mr. Gmeiner told the BOSC he has a firm handle on the contract details and will do the editing.

Pepperell

Mr. Brinkman said he sent over a detailed report on Nod Road that shows how the system is impacted by rainfall. He said this is a detailed analysis and it provides more global data, which he has used successfully on a number of projects over the years. He said this allows you to look at a lot of patterns and you can look for certain patterns and will allow you to analyze. For instance, if you have rainfall over a 4-day period you can see how the system reacts and what it looks like. Then you can look at certain conditions to see if it is improving,

he said it is spot work, but it will allow us to start attacking anything we see that is unusual. Mr. Brinkman said he is hoping by the next meeting to have a better analysis.

Mr. Berg suggested breaking out the data by month so we can see an individual month. He said by looking at it in general the flows after an event seem less than they were before. Mr. Brinkman said there is a whole methodology to analyzing the data and if we had hourly data, it would be very helpful, but they do not have that. Mr. Brinkman said one of the things to look at is the dates of flows and generally they are low in the summer, due to the schools not being in session. Mr. Berg asked if both the Middle School and High School hit the system and Mr. Brinkman replied "yes". Mr. Gmeiner said Lawrence Academy is also a part of it and asked Mr. Brinkman if the cafeteria was yet. Mr. Brinkman said its not done yet and Mr. Gmeiner thought they might be using a tight tank. Mr. Brinkman responded that the tight tank was for the kitchen and he believes they will be putting in a pump station for the new kitchen as well.

Mr. Easom asked in reference to the groundwater, he asked why was the Townsend USGS monitoring used rather than Littleton because that is actually closer and sits over the aquifer. He said that West Townsend is 7 miles from Nod Road pump station and Littleton is about 6 miles. Mr. Brinkman said that the sewer area is closer to Nod Road and he was unaware of the Littleton one and he thinks that may be a different basin. Mr. Easom said that he was looking at the aquifer and Townsend does not sit right over the same aquifer. Mr. Brinkman said he was unaware of Littleton, but can have his intern pull the Littleton Data.

Mr. Geminer asked where he pulls the rainfall data from and Mr. Brinkman said his guys have a station set up with a cup at the treatment plant and it is read from 8:00am to 8:00am. Mr. Easom asked if that information was submitted to the National Weather Service and he said they do not. Mr. Easom said they are looking for any high granularity data on rainfall. Mr. Brinkman said they are getting a more formal system to record the data and would be happy to share that information with them.

Mr. Berg asked Mr. Brinkman if he could go over the manhole report that was sent over with the bill at the next meeting. Mr. Berg said he would just like to go over some of the different categories for educational purposes.

FY26 & FY27 Budget

Center Sewer

Ms. Crory did a budget review and stated that the general expenses are under budget \$46K and she noted that the meter replacement program is 80% complete and we only spent \$3,200.00 out of the \$25K budget. She said Pepperell is our biggest expense at \$52K a month and we will continue to pay the same amount for FY27. She said this is basically an estimated number for the Pepperell IMA and then once the fiscal year is complete Mr. Brinkman then inputs all the actual numbers and provides us with a true up which can be a credit or we may owe something. So overall we are \$53K under budget on this because we did not have to spend all that true up money last fiscal year.

She reviewed the debt payment to Pepperell that we currently have which is \$70K and is covered by the capital charge we have in place. Mr. Gmeiner mentioned that as far as the debt service to Pepperell, the town is actually supposed to be picking up half as they did for a lot of years. He stated that when the town is doing okay fiscally Mr. Haddad will put into the budget and when they are not which is more frequently, he pulls it out.

Ms. Crory reviewed the betterments for Old Ayer Road/Boston Road and mentioned we did do a transfer of \$5k for this debt, due to the timing of principal and the fact that some of these homes got paid off early.

Ms. Crory told the BOSC that the rates look good and we budgeted \$710K and we brought in \$745K so she is comfortable for how the rates are set currently. Mr. Gmeiner said we have not had a rate increase since 2022 and we may want to review the capital charge in place and consider a possible adjustment at the next rate hearing for FY27 even though we do not plan on a rate increase.

Four Corners Sewer

Ms. Crory told the BOSC that we budgeted \$220K for the 5th corner that that did not happen. She explained we did have to do a large transfer in the fall to cover the budget short fall, so it makes the numbers appear a little strange, but it all worked out so we can move on from that section. She said rate income brought in \$50K out of our \$59K budget, but that is most likely because of some past due accounts. She also mentioned it tough because they are billed on June 1st and we don't always get the payments in by July 1st. As far as the Ayer debt we have four-years left out of the ten-year agreement and the debt payments to Ayer are \$21K.

Ms. Crory stated that we started the year at \$434K and the income appears short of \$230K but the remaining expenses are \$229K and this is because of those projects she talked about earlier. She said she took out the \$21K that is worked into the FY27 budget because that will be removed from the free cash balance, so the estimated balance will be \$412K. She did account for the four years left on the debt payments to Ayer of \$21K and she separated that out which will leave \$330K in the reserve fund. She did explain this is an estimated number and should have final numbers soon.

Ms. Crory said she did a comparison to the FY27 budget and feels we do not have to make any big changes. Mr. Gmeiner suggested we hold a rate hearing just to review rates even if we do not plan on making changes.

Other Business: Bills, Minutes, etc.

Next Meeting – September 9th, 2026

BILLS SIGNED: No bills signed

MINUTES: *Mr. Berg made a motion to accept the minutes of August 5th, 2026 Mr. Easom seconded and the motion passed unanimously. Roll Call: Gmeiner–Aye, Berg–Aye and Easom– Aye*

ADJOURN: *Mr. Berg made a motion to adjourn at 4:00 PM. Mr. Easom seconded. Roll Call: Gmeiner–Aye, Berg–Aye and Easom – Aye*

Respectfully submitted,

Ann Livezey
Water & Sewer Assistant