

Board of Public Works

05/13/21 – Minutes

“Go To Meeting”

Present via remote login:

DPW Board Members: Chair – Tom Nephew, Pat Harrington, Lewis Lunn, George Clark; DPW Director – Ken Kalinowski, Rene D’Argento.

Call to Order at 5:30 p.m.

Chairman Tom Nephew called the meeting to order at 5:36 p.m. and announced that it was being recorded and broadcast.

Acceptance of Meeting Minutes:

- **April 22, 2021 (Regular)**

George Clark made a motion to accept the minutes from April 22, 2021 as written. Pat Harrington seconded the motion. The following roll call vote was taken:

Pat Harrington – Aye

Lewis Lunn – Aye

George Clark - Aye

Tom Nephew – Aye

The motion passed unanimously.

Abatements: None.

Water/Sewer Updates

- **Bemis Treatment Facility.** Ken informed the Board that the plant was very close to being online, pending the delivery and installation of the backpressure sustaining valve and MADEP’s conditional authorization to operate. The staff was targeting a June 1st startup date.
- **Twin Valley Farm.** Ken presented a request from Mr. Overshiner to expand the Board’s conditional approval to include a bathroom in the barn for use of the farm employees. Ken opined that this request did not violate the conditions of the prior

approval, and the Board agreed. *Pat Harrington made a motion to approve the variance to approve a bathroom in the barn. Lewis Lunn seconded the motion.* The following roll call vote was taken:

Pat Harrington – Aye

Lewis Lunn – Aye

George Clark - Aye

Tom Nephew – Aye

The motion passed unanimously.

Ken continued with Mr. Overshiner’s second request that the Board waive one of the two \$5,000 sewer connection fees. Ken explained that under the old sewer connection fees that were amended last year, the connection fee would have been \$27,945, but under the new schedule, there would be 2 connections at \$5,000 each. Lewis inquired as to whether the applicant needed the 2nd connection at this time. Ken explained that both connections were to be installed at the same time. Tom expressed a concern that this could set a bad precedent with regards to people requesting relief from the recently reduced fees solely for budgetary concerns, and was not in favor of waiving the fee. Pat Harrington agreed with Tom’s concerns. George asked if the property was bettered, and was told that it was not. Tom asked if any Board members supported waiving the connection fee. Lewis thought it was already a good deal at \$10,000. There was no support for the request and no vote was taken.

- **Aquifer Protection Overlay District (discussion).** Ken provided the Board with an overview of the Aquifers and Zone I’s, II’s and III’s associated with the Town wells. There was also a brief overview of the Watershed Resource Protection Overlay District (WRPOD).
- **Abatement Policy Review.** Tom Nephew suggested that since the full Board was not in attendance, the discussion should be tabled. The Board agreed and there was no discussion.
- **Misc Updates.** Ken said that there was a request from the Chair of the Board of Health (BoH) to discuss several topics, and while there was not room on this agenda to go over them in detail, he had requested and received an email outlining the topics. Renee D’Argento proceeded to discuss mosquito management and the DPW’s activities to control mosquitos. Ken noted that the town cleans catch basins and tries to avoid water impoundments thru improvements such as fixing culverts and keeping water bodies flowing. Ken also noted that the town would need to apply for its water

registration renewal by June 15th, and that there was a lot of talk about the state wanting water conservation mandates possibly becoming integrated into the next permits. Tom asked for clarification from Renee on which items on her list were or were not potential areas for effective collaboration between the two Boards. Sustainable water use was one area of interest for the BoH, specifically whether Pepperell could/would adopt similar regulations prior to the state making such requirements. Pesticide management is another area of interest for the BoH. Ken noted that the town no longer used chemicals to treat roadside growth, but in the event of such use, a licensed applicator would be required. PFAS and private wells was another area of potential coordination. Ken noted that the BoH controls private wells, and that there is not any DPW control over these structures. Renee asked if the town was pursuing grants for Point of Entry (POE) filters for homeowners should the PFAS situation get worse. Ken replied that we were not, however, we were looking at a recent offering for DEP grants for possibly dealing with the problem at the source and/or determining the source. Ken also noted that there currently is not an NSF certified filter to treat water down to the 20ppt level for PFAS. Tom added that the town was at the beginning of dealing with the PFAS issue, and that it would be premature to speculate or execute a solution at this point. He also stressed the need for education of all residents regardless of whether they had a private well or town water. Renee asked if the town was aware of any PFAS-related class action lawsuits and Ken replied that there were several offers already under consideration. Ken closed with a reminder that despite a mandatory water ban, the residents were still using 800-900k gpd and that this was not helping the PFAS situation as it required that the Nashua Rd well to produce water to meet the demands. There was a brief discussion about notification of private well owners about the water ban and their impact on the water supply. Renee inquired whether we could issue water bills with comparative data on consumption as compared to their neighbors. Ken replied that he was not sure that the water billing software was capable of performing such a task but that he would look into it.

DPW

- **DPW Business Manager.** Ken informed the Board that former Board member Paul Brinkman had accepted an offer to join the DPW as the new Business Manager. All members thought this was a good thing and that we would not be losing his knowledge, but rather seeing it from a different perspective. The tentative start date is on or before June 14th. Tom asked that the Board share with him any ideas of potential replacements for Paul.

- **Bituminous Concrete Bid.** Ken informed bid opening had occurred and that PJ Keating in Lunenburg was the low bidder at \$62.49/ton. The contract is renewable at the towns discretion for up to 3 years. The contract documents were being processed.
- **ATM Warrant Articles.** Ken reviewed the various DPW-sponsored articles for the coming Annual Town Meeting, and reminded the Board that each one would need to be represented by a Board member. He was instructed to assign them as he saw fit and to let the Board know his decision. Pat asked if the Stormwater Bylaw was going to be published or made public prior to ATM. Ken said that the document would be posted on the town website before ATM. Renee inquired as to whether the Stormwater Bylaw had an impact on existing homeowners. Ken replied that unless you are disturbing more and 1 acre of land, it should not impact anyone, with the caveat that anyone with an illicit connection to the drain system could be asked to remove it. The Bylaw would have no impact on the stormwater enterprise fund or rates.
- **Misc Updates.** Ken stated that the sewer crews had started doing remote data collection with tablets in the field, and that water and stormwater would follow suit shortly. This was part of a move to go electronic with utility data management.

Review & Approve Documents:

- **Commitments.** *Lewis Lunn made a motion to allow Pat Harrington to sign the April commitments on behalf of the Board. Tom Nephew seconded the motion. The following roll call vote was taken:*
George Clark – Aye
Pat Harrington – Aye
Lewis Lunn - Aye
Tom Nephew – Aye

The motion passed unanimously.

- **Rate Increase.** Ken explained that after any rate adjustments, it was customary to create a rate table for posting on the appropriate utility web page, and that this document was signed by the Board. Similar to other documents, Ken asked that the Board nominate a Board member to sign on behalf of the Board. *Lewis Lunn made a motion to allow Pat Harrington to sign the Water & Sewer Rate sheets on behalf of the Board. Tom Nephew seconded the motion. The following roll call vote was taken:*

George Clark – Aye
Pat Harrington – Aye
Lewis Lunn - Aye
Tom Nephew – Aye

The motion passed unanimously.

Commissioners Comments:

- None.

Next Meeting Dates:

- June 12, 2021 - ATM
- June 17, 2021 – Regular Board mtg
- Ken informed the Board that the DPW and **NOT** the Selectboard would be sponsoring the public PFAS Forum on Thursday, May 27, 2021 from 7-9 p.m..

Adjournment:

Pat Harrington made a motion to adjourn. Lewis Lunn seconded the motion. The following roll call vote was taken:

George Clark – Aye
Pat Harrington – Aye
Lewis Lunn - Aye
Tom Nephew – Aye

The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:57.

Respectfully submitted,
Kenneth Kalinowski, PE
Director of Public Works