

Water & Wastewater Subcommittee Meeting

1/27/2021
7:00 PM to 9:10 PM
Remote via Zoom

Meeting Minutes

Attendees: Jim Engel, Brian Kubaska, Bill Craft, Kerry Mackin, Michael Dougherty
Vicki Halmen, John Parkhurst, Emily Sadoway, Ray Leczynski, Jeff Civitarese
Tim Lynam, Sarah Orton (206 Linebrook Road)

J. Engel calls meeting to order at 7:01 pm.

Agenda

Citizen Queries

Chair

5

Discussion: None.

Conclusions:

Action items:

Person responsible:

Deadline:

Approval of Minutes

Chair

5

Discussion: M. Dougherty moved to approve the minutes of the December 10, 2020 meeting. K. Mackin seconded the motion. Roll call vote was 4-0 in favor. B. Kubaska abstained due to his absence at the December meeting.

Conclusions:

Action items:

Person responsible:

Deadline:

WUMP Fee Abatement Request**T. Lynam****10**

Discussion: Tim Lynam and Sarah Orton were present to explain their request to waive WUMP fee for their proposed home improvements at 206 Linebrook Road. The building inspector classified their improvements as the addition of two bedrooms, triggering the WUMP fee. K. Mackin did not want to set a precedent by waiving the fees. M. Dougherty discussed his concern over the fees applying to small projects such as this.

The owners mentioned that they have a deed restriction on the property which limits it to two bedrooms. The work is adding office space, not bedrooms. It was questioned why the building inspector would classify the work as adding bedrooms when that is legally not allowed.

With this new information, M. Dougherty moved that, providing the owners supply evidence of the deed restriction, the WUMP fees shall not apply to the proposed work. B. Craft seconded the motion. Roll call vote was 4-1 in favor, with K. Mackin opposed.

Conclusions:

Action items: Provide documentation of action to Utilities Office and Building Inspector

Person responsible: V. Halmen

Deadline: ASAP

FY22 Budget Discussion**V. Halmen/R. Leczynski****90**

Discussion: V. Halmen reviewed the water and wastewater budgets. It was noted that these budgets contain funds for health care, retirement, OPEB and workers compensation that other general fund departmental budgets do not carry. These figures have increased in both water and wastewater budgets and are provided by the Finance Department. V. Halmen and R. Leczynski have discussed the increases with the Finance Director and are awaiting further clarification.

Both budgets contain significant funds for debt service on previously approved projects. If new debt service were removed from the water budget, the overall bottom line increase would be 2.6%. Future projects and associated debt service were discussed. Both departments require millions of dollars worth of spending over the next 20 years, as has been presented and projected over the past several years. Annual rate increases are projected to fund the increased cost of debt service.

The bottom line FY22 wastewater budget is presented at \$2,740,834, with a rate increase of 5% and a proposed warrant article for \$1.5M for wastewater will be requested for wastewater capital projects.

The bottom line FY22 water budget is presented at \$4,747,308, with a rate increase of 10% and two proposed warrant articles for \$1.5M (Dow Dam low level drain an improvements) and \$4M (Town Hill Tank).

Conclusions: M. Dougherty moved to support the wastewater budget, rate increase and warrant article as presented. B. Craft seconded. Roll call vote was unanimous in favor.

M. Dougherty moved to support water budget, rate increase and warrant articles as presented. B. Craft seconded. Roll call vote was unanimous in favor.

Action items:

Person responsible:

Deadline:

Updates**V. Halmen****15**

Discussion: J. Parkhurst provided an update on the wastewater plant operations and the impacts of COVID-19. Three staff members are out due to positive covid results. The operation is being successfully run by the superintendent and assistant superintendent. MassDEP was notified of the situation and will be kept up to date on any staffing or operational changes. All NPDES permit requirements are being met. There are no customer service impacts. The need to elevate wastewater operators to a higher vaccination priority was discussed. M. Dougherty to provide an email to direct concerns to the state.

E. Sadoway provided an update on the sewer siphon project, which is roughly 50% complete.

B. Craft requested a discussion on the Essex Pastures 40B proposal related to the water supply. J. Engel reviewed a water supply chart that was presented to the Select Board at their meeting on the topic. A discussion followed and resulted in agreement that a letter from the subcommittee to the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) regarding water supply concerns should be sent in advance of their meeting on January 28th.

K. Mackin moved to have J. Engel, as Chair of the Subcommittee, write a letter to the ZBA to convey the following: providing an adequate amount of safe water to Ipswich is a challenge, especially during restricted conditions; additional water use aggravates that challenge, particularly of the size and scope of the Essex Pastures project; and the ZBA shall do all within their power to minimize the water demand of the project, including requesting the size and scope be minimized.

M. Dougherty seconded the motion. A roll call vote was unanimous in favor.

Conclusions:

Action items: J. Engel to write letter as directed and send to ZBA.

Person responsible: J. Engel

Deadline:
1/28/21

Other Business**V. Halmen****5**

Discussion: M. Dougherty requested that the CARE fund be discussed at the next meeting.

Conclusions:

Action items:

Person responsible:

Deadline:

Additional Information

B. Craft moved to adjourn the meeting. K. Mackin seconded. Vote unanimous in favor.
Meeting adjourned at 10:14pm.