

MINUTES
Special Public Meeting
March 29, 2007

A special meeting of the Board of Sewer Commissioners was scheduled for tonight. The purpose of the meeting was to review the status of the Phase 2 sewer project, project costs to date, anticipated final project costs, final betterments and the proposed plant expansion.

Ms. Fiore began the power point presentation promptly at 7:00 PM. The Board of Sewer Commissioners and Wastewater Department staff was introduced.

Phase 2 construction was reviewed. Contracts 7 and 8 have installed all of the pipe in the ground. Contract 7 is complete except for final paving. The pump stations on May Avenue and Riverside Drive have just been released for use. Contract 8 is working on the pump stations now, on Summer Street and Wapping Road. The best case would be to release them in May, but it could take longer. Final road paving on all of the side streets could be done as early as May. The Sewer Commission is working to have it coordinated around the school schedule to try to avoid the school busses.

Phase 2 project costs were reviewed by slide in the power point presentation. Ms. Fiore discussed the Change Orders that have been submitted for approval and payment by Revoli Construction. The original cost of the Change Orders submitted was over \$350,000.00. The Sewer Commissioners fought hard to get these charges reduced to a more reasonable and fair cost of \$226, 379.31. She reviewed the reasons for each Change Order such as the Mass. Highway Department shutting construction down without 48 hours notice, requiring nightly plating that was not originally required, Police details being unavailable to cover construction, utilities conflicts on Crescent Street, a heat wave causing a shut down on Foster Lane (water was to be shut off to the Elizabeth Ann Rest Home), night paving on Summer Street at CVS, utility problems on Crescent Street, Evergreen Street at Pilgrim Street, and Wapping Road, borings required at the Exxon Station for contamination testing and a shut down for a railroad gate malfunction.

As of today, final project costs were projected to be \$9,257,993.31. An additional \$450,000.00 might be needed to complete the project. The betterment account has a surplus above and beyond what is needed to repay the SRF debt this year. If Town meeting approves the additional \$450,000.00, the money will be borrowed from this account, interest free, and will be repaid. Administrative fees are expected to be \$227,063.00 to borrow the money from the SRF. The betterment based on the project cost alone divided by about 825 ERU's is about \$11,497.00. Including administrative fees and repayment of the SRF loan over 27 years at 2% interest, the betterment is \$14,242.00. Based on this amount the annual payment would be about \$527.00 annually, billed on the first and second quarter tax bills. Customers will continue to pay the

estimated betterment in fiscal year 2008. In fiscal year 2009, the final betterment will be billed on the tax bill if it is not paid in full at the time of assessment.

User fees were reviewed. The current rate is \$10.98 per thousand gallons of water used plus a \$25.00 service charge per quarter. Ms. Fiore cautioned customers that outside watering cannot be deducted from their consumption as the software provider cannot discount by percentages. She also reminded everyone that the Water Department policy has been not to provide additional meters to measure outside watering. Multi-family homes will also pay according to consumption. With the connection of Phase 2 properties, the Board is hoping to be able to reduce the rates by \$1.86 per thousand gallons used. It will take a year or two to begin to see a difference. The rates will be checked quarterly and reductions will be made to the rate if possible.

A potential plant expansion was reviewed. There is a current waiting list of 130,000 gallons per day. These requests are from properties that have been subdivided or are requesting additional capacity for some kind of expansion or change in use for the property. The expansion will not be servicing more streets but will accommodate the currently sewered areas that have requested capacity. The waiting list will be expected to pay for the expansion. Phase 1 and 2 customers will not contribute to the cost at all. Start up money would be borrowed from the wastewater department surplus and would then be repaid with betterments.

Question–Betty White–How can an expansion be done without a Town Meeting vote?

Answer–The expansion would need to be approved at Town Meeting and an Article will be presented at the April Town Meeting.

Comment–Betty White–Once the expansion is built it must be maintained. The original Board and the current Board have said that maintenance of the plant is very expensive. An expansion could be very costly for all of the sewer customers to maintain.

Pictures of the current treatment facility were shown to demonstrate the equipment that would need to be duplicated for an expansion.

Ms. Fiore discussed the impact to the treatment facility if 40 R zoning is approved and 1021 Kingston's Place should move forward. She stated that the Town Treasurer, John LaBrache, and Mr. Geisinger, of Thorndike Development, were present in the audience if anyone has any questions. They would not be making any presentations.

Question–What do I do if I need a grinder pump?

Answer–Your contractor will order a pump and install it for you.

Question–What is the earliest Evergreen Street would be ready to connect?

Answer–Probably in June. The earliest would be in May if and when the Town center pumping station is ready.

Question–How long do we get to connect?

Answer–Postcards will be sent out when the street is ready and you will have 6 months from then to connect.

Question–When will Revoli be cleaning up? We have a cracked granite curb stone at 139 Summer Street.

Answer–The problem will be reported for you and someone will look into fixing it.

Question–What about new septic systems?

Answer–The Board of Health will accept applications for deferrals of up to 10 years. They will review the application and determine how long the deferral is for. The Sewer Commission needs to be notified if a deferral is granted.

Question–What size pipe is used for the grinder pump?

Answer–The standard is 4 inch to the grinder pump and a 1 ¼ inch discharge line.

Question–Can the pump be placed in the old septic tank?

Answer - You would need to submit a plan to the Board for review by the Inspector and Superintendent. The E One pumps are made for their own enclosure. Installation in a tank is usually used in commercial connections. The Small Pump Station Regulations regulation this type of installation and use. If you want to put a pump in a wet well then the homeowner would be responsible for maintaining it. If you use the standard pump and installation then the Town will maintain it. The Town will not maintain a pump if it has been abused by disposing of materials not meant to be discharged into the system.

Ms. Fiore returned to the discussion of the treatment plant expansion if the Smart Growth district is approved and 1021 Kingston's Place is approved.

The Board is looking into providing capacity for the waiting list and providing a leaching field for the additional flow. The Board has been working on this for some time and before the 40 R project was even discussed. One problem that has been identified is infiltration into the sewer from illegally connected sump pumps. This adds costs to treat clean water. By reducing the infiltration, the plant can maintain septage receiving, which brings in additional revenue that helps to offset increases in user fees.

Part of the 1021 development proposal is the reconfiguration of the transfer station and the installation of a leaching field underneath the new transfer station. The Board has also been negotiating with the owner of the Davis property in anticipation of a plant expansion. The Board was not seeking this property for use by the development but for expansion for the waiting list. The 1021 development would provide a minimum of 7 acres of the Davis land for a leaching field and up to as much as 14 acres if the project is approved. If the 1021 project does not move forward then the Sewer Commission would continue negotiations with the property owner, would seek easements for access to the land and would have to construct the leaching fields. The customers seeking capacity would have to pay for this and for all of the permitting.

If the 1021 project is approved user fees are expected to be reduced from \$10.98 per thousand gallons of water consumed to about \$6.65 per thousand gallons consumed, based on receiving 100,000 gallons per day from the development. It would take some time to reach this amount of flow. With the addition of the waiting list only, the rate would be reduced by about \$1.00 to \$1.50 per thousand gallons of water consumed.

Question–Are the aquifers in the proposed leaching field area?

Answer–Not sure of the actual area covered by the aquifer but DEP has looked favorably at this area. It is very similar to the Indian Pond Country Club disposal

site currently in use. The Board had been approached for approval to discharge near Smelt Brook. This area could require more treatment and added costs to the sewer customers. The Board went to DEP with the Water Commissioners, CDM, the Jones River Watershed, Conservation and Thorndike to discuss this. DEP said that typically they avoid permitting discharge sites near any waterways because there is a potential for costly changes that might be required in the future.

Ms. Fiore continued that the Board has worked very hard to look into all kinds of problems that could occur during a plant expansion. For example, what if the 1021 project does not move forward because the real estate market is not good? The Sewer Commission has negotiated such that the department would receive everything that is needed to accommodate the waiting list and the construction of 1 new SBR.

It is not the intention of the Sewer Commissioners to advise anyone how to vote on the 40 R zoning articles, but to provide enough information about the sewer facilities and future needs so that people can make their own decisions.

Ms. Fiore asked if there were any more questions regarding the presentation. Being none the meeting concluded at 9:00 PM.

Suzanne Richards
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