

Board of Water and Sewer Commissioner's Meeting March 2, 2022

Present: Scott Zajkowski, Jay Spahl, William Conley, Robert Sullivan, Tom Fournier, George Patrinos, and Jennifer Cournoyer.

In attendance: Paul Brinkman

Scott opened the meeting at 6:30 pm with the Pledge of Allegiance

Accept the minutes of the February 2, 2022, public meeting: *Robert Sullivan made a motion to accept the minutes as presented, Jay Spahl seconded the motion, no further discussion, a vote was taken, Tom Fournier abstained as he was not at the last meeting. The vote was 4 in favor and 1 abstention, passed majority.*

Water Sewer Rate Discussion: Scott stated that a Public Hearing will be held at the April 6, 2022, meeting. A discussion occurred as to what the recommendation of the Ad Hoc Water Sewer Infrastructure Rate Study Committee would be. Bob Sullivan stated that there was no decision at this time, but a recommendation will be forthcoming to the Board of Selectmen. The slated increase for water is 12% if no other intervention occurs. Bob Sullivan asked if all the revenue information provided to Tighe and Bond was up to date and factored into the Rate Study. Yes, all information was up to date.

Jay Spahl: On presenting a Debt Exclusion to the Town, is there a way for us to help sell it?

Bob Sullivan: My opinion is that it should be put on the warrant and brought forward for the people of the town to decide.

Scott Zajkowski: I think the people should decide.

Tom Fournier: We should be proactive and put on the warrant and we should sponsor the article.

Bill Conley: I think we need to go with a rate increase acting like there is no help coming forward, I would recommend the 12% increase.

A discussion then occurred about the Sewer Rates and possible increase of Sewer Rates. It was also brought up regarding if the budget was based on actual receipts or with the outstanding bills.

Tom Fournier made a motion to put an article on the Town Warrant to go forward for a Debt Exclusion to help offset the Water Sewer Rates, Bob Sullivan seconded the motion, discussion occurred: Jay asked can we do that? Bob stated that yes and we should at least have a place holder. A vote was taken, all in favor, passed unanimously.

Webster True-up update: Paul Brinkman was in attendance to present what information he has received from Webster. He stated that he hadn't received much information from them until this past Monday. In going over the information Paul stated that the Dudley flow has been running about the same. Paul did a brief presentation of limited information and some of his concerns. He stated he is going to go through all the new information that he was provided and come up with a new spreadsheet showing what he feels are the new true-up numbers. The payments to Webster are going up by about \$100,000.00 over the last couple years. Part of the discussion to be had will be how much is Webster

putting on Dudley and especially since there has been no information given to Dudley from Webster in over 10 years. Paul presented two spreadsheets, the first was Webster's true-up summary and the second is the Debt Schedule for Webster. Paul stated now he will go through all the information page by page and go back and forth over the next couple months with Webster to try and figure it all out.

Scott Zajkowski asked what is the timeline we can expect? Paul stated hoping for it to be a couple months. Tom Fournier asked who are you in touch with over at Webster? Paul stated that the Abrams Group is handling the information for Webster. Paul also stated that he wanted to be sure that the IMA between Dudley and Webster is being interpreted correctly. Scott stated that we are moving forward with this now.

A discussion occurred as to how Paul is to handle the back and forth with Webster, it was decided that Paul will do his research and come back in a couple months with a recommendation for the Board and see how the Board wants to proceed.

Scott asked one last question, as a point of discussion, what is the potential of PFAS affecting any of the costs on this? Paul stated that he believes that there will be some fallout from PFAS.

PFAS Litigation: An email was received from Town Counsel regarding the Town pursuing PFAS litigation and it was asked for the Board to review and approve prior to filing the complaint. The highlighted sections were read and discussed with the Board seeing no problem with the information. Bob Sullivan wanted a couple items noted, he wants to be sure this is not the only complaint as this is focusing on Fire Fighting products, he wants to be sure all avenues are being explored. Also, he wants to be sure that there is not a conflict where KP Law represents the Town and were working with Hank Naughton at Napoli Law who is representing the Town of Dudley Water Sewer Department and now KP Law has joined with Napoli Law representing the PFAS complaints. Both points will be emailed to Town Counsel to be sure of the answers. It was the consensus of the Board to have the Attorney file the complaint.

51 Airport Rd: There has been an ongoing issue with 51 Airport Rd and meter reading/usage. When the Brian Dorval, the technician was able to go into the property with the homeowner it was discovered that this property has an exception meter that was installed, but never inspected by the Town of Dudley Water Department and has never been read. The house was built back in 2016-2017. The reason this is being brought to the Board's attention is that 3 years ago the Board voted to do away with exception meters and now this meter has been found. The board discussed this, and it was determined that if it was never inspected that it is not an active meter so they cannot use the exception meter.

Connection Fees and Fee Structure: Bob Sullivan wanted this placed on the agenda so that we could look at the connection fees that we are currently charging and see if there is room for improvement. Bob will review and have more information on this for the next meeting.

Policy for Shut off and non-repaired lines: George is looking to get something in writing for Customer leaks and the policy for shut off and repairing. Bob stated that standard practice is to shut off and that you don't have to give any notice and that it is a backflow issue and can cause a problem if there is a fire in the area. Bob will work on for the next meeting.

Policies follow-up: This was tabled, and a discussion occurred that we may need to meet twice a month, one meeting for working on the items that are constantly tabled.

Moratorium: tabled

Superintendent Report: George presented a written report to the Commissioners and asked if they had any questions?

Bob had a few questions:

1. #5 on the report is that the same culvert? George stated yes that it totally rotted out. Bob stated that we had discussed this with Tighe and Bond about needing a real replacement of the culvert. George stated that this has gone nowhere at this time, he has been trying. Bob then asked for an email to be sent to Tighe and Bond asking where this is at.
2. #14 before winter it was explained to Barbato that no matter what the pipe to the well to the new TIGG be rigged up and ready to go and be ready. Barbato saves money by going through EJ Prescott for items. Barbato dug a little at sight, and now we have the rupture discs in which was a change order for the pressure reducer and now we are being told that there are still waiting on parts for the piping, which should have been done months ago. Bob stated that this was his concern last month when voting on the change order, they have had every opportunity to get missing parts and they will not use another supplier to get them. Now we can go after a penalty. George stated that there will be a meeting next week to go over this issue with Barbato and the Engineers. Scott then stated that last Thursday he stopped and took pictures at the site. It has been an eyesore since the first of the year, we keep going around about this. Scott stated that it is time to play hardball. Bob stated that we have passed the deadline to have online and that he specifically asked the engineers at the last meeting if the only thing holding them up was the pressure reducer and the engineers said yes that was only thing.

George then went on to explain a couple other items:

1. #7 did test pit and will be doing some exploring at Bates Tank.
2. #16 still working on meter replacements
3. #15 Lafleur is working with National Grid regarding the PRV Vault on Mason Rd, Bob stated that he thought that was a change order and George should look into that.
4. Sewer Report only thing was the I & I was still going on and just about done.

Public/Board Comments: Bob Sullivan wanted to discuss the email that we received from Jay Billings regarding Zone 2. I would like to ask Jay to give a proposal identifying future water sources that he may want to add. If we are making changes we don't want to take away, I would like to include future potential water sources. George stated that he would call Jay tomorrow and ask him to do this. He will show Jay what he has for potential sources and see what else Jay can come up with. Bob said yes, he wants to see Jay's opinion and data.

Scott then stated that we should decide on another meeting date, it was decided the next meeting will be held on March 16, 2022, at 6:30pm.

Tom made a motion to adjourn, Bob seconded the motion, no further discussion, a vote was taken, passed unanimously, meeting adjourned at 8:32pm

Respectfully Submitted,
Jennifer Cournoyer, Administrative Assistant