

Board of Water and Sewer Commissioner's Meeting June 3, 2020.

Present: Scott Zajkowski, Robert Sullivan, Tom Fournier, Jay Spahl, George Patrinos, Brian Dorval and Jennifer Cournoyer

Present: Jeff Faulkner and Mike Schrader from Tighe and Bond

Scott opened the meeting at 6:38pm

Scott read the Governor's order into the minutes.

Accept the minutes of the March 4, 2020 Meeting: Tom made a motion to accept the minutes of the March 4, 2020 meeting, Bob seconded the motion, no discussion, a roll call vote was taken, all were in favor, passed unanimously.

Accept the minutes of the May 5, 2020 Meeting: Tom made a motion to accept the minutes of the March 4, 2020 meeting, Bob seconded the motion, no discussion, a roll call vote was taken, all were in favor, passed unanimously.

Scott opened the Public Hearing at 6:49pm

He stated that Tighe and Bond were contracted for a Water Sewer Rate Study evaluation. These are the final results of the study and they will be presenting them to the Board of Water Sewer Commissioners as well as the public. Scott explained that questions can be submitted via Facebook Live and would be answered as best they could. Scott then turned the presentation over to Jeff Faulkner and Mike Schrader from Tighe and Bond.

Before the presentation began Scott stated that he wanted to answer a question that was posed the other night at the Selectman's meeting regarding how many homes on town water, he stated about 50% of the single-family homes are on town water.

Dennis Brosnihan submitted a question via Facebook Live: Is it 50% or 15% and how many businesses, Scott replied stating that it was 50%.

Mike Schrader gave the presentation on the rate study with slides (which are attached to these minutes). When they began the study, they looked at expenses and revenue and then calculated the net revenue to see if existing rates can support the service or not. They use a ten (10) year long term plan to evaluate. Each slide of the presentation was explained showing the needs of the Water Sewer Departments and the increase to rates over a 10-year plan. The rate increases were shown with a Debt Exclusion and without a Debt Exclusion.

Bob Sullivan asked a question regarding the rates with debt exclusion verses without debt exclusion, the benefits for the town of the Water Sewer Department are, Fire Protection services, better rating on the town's insurance policy. Without the ability in the future to expand or upgrade we cannot bring in new taxable businesses or industries to town. The he also asked should we be looking at raising the fees for Fire Protection?

Scott Zajkowski interjected that he had been jotting down the benefits of a strong water sewer system, which overall provides a greater good for the community. The water feeds the schools, sports fields,

grocery stores and restaurants. ISO rating which will affect the property rates. He also wanted to say that when the rate study was started PFAS was even on the radar yet. The Board asked Tighe and Bond to provide rate increases with a debt exclusion and without a debt exclusion for comparison and something to think about.

Mike continued on through the rest of the presentation. At the end of the presentation Scott Zajkowski asked Mike if when the study was done any new users being added taken into account, Mike responded with an explanation and stated not at this time.

At this time questions were asked via Facebook Live:

Dennis Brosnihan: Question please - so from what I've heard, 50 percent of residents on w/s (or is just water, and/or sewer, what is, and how many are business from my first question) some the largest users would be business according to the gentleman, how do you rationalize charging non users, and users of the system to pay for the largest users which are business, as they use more. Who has that analysis and spreadsheet - thank you.

Scott replied that %50 of s/f homes are on the water system and the town benefits from the water sewer system.

Dennis Brosnihan: This gentleman keeps referring family impacts and affordability costs, residential, families-of 4 etc, where is the business side of the equation, impacts, etc. Does anyone have the metrics on how much water business use versus residential, we have meters, do we have data

Michelle Hayes: Can you break out the costs of services leveraged by "non-users" for fire dept etc. that doesn't seem to equate to the amount included in debt exclusion and What's the justification for 50% of private well citizens subsidizing lower rates for a service we don't have access to with debt exclusion?

Scott replied with an example of him paying for the school with his taxes but he does not have a child in the school system. There are certain items in town that we may not use but pay for.

A little more discussion occurred and it was asked via Facebook Live if there were any other questions, there were no additional ones noted.

Scott closed the Public Hearing at 8:30pm.

A discussion then occurred as to what the board wanted to do regarding the rates at this time. Bob stated he was not comfortable with voting on the rates until a decision was made regarding a debt exclusion. Jay stated he was not comfortable with a rate increase right now. It was stated that I would post the survey online for the public to view.

Superintendent's Report was reviewed by the board and a few clarifications were stated:

The generator is at Lafleur Electric and will be installed on Lakeview Ave Sewer Pump Station shortly. The Pump Station on Eisenhower Drive is a Sewer Pump Station, it is being paid for by a bond that was placed on by the original developer to bring it up to a level where it can be accepted by the Sewer Department.

COVID incident on Airport Rd and Tanyard Rd- a discussion occurred regarding possible exposure to COVID-19 and revamping systems to prevent this from happening and making sure the department has all the proper PPE's for working in these conditions.

Comments (Public or Board): No comments at this time.

Tom made a motion to adjourn, Bob seconded the motion, no discussion, vote taken, all in favor, passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 8:45pm

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Cournoyer
Administrative Assistant