



*Town of Walpole
Commonwealth of Massachusetts*

*William Abbott, Chair
Glenn Maffei, Clerk
Patrick Fasanello, Member
John Hasenjaeger, Member
John Spillane, Member*

Board of Sewer and Water Commissioners

**February 22, 2021
Meeting Minutes**

A regular meeting of the Board of Sewer & Water Commissioners was held on Monday, February 22, 2021. The meeting is called to order remotely via Zoom by Board Chair William Abbott at 2:00 p.m. Mr. Abbott recites the Executive Order on Remote Participation.

Present Remotely at the Meeting: William Abbott, Patrick Fasanello, John Hasenjaeger, Glenn Maffei, Bernie Marshall, Water & Sewer Superintendent, Rick Mattson, DPW Director, Scott Gustafson, Water & Sewer Assistant Superintendent, James Johnson, Town Administrator, Gary Riggots, Chairman of Trails Committee. Absent from meeting is John Spillane.

Abatelements

Mr. Fasanello asks if the MTU's are not functioning very well. Ms. Timilty explains the problem that the office has run into is they have not been able to schedule appointments since last March to correct any of the transmitter problems. Ms. Timilty explained the office has to estimate accounts when after an unsuccessful contact attempt to the customer for a meter reading. Ms. Timilty makes the Board aware the office has approximately 400 appointments that have to be made once the office can safely schedule appointments for the crew. Mr. Fasanello asks if these are all overestimation. Ms. Timilty answers yes and explains that once the office can successfully contact a resident and are provided with a meter reading at that time it is discovered that their previous billings was overestimated.

Motion made by Mr. Maffei to approve the abatements for Mr. Abbott to sign. ***Seconded*** by Mr. Hasenjaeger.

Roll Call Vote Glenn Maffei-Aye, Patrick Fasanello-Aye, John Hasenjaeger-Aye, William Abbott-Aye
Vote 4-0-0

Minutes of the January 19, 2021

Motion made by Mr. Maffei to approve the minutes of January 19, 2021. ***Seconded*** by Mr. Hasenjaeger.
Roll Call Vote Glenn Maffei-Aye, Patrick Fasanello-Abstain, John Hasenjaeger-Aye,
William Abbott-Aye
Vote 3-0-1

Superintendents Report

Mr. Marshall reports there has been one water main break on Sandra Road since the last meeting. Mr. Marshall provides an update on the SCADA upgrade, the Grant Program, a new employee update and what the distribution crew is working on. Mr. Marshall discusses the memo Wright & Pierce sent out regarding their hydraulic study and also provides an update on the bid project for the sandblasting and painting.

Mr. Abbott speaks to Mr. Gustafson regarding a case in Florida of a SCADA system that was hacked into and asked Mr. Gustafson what we are doing to prevent anything like this happening. Mr. Gustafson reported the vendor is due to come out this week and they has a list of tasks plus a punch list for cleanup items on the SCADA Project.

Mr. Fasanello inquires if there is hard copy of the Superintendents Report and Mr. Abbott answered it has always been verbal.

Mr. Maffei wanted to get an idea if the town knows where or how they positioned in the event of a power outage based on what is going on in Texas, Ohio and some other states. Mr. Marshall provides an update of what the town has in place in case of an outage.

Appointments:

Mr. Abbott introduces Gary Riggott, Chair of the Walpole Trails Committee and is requesting to use Jarvis farm to set up a program for the hikers on the Bay Circuit Trail to stay overnight. Mr. Riggott provides a lengthy history of Jarvis Farm and overview of the program the Trails Committee would like to have in place with the Bay Circuit Alliance.

Mr. Abbott asks the Board for any questions or comments.

Mr. Maffei comments he is the Vice Chairman of the Trails Committee. Mr. Maffei is in favor of exploring new ideas and mentions he is a big proponent of open space and outdoor recreation. Mr. Maffei comments he does not think it'll have a net positive impact to our water supply and doesn't think it'll have a net negative impact, either. Mr. Maffei supports this idea. Mr. Fasanello comments it's not passive recreation we're talking about, we're talking about accommodation. Mr. Fasanello continues to say the point that eludes him is, why aren't these people who are walking this trail going to a hotel or a motel up the street as he is concerned about taking on a liability. Mr. Fasanello comments that the primary purpose of this property, which was purchased by the ratepayers and not the taxpayers is to protect the water supply. Mr. Fasanello continues to review the proposal and questions what rate will be charged by the Commissioner if approved. Mr. Fasanello continues to discuss his concerns about the use of Jarvis Farm and the parking lot situation. Mr. Fasanello and Mr. Mattson discuss the progress with the construction of the parking lot. Mr. Johnson asks if the Commission has voted or not on whether to pursue it and the Town needs some guidance and direction from the Board of Sewer & Water Commissioners. Mr. Mattson comments they will have all the figures and necessary information available for the Board to make an informative decision as to whether they want to proceed with a capital improvement or not by this Fall. Mr. Hasenjaeger comments he think we need to have some kind of a workshop to discuss all this as so many issues bundled in this interesting request. Mr. Hasenjaeger makes his comments and expresses his concerns on this Jarvis Farm request. Mr. Hasenjaeger points out Mr. Rigot is certainly an admirable community volunteer and has done great work it is really not the point. It's not to tarnish in any way his proposals or ideas, but thinks we just have to maybe take a step back and try to work on all this

and try to get some foundation of what should and shouldn't happen at Jarvis Farm. Mr. Hasenjaeger continues to comment and asks who would take on total responsibility for the different types of events. Mr. Hasenjaeger feels the Commissioners need to have some workshop or something to get themselves organized as to how we want to approach and maybe consolidate the utilizations of Jarvis Farm.

Mr. Abbott comments that he is uncomfortable with the approach and points out Jarvis Farm is right in the neighborhood of Morningside Drive and feels they should talk with the Police for further information. Mr. Abbott continues to comment on other towns and how they run their operations renting function facilities and points out Jarvis Farm was acquired for aquifer protection. Mr. Abbott asks if the Board wants to take a position at this point, or whether they would prefer to give some thought and bring it up later. Mr. Riggott makes comments on notes he took throughout the meeting and the small needs of the electricity and rest room facilities. Mr. Riggott also discusses the Trails Committees Mission Statement. Mr. Abbott comments he wants to get to either a position that the condition wants to either if the Board is okay to proceed, or not to proceed, or they would want to think about this and more and we can put it on the agenda at a later point.

Motion made by Mr. Hasenjaeger, **Seconded** by Mr. Maffei to suspend this proposal for further future action and find a time to dedicate discussing the different components of this proposal.

Roll Call Vote Glen Maffei-Aye, Patrick Fasanello-No, John Hasenjaeger-Aye, William Abbott-Aye
Vote 3-1-0

Planning Board-Request for Comments-Revised Plans 1363-1391 Main Street

Mr. Abbott comments it's a service connecting to a water main on Main Street. Mr. Fasanello asks what is the building and Mr. Abbott answers it is the property at Leo's Pizzeria and the building behind that's being knocked down and it's going to be mixed apartment and commercial building on the first floor. Mr. Fasanello asks how many apartments upstairs and Mr. Abbott replies he doesn't know and he has seen the Planning Board and the Zoning Board's hearings on them and it really doesn't strike him as much of an issue for the Commissioners as buildings already have water. Mr. Fasanello replies if this is going to be made into condos his concern is the water meters and feels each store and apartment should have their own meter and feels they should have separate services so the Commission doesn't run into a problem. Mr. Johnson comments on his discussion with the Building Commissioner regarding the number of unit and is in the process of finding out whether or not it was condos or apartments. Mr. Abbott suggests we can hold this information till our next meeting. Mr. Hasenjaeger comments that the Sewer and Water Commissioners intent is to have separate meters for every unit, whether they be business or residential in that building. Mr. Mattson questions if the Commission still wants to go with individual meters, even if their apartments as opposed to condos? Mr. Hasenjaeger, Mr. Mattson and Mr. Marshall continue to have a discussion on how landlords pay utilities on apartments and have further discussion on this matter. Mr. Mattson comments the main concern is the utilities and as far as the number of units, we can expect that they should pay some additional entrance fees, connection fees, because they're going basically from a single, single service to several services. Mr. Mattson continues to discuss with the Board on the individual metering of units and if they are for rent apartments they should be cautious. Mr. Fasanello comments the Commonwealth of Massachusetts passed a law a few years ago, that allows landlords to put in their own meters for each apartment in the building because of water conservation reasons. Mr. Mattson and Mr. Fasanello continue to discuss the matter. Mr. Fasanello continues that if they were to make the units into condos it would be all done and the Commissioners should learn from our mistakes and not to do the same thing over and over again. Mr. Mattson reiterates we cannot collect storm water utility usage fees from a rental apartment, the landlord can. Mr. Fasanello and Mr. Mattson continue to discuss the individual metering of each unit.

Mr. Hasenjaeger comments the Commissioners can require them to put the meters in on his own or they have us put them in that is up to them. Mr. Fasanello comments if we put them in they are there and already registering and if they ever should go private, the situation is solved. Mr. Abbott comments we have ways of dealing with condos in the Munis system as apartments do get converted to condos. Mr. Abbott continues to compare with the 95 West Street Property and Mr. Fasanello provides his comments. Mr. Johnson comments he received clarification and it is apartment rentals. Mr. Abbott, Mr. Johnson and Mr. Hasenjaeger continue to discuss the option of Town Council providing legal advice regarding the matter of individual meters being installed. Mr. Mattson and the Board continue to have further discussion on this matter.

Mr. Abbott comments The Planning Board is asking for comments at this time.

Motion Made by William Abbott that The Commission has no comments. ***Seconded*** by Glenn Maffei.

Mr. Abbott asks if any further discussion? *No Answer*

Roll Call Vote Glenn Maffei-Aye, Patrick Fasanello-Abstain, John Hasenjaeger-Aye, William Abbott-Aye

Vote 3-0-1

2021 Spring Town Meeting Zoning Articles-Comment Request

Mr. Abbott comments two of the zoning articles, in particular article 17, which is the stadium, parking overlay district it was going to be brought up at the last town meeting and there was some sort of problem with it. It's being brought up, I guess properly, doesn't seem to need to have anything to do with water or sewer.

The other one is article 18 there is a ground mount solar overlay district and they are requesting that an additional parcel be added to that district. The Board has a couple questions for the Chair.

Motion Made by William Abbott that this is a read noted and that the Sewer and Water Commission has no comments on the two Articles. ***Seconded*** by Glen Maffei

Roll Call Vote Glenn Maffei-Aye, Patrick Fasanello-No, John Hasenjaeger-Aye, William Abbott-Aye
Vote 3-1-0

Correspondence #1 Mr. Abbott comments this is the regular information that he provides to the Commission with the revenue numbers for FY 21. Things of note, Mr. Abbott points out the water usage, seven months in, we're doing well. Mr. Abbott feels he should caution the Commissioners that the second half of the year generally does not mirror the first half in terms of revenue, it's usually about 94% or 95%. Mr. Abbott continues his review and comments of the Water and Sewer Revenue by month and Mr. Maffei provides his comments.

Correspondence #2 Mr. Abbott comments the Water Production is something he provides every month and it's sort of a leading indicator, because if you get 90 day billing, you've got three months worth of water. Mr. Abbott points out we had 16 months of less than historical usage. And then starting in May, through October, we actually were back. Mr. Abbott continues his report on water pumped from 2015 to present and there are no other comments from the Board Members.

Correspondence #3

Mr. Abbott comments this was an email to the Finance Committee from Jim Johnson regarding four Sewer and Water Articles (Article 7, 8, 9 & 10). Mr. Abbott and Mr. Johnson provide their comments regarding the four articles. Mr. Johnson feels it is something that as we get closer to Town Meeting the Commissioners are going to have to provide some direction. Mr. Abbott continues to discuss the retained earnings and the upcoming Rate Heating in June.

Motion Made by William Abbott ***Seconded*** by Glen Maffei that the Sewer and Water Commissioners are in support of Articles 7, 8, 9 and 10.

Roll Call Vote Glenn Maffei-Aye, Patrick Fasanello-Aye, John Hasenjaeger-Aye, William Abbott-Aye-
Vote 4-0-0

Mr. Johnson comments in the future, he and the Town Accountant Jodi Cuneo will work with Mr. Mattson and Mr. Marshall who will obviously identify the funding sources. Mr. Johnson feels it would help as we get closer to get a sense from the Commissioners what they want to do about the rates. Mr. Abbott comments it would not be appropriate at this point, since we still have a number of months with potential entrance fees and we can also get a better sense of water usage.

Continued Business.-

Mr. Abbott comments on the request by Commonwealth Dance Academy for use of Jarvis Farm from 8am to 8pm for their upcoming dance recital in June, 2021. The Board has a lengthy discussion of their thoughts and concerns.

Motion Made by Glenn Maffei to approve the application subject to applicable fees to be decided at a later time.

No Vote Taken

Amended Motion Made by Mr. Hasenjaeger to approve this request with a caveat there would be a \$150 fee attached for the support of opening and closing the facility. ***Seconded*** by Mr. Maffei

Roll Call Vote Glenn Maffei-Aye, Patrick Fasanello-No, John Hasenjaeger-Aye, William Abbott-Aye
Vote 3-1-0

Mr. Fasanello asks if a new development is going near the gun club. Mr. Abbott replies he is correct. There is a discussion on this land for sale.

Motion Made by Mr. Maffei and ***Seconded*** by Mr. Hasenjaeger to adjourn.

Roll Call Vote Glenn Maffei-Aye, Patrick Fasanello-Aye, John Hasenjaeger-Aye, William Abbott-Aye
Vote 4-0-0

Meeting adjourned at 3:30 p.m.

Meeting Minutes Accepted with Recommended Changes-***April 26, 2021***