



*Town of Walpole
Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Board of Sewer and Water Commissioners*

*John Hasenjaeger, Chair
Pradeep Mishra, Clerk
William Abbott, Member
Patrick Fasanello, Member
Jeffrey Fisher, Member*

MEETING MINUTES

Monday, March 11, 2024

6:30 P.M.

E.J. Delaney Treatment Plant

A regular meeting of the Board of Sewer & Water Commissioners was held on Monday, March 11, 2024 at the E.J. Delaney Treatment Plant, 1303 Washington Street. The meeting is called to order by Board Chair, John Hasenjaeger at 6:30 p.m.

The meeting is being recorded and will be available on Walpole Media's YouTube Channel.

Present at the Meeting

Sewer and Water Commissioners:

John Hasenjaeger, Patrick Fasanello, William Abbott, Pradeep Mishra and Jeffrey Fisher

Other Participants:

Rick Mattson, Director of Public Works, Scott Gustafson, Sewer and Water Superintendent, Stephen Nunnery, Asst. Sewer and Water Superintendent, Robert Truax, GLM Engineering, Matthew & Erica Sharris, 48 Mill Brook Road, Terri DiGiovanni, Board Secretary

Minutes: February 26, 2024

Motion made by Mr. Abbott and **Seconded** by Mr. Fasanello to approve the minutes of February 26, 2024.

Vote 4-0-1 (YES VOTE)

Roll call John Hasenjaeger-Yes, Patrick Fasanello-Yes, William Abbott-Yes, Pradeep Mishra Yes, Jeffrey Fisher-Abstain

Mr. Hasenjaeger states that we will jump around the Agenda due to timing.

Superintendents Status Report:

Mr. Gustafson reports that there have been no water leaks since the last meeting. MTU Report: No issues. Mr. Gustafson continues that the pilot program meters continue to send information to the Beacon Software System without issue. Mr. Gustafson notes that the system is running great and that more training for the staff is scheduled for next week.

Comment Requests: (All Plans will be available for review)

1. Memo from Planning Board re: 241 Norfolk Street

Read and Noted.

Correspondence:

1. 48 Mill Brook Road – Residents will be in attendance

Mr. & Mrs. Sharris attended the meeting to dispute charges on their water bill. Mr. Sharris notes that he thinks that it is an inaccurate meter reading. Mr. Sharris states that they didn't use their irrigation system during the bill period of 8/11/24-11/11/24. He continues that over the summer we probably used the irrigation system only 3 or 4 times since it was a wet summer. Mr. Sharris continues that the bill is close to \$3,200 and the past 2 or 3 years at the same time period, the bills were \$800, \$700, \$1200 respectively. Mr. Sharris continues that he appreciates that the water department replaced the old water meter with a new sophisticated meter this week. Mr. Abbott comments that he went back and looked at readings since 2019 and that during the summer between July 30th- October 22nd, you used 13,169 CF. Mr. Abbott continues the summer of 2020 between May 14th-Aug 27th, you used 14,000 CF. He continues that the middle of 2021, the readings if you combined them would've been probably around 11,000 CF. Mr. Abbott notes that May 2022-Aug 2022 you used \$14,000 indicating the sprinklers were being used. This past year Aug 12th –Nov 12th, it was at 15,000 CF. Mr. Abbott notes that the pattern fits that the sprinklers were being used. Mr. Abbott continues that you have one meter so it would seem to me that if something was wrong with the meter and if it wasn't going out into the irrigation system, the other 3 quarters would be high also. Mr. Sharris comments that he unplugged the irrigation system from the wall. Mr. Hasenjaeger comments that you have to shut the water line off, unplugging doesn't do anything. Mr. Hasenjaeger continues that if you had a leak in the pipe out in the yard, you have no way to shut that off. Mr. Gustafson notes that the old meter has been sent out for testing and that we have not received the results yet as of today. Discussion about the bill being estimated. Mr. Hasenjaeger notes that when we get the test results back, if there is a problem with the meter we can address it that way.

Mr. Hasenjaeger leaves the room and passes the gavel to Mr. Mishra to run the meeting in his absence.

Mr. Fisher also steps out of the meeting.

Appointment – 6:45PM – Lincoln Estates, Robert Truax, GLM Engineering

Mr. Abbott asks if this is the same plan. Mr. Truax states that it is the same plan, it's been appealed, been to court which is a remand back to the Planning Board. He continues that the only thing that has changed is an area that has been raised. Mr. Truax continues part of the reason for the denial was the gravel removal. He notes that the section has been raised 5 or 6 feet from the original plan and that is what is going back to the Planning Board. Mr. Abbott comments so the water plan is unchanged. Mr. Truax states nothing else is changed. Mr. Abbott comments that I think that we were ok with the water layout the first time. Mr. Abbott continues that our only concern was if they were changing the streets around. Mr. Truax notes that no water lines or utilities have been moved.

Motion made by Mr. Abbott and ***Seconded*** by Mr. Fasanello to send a letter to the Planning Board that after reviewing the current Lincoln Estates plan, the water system has not changed and the Commissioners are satisfied on how it is laid out.

Vote 3-0-0 (YES VOTE)

Roll call John Hasenjaeger-Abstain, Patrick Fasanello-Yes, William Abbott-Yes, Pradeep Mishra Yes, Jeffrey Fisher-Not Present

Mr. Hasenjaeger re-enters the room and Mr. Mishra returns the gavel.

Mr. Fisher returns to meeting.

Correspondence:

2. The Abrahams Group Water Rate Study

Mr. Abbott notes that the majority of the systems if you look at the MWRA rate survey of the adjacent communities have a fixed fee as well as consumption rates. Mr. Hasenjaeger comments per bill fixed fee revenues to be the component to address the bump in the PFAS component. Mr. Mattson comments not just PFAS, any capital improvement moving forward. Mr. Mattson continues that any capital improvement fee, like many towns do, in addition to whatever your rates are. Mr. Mattson continues it is like a depreciation fund if your pipes age, they will have to be replaced. Mr. Mattson notes that this method that Abrahams had recommended lessens the blow, so to speak, it is annualized and does not hit you all at once. Mr. Mattson continues a fee that would go on per bill. Mr. Abbott notes that some communities have a separate line on the bill so you know it is going to capital improvements. Mr. Mattson comments that it will become more difficult to continue to raise your rates to cover very expensive capital improvements that you need to make, it is just necessary improvements. Discussion on water tiers and water structures. Mr. Mattson notes beyond the use of retained earnings in either sewer and water, you have no capital funding plan. Mr. Hasenjaeger comments that the annual impact of a fixed fee should be a flat fee for having a water system. Mr. Hasenjaeger continues that I am in favor of doing the \$20 fee per quarterly billing which equals \$80 a year for a capital fee. Mr. Mishra suggests that we do a study of surrounding towns to see what fixed fees they have. Mr. Hasenjaeger notes that we are taking the action to do a study and we will finish the study before the rate hearing. Mr. Hasenjaeger continues that we decided to report back in a month with the survey of adjacent communities to get a sense of their flat fee range.

3. 2024 Spring Town Meeting – MBTA Article

Mr. Fasanello asks would this create so many apartments and so many living units that we would have a problem supplying them. Mr. Hasenjaeger comments the MBTA & Governors Office should not have the power to bully the Town of Walpole to change all their zoning. Mr. Hasenjaeger continues they want to allow 15 or more housing units per acre that means at least 1,000 more units of housing. Mr. Hasenjaeger continues that there is no law that entitles them to do so. He notes that this zoning could impact us and could stress the system. Mr. Mattson comments that he does not know where they would possibly put the housing units. Mr. Mattson continues that we will do as we do now, whenever a large complex goes before the town we handle on a case by case basis. Mr. Mattson continues that if you simply do not have the water to provide to that development then you take the proper channels and dispute the building of that complex.

4. Bill Abbott Letter – Jarvis Farm Future

Mr. Abbott notes that he had a chance to speak with the Town Recreation Director about the discussions the Sewer and Water Commissioners have had on installing a paved parking lot, declaring some of the old cabins as surplus as well as installing solar panels. Mr. Abbott continues that he asked what their plans are for Jarvis Farm now and in the future. Mr. Hasenjaeger comments that his observation is that there is not a plan for any heavy increase usage at Jarvis Farm. Mr. Hasenjaeger continues that they could not really name any new sport or any activities other than baseball. Discussion about the need for a new paved parking lot.

5. Jarvis Farm Permit Application – Bridal Shower and Engagement Party – June 8, 2024

The Board discussed an application received from an applicant to host a private event at Jarvis Farm on June 8, 2024.

Motion made by Mr. Fisher **Seconded** by Mr. Abbott to approve either allowing the pig roast or catered event at Jarvis Farm.

Vote 4-0-1 (YES VOTE)

Roll call John Hasenjaeger-Yes, Patrick Fasanello-Abstain, William Abbott –Yes, Pradeep Mishra-Yes, Jeffrey Fisher-Yes

6. Memo dated 03-07-24 from Bill Abbott re: Data for the Water Pumped since 2017

Mr. Mishra thinks the numbers look okay. Discussion about our wells and surface water.

LATE MAIL

Memo dated 03-07-24 from Bill Abbott re: FY24 Revenue Numbers

Mr. Mishra notes the revenue numbers are \$4.9 Million for water and \$4.2 million for sewer.

Old Business

1. MWRA Water Connection

Mr. Mattson comments that Weston & Sampson is currently coordinating a meeting with Stantec, Norwood's Engineering firm. Mr. Mattson continues at the meeting, we are hoping to find out why we need to do so many offsite improvements in Norwood. He continues secondly, to see if there is a more efficient and cost effective, less expensive improvements that we can do in Norwood to facilitate the MWRA connection. Mr. Mattson notes that the Department of Conservation & Recreation regarding the Interbasin Transfer Process is in the process of filing the necessary paperwork. Mr. Mattson continues they also need to do an alternative analysis for the state. Mr. Mattson notes that depending on what happens with the meeting and what we get from Norwood, we may request that they look at the other site as we discussed.

2. Jarvis Farm

3. Meter to Cash Report

Motion made by Mr. Fasanello **Seconded** by Mr. Fisher to adjourn at 8:12p.m.

Vote 5-0-0

Roll call John Hasenjaeger-Yes, Patrick Fasanello-Yes, William Abbott –Yes, Pradeep Mishra-Yes, Jeffrey Fisher-Yes

DATE MINUTES ACCEPTED: April 8, 2024