

Minutes of the Board of Water/Sewer Commissioners
December 5, 2016 (Rescheduled from 11/28)
DPS Administration Building – 16C Perry Way
4:30pm

Present Commissioners: John Tomasz, Robert Cook, Roger Jones

Staff:

DPS Director, Anthony Furnari
Business Manager, Kathe Talkington
Assistant Engineer, Dianne Gagnon
Assistant Water Operations Superintendent, Chris Hood
Sewer Chief Operator, Chris Pratt

Guests:

Mayor Holaday
Robert Rafferty, Environmental Partners
Dyke Hendrickson, Daily News

1. Mayor Holaday

Mayor Holaday let the Board know that the City Council has approved the setup of the Plum Island Utility Fund with the \$4.7 million settlement for future Plum Island repairs. The Council did not have the votes to move funds out of the account to cover legal/operational costs during the five year settlement. We will need to revisit this with a new strategy.

The Mayor was also present to hear the Environmental Partners update.

2. Appointments/Customer Issues

-27 Johnson St

Kevin and Kate Sweeney appeared before the Board to appeal an approved abatement amount. The Sweeney's 9/15/16 bill was \$1602.61. It is usually in the \$200-\$300 range. A technician went out and changed the meter, saying the old one was faulty. After an abatement was granted, the bill was still \$723.39. After discussion of the abatement calculation sheet, the Board decided they would approve an abatement reflective of summer usage of 3350 cubic feet (roughly the average of the past two summer quarters).

Commissioner Cook made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Tomasz to approve the abatement appeal and adjust the 9/15/16 bill to be reflective of usage of 3350 cubic feet.

Vote: 3 yes

-56 Spofford Street

Mr. Cummings appeared before the Board to appeal an abatement denial. The Cummings' 6/15/15 bill was \$3849.13. This was due to an outdoor shower leak in February 2015. The leak was noticed in spring 2015 after snow melt, water turned off to the outdoor shower, and a repair was made in July 2015. A copy of the bill from the plumber was not obtained until January 2016. After back and forth with the water/sewer office on the abatement process, an abatement was filed in June 2016 and denied in July

2016 due to the length of time it took to file the abatement. While he knows he is guilty of being late, the issue still occurred and was repaired.

The Commissioners discussed and although they had a hard time having sympathy based on time, the issue did occur, and the bill had been paid in full since. They decided in this case to waive the deadline and grant an abatement as calculated - water abatement \$553.19 and sewer abatement of \$839.61.

Commissioner Cook made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Tomasz to approve the abatement denial appeal and abate \$553.19 water and \$839.61 sewer from the 6/15/15 bill.

Vote: 3 yes

-12 Coombs Circle

Gary Duclos briefly presented his case to the Board last week and submitted a follow up letter prior to this meeting. The Board decided that since the repairs have not been made to leaks, they would table the appeal and place no interest on the outstanding bill until the spring when the resident can show leaks have been repaired.

Commissioner Cook made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Jones to table the appeal until leaks have been repaired in the spring.

Vote: 3 yes

3. Approval of Minutes

Commissioner Cook made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Jones to accept the October 17, 2016 minutes.

Vote: 3 yes

Commissioner Cook made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Jones to accept the October 26, 2016 minutes.

Vote: 3 yes

Mr. Cook asked about whether testing around the well has happened. Results should be known by the end of the month. Mr. Cook also asked about exploration of an additional well. The Mayor was unable to get permission to explore the property. Mr. Hood asked about the Enabling Act and right to look for water. The Mayor will reach out to legal on this.

4. Business Manager's Report

Ms. Talkington noted the following in the Business Manager's Report;

- Newbury liens were sent out last week.*
- Newburyport liens will be sent shortly – working with Jill Brennan in the Assessors' Office on timing.*
- Invoice to sign for the DPS building. They are still working on a punch list.*

Commissioner Jones made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Cook to accept the report as presented.

Vote: 3 yes

5. DPS Operations Reports

Mr. Furnari noted the following on the Director's Report;

- Water Superintendent Interviews are set to take place on 12/13/16 if any commissioners would like to be involved
- Chris Hood has been running the water treatment plant with help from Paul Colby and Tom Smolski. He was commended for stepping up to the plate
- Working on setting up recertification for CPR, etc
- D2 position open

Mr. Pratt noted the following on the Sewer Report;

- Plant ran well in October and November, with the exception of one issue in November, now fixed.
- Flows have been low.
- Catch up work proceeding at the plant
- Pursuing upgrades to SCADA software and hardware and maintenance and support for the SCADA system. Service and maintenance contract should be around \$5,000, software around \$5,000, hardware unsure, possibly \$15,000-\$20,000
- Cleaning and inspecting clarifiers.

Mr. Hood noted the following on the Water Operations Report;

- 82% reservoir levels – suggest we can now go back to a voluntary water ban.

Commissioner Cook made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Tomasz to move from a mandatory to a voluntary water ban.

Vote: 3 yes

- Bids for pump test on Evergreen property – Low bid of \$24,000-\$26,000 was Barry Miller who is also doing well redevelopment work.
- Wells are off for the season – until peak demand in May/June. They will still be tested two times per month.
- Annually fluctuation and sedimentation basin cleaning.
- Conducted tour for River Valley Charter School
- Upper reservoir is full, lower is 31 inches out

Mr. Hendrickson from the Daily news asked what percentage the reservoirs were down to at the lowest this summer. Mr. Hood answered 82% now and was at 73% at the lowest.

Commissioner Cook made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Jones to accept the reports as presented.

Vote: 3 yes

6. Sewer Pretreatment Report

7. New/Old Business

- Water Ban Status
See above.
- West End Easement Project Update
Dianne Gagnon noted that the engineering team is where they were at last month with easements out.

Walter Purdy, 22 Finnegan Way was present with a counter offer to his easement offer. He felt his property is greatly affected by two manholes, four bends, and a 120 ft. span with the potential for problems. The easement would prevent building on the left and front of his home. After speaking with professionals he is counterining with a \$10,000 amount and hopes to settle tonight. After discussion the Board agreed with Mr. Purdy.

Commissioner Cook made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Tomasz to accept the counter offer of \$10,000.

Vote: 3 yes

-Odor Control Project Update

Robert Rafferty of Environmental Partners presented a project status update. The project is at 65% design, now working on 90%. The schedule is still on track depending on submittals for covers and bio filter media, which is dependent on procurement. Submittals are needed for the design package in order to go out to bid.

As of now, probable cost would be \$5 million, up from \$3.5 million, which the City would bond. Originally, the project would be 16,000 cfm air capture and treatment from primary odor areas only. Now, the project would be 20,000 cfm with additional air capture from primary odor areas and provide capacity for secondary odor areas. Changes included;

- Biofilter system (\$450,000): size increases by 30%, increase from 60'x25' to 90'x35'
 - Odor control ducts (\$150,000): new bridges and columns, additional duct work, larger diameter (36" to 48")
 - Secondary odor areas (\$400,000): cover aerobic digesters, cover aeration troughs
 - Other odor control measures (\$200,000): Water St. pump station chemical system to pre-treat Plum Island wastewater, add trench drains at truck bay doors and dumpster to collect spills and odors
- Secondary odor areas and other odor control measures would have to be a third phase.

Mr. Cook and Mr. Tomasz remarked that we should make every attempt to improve odors 90+% to try and set an end point.

The Mayor asked Chris Pratt, based on past experience, what the advantages of covering the bio filter would be. Mr. Pratt commented that covering does not necessarily mitigate more odors and is not necessity. Operator safety then becomes an issue if enclosed it becomes a confined space, where hydrogen sulfide is present. To route odors they would need to put a large stack for dispersion, which would be an issue with abutters. Mr. Pratt also commented on trench drains as an additional item. He felt that these are a need, not an option. Mr. Tomasz commented we would work on phase 3 once further along in phase 2. He asked Ms. Talkington run some numbers on how it will affect rates going forward.

There was discussion of motions and funding needed and time frames for getting approvals to keep the project moving and on time. The Board requested that a bond authorization in the amount of \$800,000.00 be submitted to City Council for the December 12th meeting. The Board also asked that City Council approve 10% of the bond authorization (\$80,000.00) be funded from undesignated funds so that the submittals/shop drawings could be included in the general contract bid. In addition, the Board asked

that the transfer request be considered a time sensitive emergency and that City Council suspend the rules and vote on the \$80,000 at its first introduction.

Commissioner Cook made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Tomasz to ask City Council to appropriate 10% or \$80,000 from undesignated fund balance in order to submit design package to be included in the general bid.

Vote: 3 yes

Commissioner Cook made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Tomasz to accept and award bids from Biorem Technologies for the biofilter (\$529,000) and Ultraflore Corporation for the clarifier covers (\$237,525), pending financing.

Vote: 3 yes

-Evergreen Commons Project Update

See above.

8. Executive Session

None

9. Confirm Next Meetings

The next meetings will be held at 5:00p at 16C Perry Way;

January 4, 2016

February 13, 2016

Vote: 3 yes

10. Warrant Contract Signing

Commissioner Jones made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Cook to accept the warrants presented.

Vote: 3 yes

11. Adjournment

Commissioner Cook made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Jones to adjourn the meeting at 6:15p.

Vote: 3 yes

Respectfully Submitted By:

Katie Mahan