

Minutes of the Board of Water/Sewer Commissioners
Joint meeting with City Council
February 22, 2017
DPS Administration Building – 16C Perry Way
5:00pm

Present Commissioners: John Tomasz, Robert Cook (present until 5:30p), Roger Jones, Brendan Coffey

Staff:

DPS Director, Anthony Furnari
DPS Business Manager, Kathe Talkington
City Engineer, Jon-Eric White
Sewer Chief Operator, Chris Pratt
Sewer Collections Superintendent, Jamie Tuccolo
Water Superintendent, Ted Angelakis
Water Distribution Manager, Dan Lynch

Guests:

Mayor Holaday
Patricia Moore
City Councilors;
Sharif I. Zeid, Ward 1
Robert J. Cronin, Ward 3
Charles F. Tontar, Ward 4
Larry G. Giunta Jr., Ward 5
Edward C. Cameron, Jr., Councilor At-Large
Barry N. Connell, Councilor At-Large
Andrew Dennehy, BETA Inc
Eric Kelley, Environmental Partners
David Hall, Hillside Center
Dyke Hendrickson, Newburyport Daily News

1. Mayor Holaday

Mayor Holaday invited Jamie Tuccolo to present on the Graf Road Lift Station Replacement. Mr. Tuccolo presented a slide show that pointed out

-capacity issues at the existing stations – designed for 650 gallons per minute and is operating currently at 1400 gallons per minute, causing constant repair work to maintain

-wet well access safety issues and confined space – currently when performing long hours of maintenance (2) operators must descend into the well, (1) operator remains in the truck to operate, and (1) operator communicates between the men in the well and the truck operator. The truck operator has no view of the well and fully relies on the middle man for communication. Lifelines are impossible in this situation.

-future flows – residential are estimated at 222,200 gallons per day. Industrial flows are difficult to estimate based on varied uses. The Planning Department estimates there is one million square feet available to be expanded.

-repair/replacement options

(1) Addition of a third pump to existing pump station - \$1,302,000 – does not meet future demand and does not address safety concerns

(2) Increase existing wet well - \$3,255,000 – meets future residential, but not industrial demand and does not address all safety concerns

(3) Replace station/same location - \$6,184,500 – meets future demands and addresses safety concerns

(4) Construct New Station/new location - \$5,780,880 - meets future demands and addresses safety concerns. The new station would be built across the street

Councilor Cronin was interested in option (2), increasing the capacity of the existing wet well. Andrew Dennehy, of BETA Inc. responded that this option is due to space. The size of the well must be increased to increase capacity. Constructability becomes an issue at the current site, bordered by wetlands. Option (4) would allow for new station layout of increased size.

Commissioner Cook asked if odor control venting would be needed. Mr. Dennehy responded that odor control would be a minor issue at the lift station.

Commissioner Tomasz asked what the age of the current lift station was. It is now 30 years old. If we did not carry on with the project, what would be lost. Mr. Tuccolo answered that the department would lose \$300,000 in design, a \$1.8 million grant, and lose the ability to increase flow.

Commissioner Jones asked if a new station is built across the street, would we retain the current one. Mr. Tuccolo answered that it would be demolished and not act as a backup. The station has met its life expectancy; functioning over capacity for at least (5) years.

Councilor Connell was concerned with odor control and how far away from the nearest private property the station would be. Mr. Dennehy responded that the station would be no closer than 100 ft. of an industrial property. There has been no history of odor complaints and the processes are different from those of the wastewater treatment plant.

Councilor Zeid asked for some mathematical clarification on pump cycles, increased wet well size and VFD (variable frequency drive), maximum flows versus average flows, and industrial user increase. There was discussion on the basis for design back in the 1980s. Mr. Tuccolo noted that the City has flow data from all seasons dating back to 2014.

Councilor Zeid asked if Graf Road was the oldest lift station in the City. The Hale Street lift station is actually the oldest lift station, so it is surprising the way Graf Road was designed.

Councilor Cronin asked where the vacuum truck is currently housed. It remains on Perry Way at the DPS property. The truck is used at Graf Road more than anywhere else, and it would make sense to be housed there.

Councilor Connell asked how far down the wet well will be. It would be down 30ft. As far as the topography and groundwater, Mr. Dennehy felt confident the new station would be in similar conditions to the existing station. There was discussion on silicosis, former tide lands and hydraulic pressures. Mr. Dennehy stressed that the existing station has not has any of these related issues and conditions would be nearly the same.

Councilor Zeid asked if the wet well would be built to the maximum size in new location. Mr. Dennehy responded that no, it would not be.

Councilor Tontar had a question about future development. According to Planning, there are one million developable square feet of land in the industrial/business park.

Councilor Giunta asked what neighborhoods the Graf Road station serves. Mr. Tuccolo and Mr. Dennehy pointed out the area on a map. He also had questions on timing of the bid process. Mr. Tuccolo responded that the project is currently out to bid, with sub bids due Friday 2/24/17. Mr. Dennehy commented that there are 60+ plan holders and heard there is tremendous interest, and it is expected to be competitive.

Mayor Holaday asked what else is in the garage area. Mr. Tuccolo answered there would be an I beam, for easier pump maintenance.

Councilor Giunta asked what the project will cost rate payers. Ms. Talkington responded that the effect for the Graf Road project alone would increase the average sewer bill approximately \$33/year. Including the debt for the force main and odor control projects, the average sewer bill would increase \$110/year. Commissioner Tomasz pointed out this would be with no retained earnings transferred. Ms. Talkington noted that the numbers are conservative and older debt would be paid off in time. Councilor Connell asked what that would be translated into a bill. Ms. Talkington responded this would vary based on the specific debt repayment schedule.

Councilor Tontar asked if there would be any other capital projects in next 10 years. There likely would be with aging infrastructure; however other projects would be finished. Mayor Holaday pointed out storm water management as a future concern.

Councilor Zeid asked if the project would be managed by BETA through construction. It would be. He also asked if the sub bids would be shared with the Council. Mr. Tuccolo responded that yes, after Friday they could share the sub bids. There was brief discussion on contingency accounted for and also the types of companies that might bid on such a project.

Councilor Connell asked that the slides be sent to the City Clerk to be forwarded on to the City Council.

Water and wastewater modeling plan;

Mayor Holaday opened discussion on a water and wastewater modeling plan the City is looking to do. It would look at the capacity of our water and sewer systems. AECOM would assist water and BETA would assist sewer. The estimated cost for sewer is \$300,000. Mr. Dennehy explained the study would look at the capacity within major lines. The City has a good idea as far as lift stations already. This would be important for future development around the City. Mayor Holaday asked Mr. Dennehy and Mr. Tuccolo to put together a list of lines to look into. Water has met with AECOM on safe yield. There are (4) tasks that will cost \$90,000 that will study the reservoir and capacity. A spring study before growth occurs would be ideal. Mayor Holaday noted there has been so much pressure on water and sewer, she would like to recommend this study comes out of free cash.

Evergreen Commons;

Mr. Angelakis updated the Commissioners that water has been working with the representatives and owner of the Evergreen Golf Course property. The 4.5 hour pump test in the 2.5" test well went well. The City would like to proceed with an 8" test well with increased timing. Mayor Holaday explained our right of entry is through end of February and we need to go about two more weeks into March. Recent storms have delayed tests.

Councilor Zeid asked if there was a reason to pursue the 3rd well. A potential new water source is good for the future of the City. The Planning Board and water are running on parallel tracks with the Evergreen project. They will sit as a team to evaluate findings.

Councilor Tontar asked if a different source is important for the future of the City. The Mayor answered that this is the only viable additional place we think we can find water. She was not sure what it means yet.

Councilor Connell asked if the City had looked into the City Forest. The Mayor responded that we have not.

Councilor Giunta asked if the development were to be built, how the well would be protected. There is a long list of conditions to be attached to the Planning Board decision.

Councilor Zeid asked if the testing finds a new well is developable, would land acquisition take place. The Mayor responded that she would not go there yet.

Commissioner Jones asked about our bonding rate. Ms. Talkington responded that it has been around 3.5% currently. Projected rates from Ethan Manning are 4.5% for 25 years, conservatively.

2. Graf Road Pump Station Loan Order

See above

3. Appointments/Customer Issues

None

4. Approval of Minutes

Commissioner Jones made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Tomasz to accept the January 4, 2017 minutes.

Vote: 3 yes

5. Business Manager's Report

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

- City Council has approved odor control bonding
- City Council has tabled the Graf Rd Lift Station project
- City Council has approved the transfer for rehabilitation of wells for water
- Water is not in the black due to debt being paid almost in full for the year
- Noted a consumption comparison – FY16 billed consumption was 72,361,254 cubic feet, at this time last year billed consumption was 48,017,289 cubic feet. FY17 billed consumption thus far is 51,567,612 cubic feet.
- Working on FY18 budgets

Commissioner Tomasz asked when rate recommendations would be made. Ms. Talkington replied that until we know what loans will be, we will not know. Water rates could likely stay the same. Sewer rates may need to go up. Ms. Talkington has a meeting with Ethan Manning next week.

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

Vote: 3 yes

6. DPS Operations Reports

Mr. White noted the following on the Engineer's Report;

- Plum Island Hydrant replacement is still in the design phase, with a goal of going out to bid in March
- West End Easement – a counter offer has been received for 235 Storey Avenue. The owners countered \$7800 to the \$1000 offered. This is the final easement needed to build the road. This piece of land was not appraised before the offer. Commissioner Tomasz was inclined to say no. He asked that Mr. White send a letter from the Commissioners and himself with the \$1000 offer.

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

- Thanked staff on budget work, many hours on the Evergreen project, and the Graf Rd lift station
- Congrats to Commissioners Tomasz and Cook for renewing their Board positions for three years

Commissioner Tomasz asked about the bathroom sink issue noted in the report. Mr. Furnari explained there have been a few remaining issues in the new administration building, one being automatic faucets in the restrooms.

Mr. Pratt noted the following on the Sewer Report;

Mr. Pratt presented the Pretreatment report on behalf of Jerry Cronin;

- Normal monthly sampling has taken place; PCI Synthesis is the only result of concern with a recurring high BOD level. They continue to work with a consultant
- Two breweries are not permitted; will be pursuing them and hopefully making inspections
- Working on new FOG program

As far as the treatment plant;

- Phase 1 is done
- Annual metals testing
- Working out process issues at plant
- Experienced high flows due to recent Northeaster.
- Sent samples to Dr. Michael Richard for filamentous identification
- Received Budget number for SCADA computer upgrade of approx. \$18,000

Mr. Tuccolo noted the following on the Sewer Collections Report;

- Graf Road lift station (see above)
- Cleaning lines
- Working on new FOG program. Stantech is trying to develop a strategy on grease traps in the City.
- PI alarms on Northern Blvd. are done and working out kinks. Goal is by next year at this time the entire system will be 100% functional.

Mr. Lynch noted the following on the Water Construction Report;

- Carter and Tilton Streets had small breaks
- Spent time shoveling hydrants out after storms
- Leak on Plum Island Blvd.
- Working on Plum Island Hydrant Replacement project
- Working on FY18 budget
- Cleared path for drill rigs at Evergreen for test well

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

- The reservoir is now at 91%, Indian Hill is out 34 inches
- Asked to lift the voluntary water restrictions

Commissioner Jones made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Tomasz to lift the voluntary water restrictions effective immediately.

Vote: 3 yes

- Moving on to an 8 inch test well at Evergreen
- Well 1 and Well 2 rehabilitation and reconditioning will begin when Barry Miller finishes with test wells
- A permission request for an ice fishing tournament on the Upper Artichoke this Sunday. Not frozen any longer, heard the tournament has been canceled.
- The Tour de Cure Bicycle Ride requested to route by the Indian Hill Reservoir on May 21, 2017. Mr. Angelakis expressed concern with liability. Commissioner Tomasz asked Mr. Angelakis make a recommendation and get back to the commission. The City should be released of liability.
- MA DEP quality sampling will take place from April to October

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

Vote: 3 yes

7. Sewer Pretreatment Report

See above – Chris Pratt update

8. New/Old Business

-West End Easement Update

See above – Jon Eric White update

-Odor Control Project Update

Eric Kelley of Environmental Partners was present to update the Board on the Odor Control Project. The Biorem full construction submittal to central register was submitted today and will be live next Wednesday. General bids will be available in mid-April. The project is about a month behind Graf Road in the bid process. Pre-bid meeting will be on 3/13/17. Considerable interest is expected. We are still waiting on the Ultraflote submittal.

-Evergreen Commons Project Update
See above.

-Hillside Center/David Hall

David Hall presented in regards to the Hillside Center project. The Planning Board approved 48 units plus a 10 unit residence for the YWCA. The units will be net zero with all energy needed provided onsite by solar panels on campus. The community will be self-sustaining. The team has worked hard on strategies for grey and black water reduction using features and fixtures in units as well as throughout the campus. The community is at the Eastern edge of the Low Street tributary area. Mr. Hall anticipates the flow would be reduced to 50 gallons per bedroom per day, not including the prospect of a more composting toilet. There are (61) bedrooms within the tributary area and (42) outside. Mr. Hall is looking for relief on the upfront cost to connect the community to the sewer system and asking the commission to acknowledge many of the alternative fixtures and features that will be used. Commissioner Tomasz asked where we stand on cost to the developer.

- The full betterment for (103) bedrooms is \$273,803.90 based on 110 gallons per bedroom per day. Reducing this to 50 gallons per bedroom per day for the (61) units in the tributary area would be \$74,420.00. Commissioner Tomasz noted that the Board has made exceptions in the past, for example the Port Rehab structure.
- The I/I fee on (103) bedrooms would be \$15,450.00 based 50 gallons per bedroom per day it would be \$15,450.00. Mr. Hall would like to provide work in place of this fee; he would replace 8 inch sewer main and manholes working with Mr. Tuccolo.

Mr. Pratt asked if the betterment is reduced to the 50 gallon per bedroom per day rate, if there was some guarantee that residents don't replace fixtures. There was discussion on this green initiative and residents knowing what kind of community they were moving into. Mr. Hall was willing review water usage after a period of time.

Commissioner Tomasz made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Jones to approve a betterment of \$74,420.00 based on 50 gallons per bedroom per day and work in place of I/I fee of \$15,450.00 based on 50 gallons per bedroom per day with the understanding the City will check and revise after two years of usage.

Vote: 3 yes

-FY2018 Proposed Water and Sewer Budgets
Will be reviewed at next meeting

9. Executive Session

None

10. Confirm Next Meetings

The next meeting will be held at 5:00pm at 16C Perry Way;
Wednesday March 22, 2017

Vote: 3 yes

11. Warrant Contract Signing

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

Vote: 3 yes

12. Adjournment

Commissioner Jones made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Tomasz to adjourn the meeting at 7:00p.

Vote: 3 yes

Respectfully Submitted By:
Katie Mahan