

# TOWN OF WINCHESTER – CITY OF WINSTED

Town Hall – 338 Main Street

WINSTED, CONNECTICUT 06098



## ***Water & Sewer Commission Minutes Held via ZOOM***

***Livestreamed on YouTube at the following address:  
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCT1ffBjMTBOM5OEXSgKlqg/videos>  
December 8, 2020 Regular Meeting – 6:00 PM***

### **I. CALL TO ORDER:**

Vice Chairman Joe Lemelin called the meeting to order at 6:04PM.

### **II. ROLL CALL:**

In addition to Mr. Lemelin, the following members were present: George Closson, Bill Hester, and John Masicotte (6:09 PM). Also present were Director of Public Works Jim Rollins, Superintendent of Water Works Marty Cormier and Finance Director Bruce Stratford.

Tim Moran was absent excused.

### **III. PUBLIC INPUT:**

No input from the public was received.

### **IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – NOVEMBER 10, 2020:**

**MOTION:** by Bill Hester to approve the minutes of November 10, 2020. Second by J. Lemelin; **VOTE:** *motion carried unanimously.*

### **V. OTHER BUSINESS:**

#### **A. Barkhamsted Sewer Update:**

Jim Rollins indicated that the force main is completed from end to end and the laterals to the five properties are being hooked up this week. He expected the manholes to be delivered and installation to start next week. He shared the only foreseeable glitch as possibly the availability of sewer digital flow meters for the manholes at the property line. J. Rollins thought it likely that they would show up in time to be ready for startup. J. Rollins asked M. Cormier for update on delivery. M. Cormier reported TiSALES was unable to provide that information today. He noted that they were ordered on time and it does fall in the two-week parameter for when they are needed. It shouldn't hold us up, if they are ready to go, we will be able to meter it from each individual house. He explained that this meter will be a second check more of a safeguard, every building will be metered, and we will be able to balance the meter readings and we can measure our meter reading at the town line. J. Rollins noted that there is also a flow meter at their E1 pump, so until someone else gets hooked up, that will be a triple check. M. Cormier suggested that if we do not have the meter in hand and they are ready that we go ahead and let them fire up the system, we can take a reading from the building itself, it will be the only entity hooked up. B. Stratford questioned the expected date that they will actually begin pushing flow to the sanitation plant. J. Rollins expected that it will likely be about two weeks. B. Stratford

questioned whether the January readings go out if they will essentially be one customer for a couple of weeks. J. Rollins indicated that the water meters will not be set up before they energize the system. They are changing to our meters with our MIU's, we will have all that information. B. Stratford-so you are going to use the meter readings to document the sewer flow. J. Rollins-yes and the meter at the E1 pump and the meter at the pit. So, there will be three ways to cross check. B. Stratford-so you expect that the January readings we will have multiple customers. J. Rollins- yes, assuming that they are up and running by January 1<sup>st</sup>, we will have something set up by January 1<sup>st</sup>, however the meters could read (0). B. Stratford-in that case they would only get the base charge. J. Rollins-yes. J. Masicotte-I missed the first part, I don't see any manholes in there yet. J. Rollins-the force main is done, the laterals are going in this week, they are expecting to excavate and place the manholes next week and finish up the internal plumbing, set up the meters and then it should be operational. J. Masicotte-is the flow meter going in at the town line? J. Rollins-yes, it is, we are experiencing a delay in getting that meter. B. Stratford-tomorrow I am supposed to connect with the Assistant Treasurer-Spencer Monroe for the Town of Barkhamsted, on how to transmit billing information and what I to know when we would have data for them.

**B. Report from Finance Director:**

B. Stratford- provided copies of the budget reports, bank statements. B. Stratford-I sent out four documents with notes and I think they are self-explanatory.

*Sewer fund Budget:* You will see we are at 42% for the fiscal year, so we are actually ahead on our sewer rent collections. The current line item we are at \$631,996 versus \$610,000 what we collected last year. We are a little behind on the past due rents, which is typical for this COVID year. Russ Septic's bill was fully collected. B. Stratford-is Alex taking any dumps from Russ Septic? J. Rollins-he hasn't that I am aware of, however he learned that they are behind in payments to Torrington.

B. Stratford reported that the Sanitation Plant Department is at 37% budget for the fiscal year, noting that all those items appear to be what they should be. B. Stratford reported that the Pumping Station is at 32% of budget, indicating he had made a note on page 3. He explained that the Barkhamsted Interlocal project expenditures include \$15K of Mallory Brook funds to offset some of the inspection fees which is why the year to date expenditure reads as a negative number. This is because more fees have been collected than have been inspection fee expenditures, according to B. Stratford. He reported the Sewer Fund as 31% of budget.

B. Stratford reported the water rents running ahead of last year by about \$35K. However, he noted that while the town is \$25K behind on past due water rents, total revenues are very comparable to last year at this time: \$851K compared to \$853K. He noted that he had underlined some accounts that were showing some negative unincumbered balances. B. Stratford explained that those are just reminders that we have to be careful. B. Statford reminded commissioners that metered expenses are known and indicated at the bottom of the page and that some extra expenses are being run through that account. Water Works is at 44% of the budget, Water Plant is at 31% of the budget, Administration is at 37% of the budget and Water Commission is at 7% of the budge, with the total expenditures being at 32% of the budget, according to B. Stratford. He noted that operating expenses were running very comparable to last year at \$611,000 with it being \$606,000 last year at this time.

G. Closson questioned the line item for the temporary intern on page 2. B. Stratford asked whether there was some scholarship money coming in to offset that. M. Cormier confirmed that there was but could not recall what was approved by the commission as a match for that cost. He indicated that he would check the past minutes on this. B. Stratford understood that there was \$3,120 in intern/temporary help cost but questioned whether that was supposed to be a 50% match. M. Cormier believed that to be correct but noted that he would have to check. J. Rollins indicated that information will be available for the next meeting.

B. Stratford reported the sewer fund bank balance as \$469,423 and the Water Fund with \$561,537. He noted the savings account balance for the two funds as \$1,147,355 with a split of \$837,867 in the water fund and \$273,694 in the sewer fund. He noted that while these balances are still healthy, this past week a check was cut for the vacuum truck which will deplete \$205K from each one of these accounts. B. Stratford indicated that he was pleased to pay cash and not to have to finance the purchase. He acknowledged the dealer with being able to accommodate that with almost one year of construction without this commission having to put up any money in advance.

B. Stratford commented on the Water & Sewer Capital Improvements, noting that Page 2 details the various projects. He noted that the report included the budget on some of the projects running from July, 2018 through November, 2020. He noted that an invoice from P&G Pepper remained outstanding although a purchase order was issued. M. Cormier confirmed that he was following up on that. B. Stratford reported having received and paid \$50K worth of invoices from Brookside and Overlook. B. Stratford explained that the vac truck cost was appropriated over several years.

B. Stratford reminded the Commission that there had been activity on the Brookside water main, Wallen's Hill tank, Crystal Lake tank, and the pipe saw. He also noted the engineering fees incurred on Case, Center, Holabird, Thibault, and Gay Streets.

**C. Update on Sewer Plan Furnace Delivery and Install.**

J. Rollins reported the installation of the furnace as nearly completed, noting that the units were in place and the plumbing was done. Although the furnace had not yet been fired up, the installation was going according to plan, according to J. Rollins.

**D. Step Screen Bid Update.**

J. Rollins reported that an update will be provided at a future date.

**E. Discussion on Sewer Rate Increase for Next Three to Four Years.**

Mr. Stratford reminded the Commission that the options were going to be reviewed. Additional discussion was deferred until the next regular meeting.

**F. Discussion MIU.**

J. Rollins noted that due to an uptick in the COVID-19 pandemic, the MIU program had again been put on hold. J. Rollins relayed an experience with a very anxious customer because of virus

fears despite an explanation behind the initiative having been shared. He indicated that the program will hopefully resume in the Spring.

**G. Update on Minutes for Secretary for Commission.**

Mr. Rollins introduced Rhonda Roy as Secretary for the Commission.

**H. Crystal Lake Emergency Action Plan Update – Lenard Engineering Update.**

J. Rollins reported after finally receiving the task orders from Lenard Engineering, four aspects are being further reviewed. Referring to the required 10-year update to the water supply plan, J. Rollins noted that there is a new element added to the requirements this year, a Safe Yield Study. He explained that the Safe Yield Study is to ensure people don't over pump their aquifers or exceed their bypass permits or diversion permits. He explained that there is also a Risk and Resiliency Assessment, a vulnerability assessment, and an Emergency Response plan. J. Rollins explained that some of these studies are updates and some of these are new.

J. Rollins reported the plans have an estimated cost of \$29,500. He questioned which line to fund these. J. Masicotte suggested that the cost might come the Water Fund. B. Stratford noted that Department 322-Water Commission, a contingency account (322-835), carried a \$45K budget of which \$6K had been spent to date leaving a balance of \$38K. He noted that there were currently no encumbered purchased orders. B. Stratford also noted that 851-Engineering Services had a \$20K budget with no expenditures or encumbrances. J. Masicotte questioned whether there were funds remaining in the water budget expenditure report regarding Overlook and Brookside. J. Rollins reported that Overlook should be completed at this point and that with Brookside, there may be some paving cost in the Spring. J. Rollins explained that a patch was completed but that the Town may split the cost because of the work that is necessary there. J. Masicotte noted that Overlook has \$100K remaining in the budget. He suggested it be taken from that account. B. Stratford noted that there was also an account, State of Emergency Action Plan 322-878-2104, with a \$20K budget. B. Stratford suggested using that allocation along with a transfer of \$10K from the Overlook Road Water Main Budget to the Emergency Action Plan Budget.

**MOTION:** by G. Closson to move from account 322-878-2003-0000 to account 322-878-2104-0000, \$10,000 in budget dollars, which is Fund 123, second by J. Lemelin. **Vote:** All in favor, *motion carried unanimous.*

**I. Sewer Plant Generator, Frozen Valve in Potable Water Pump, Internet Update, Broken PVC Pipe.**

J. Rollins reported the internet was up and running. He noted that the sewer plant generator circuit had been installed but did not recall if the rest of the setup was complete. B. Hester indicated that he would be checking for updates on the day following this meeting. J. Rollins reported that nothing had been done about the frozen valve or broken PVC pipe, explaining that the boiler had been prioritized. J. Masicotte questioned the broken PVC pipe. J. Rollins explained that its break was because it was misaligned and that as it follows around the building and comes together, is stressed, and has a bit of a crack. J. Rollins characterized it not a big job, explaining that it was just a matter of shutting down the pumps for a little while and fixing it. J. Masicotte questioned whether it was something that would be completed in the spring. J. Rollins

confirmed that it would be done after the boiler was completed. B. Hester indicated he would follow up on the valve on the portable water pump.

**V. BILL ADJUSTMENTS:**

No bill adjustments were made.

**VI. DIRECTOR'S REPORT:**

J. Rollins reported the Carey Avenue sewer project had emerged again as one of the houses on that street appears to be getting sold. A sewer main will be installed to connect a couple of houses in that area. The buyer, seller, and realtor had been referred to Lenard Engineering as they work out who was paying for what and determine what is involved.

J. Rollins reported that scheduling for testing for the wastewater licenses has again begun. He noted that Alex, Wade, and possibly John are scheduling tests.

J. Rollins reported that the Town had been approved for the National Historic Places. He indicated that he had contacted Jenny Scofield from State Historic Land Preservation to gain a better understanding of exactly what that meant and was provided with list of things of where it impacts and where it does not. In summary, there was not a great deal of impact with the designation, according to J. Rollins. He indicated that he was going to consult with Lenard Engineering on how the designation may impact dam and partially complete dike repairs.

J. Rollins reported a complaint of shooting on the water company property off of Old Danbury Quarter Road. He noted that a complaint had also been filed with the Police Department. He indicated that there appeared to be a mess at that location so felt the complaint was warranted.

J. Rollins reported on the on-call phone procedure for the sewer plant, noting that there had been overlaps of phones calling phones, explaining that it was not well automated. He explained that there is a cell phone that is sent home with somebody on a nightly basis or as an available basis. J. Rollins explained that the compensation had to still be worked out for the person who will be required to carry a phone. J. Masicotte recalled having already dealt with that issue. J. Rollins explained that it had been dealt with for M. Cormier's group of guys. He noted that the sewer plant employees do not get the frequency of calls and accordingly, did not anticipate the stipend to be a significant amount of money. He indicated that he would be working with Alex on this.

**VII. OLD BUSINESS:**

**A. Sewer plant bridge repair.**

J. Masicotte reported the sewer plant bridge repair project will be undertaken in 2022.

**B. State revolving fund.**

Regarding the Wallens Hill and Crystal Lake tanks, J. Rollins reported that a flow study of the system had been completed and was being updated. He noted that the property was also being surveyed. He reported that the engineering fees on the water main project are being negotiated.

**C. Dam Repair through USDA funding.**

J. Rollins reported that similarly to the past, the next step is to revisit the design and permit after now having received our designation. J. Rollins indicated that the next consideration should be how to pay for what was estimated for a \$3M dam and dike repair. He noted that we have these to SRF applications, the mains and the tanks and the next round of tanks.

**D. Water Regulations to Accept High Density Polyethylene.**

J. Rollins reported that these had not yet been reviewed.

**E. Tree Harvesting.**

No business discussed.

**F. MIU's Installed.**

J. Rollins reminded the Commission that the program has been put on hold due to COVID-19.

**VII. NEW BUSINESS:**

J. Masicotte indicated that the meetings will likely be held remotely, via ZOOM, for the foreseeable future.

G. Closson questioned whether M. Cormier might again review the pump supplier for Morgan Drive/Lakeview Road neighborhood. J. Rollins indicated that they may get Eric Hess to look at it to provide a proposal. He explained that as they were reviewing that area, they considered doing it similarly to Overlook and run it up the side of the road. He explained it would be just in the grass which would save quite a bit in paving costs. G. Closson recalled Lenard Engineering having provided an estimate. He noted that there was additional capacity with the plant available and would result in adding some more users.

G. Closson questioned the Highland Lake Drawdown, in terms of how the water is controlled from Rugg Brook to Crystal Lake and then the outlet going into Highland Lake. J. Rollins explained that the way it was supposed to work is when they needed water in Highland Lake, water from the Mad River could be diverted and the diversion canal into Rugg Brook. Rugg Brook would fill up, the gate would be opened, and it would flow through the tunnel into Crystal Lake, overflow Crystal Lake down into Sucker Brook and then fill Highland Lake, according to J. Rollins. He explained that was what they did for waterpower back in the day. J. Rollins noted that it doesn't currently work because the diversion dam is not functioning so the water cannot be diverted, noting that there is a breach in the canal. He explained that this would be part of the \$3M dam and dike repair.

**VIII. ADJOURNMENT:**

**MOTION:** J. Lemelin-made a motion to adjourn meeting at 6:53pm, seconded by B. Hester.

**Vote:** *all in favor-motion carried unanimous.*

Respectfully submitted,

  
Rhonda Roy  
Minutes Secretary