

Town of Rockland SEWER COMMISSION

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Charles Heshion, *Commissioner*
Daniel E. Duross, *Commissioner*
Keith Nastasia, *Superintendent*



Remote Teleconference
Recorded for Public Playback on WRPS
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Rockland Sewer Commissioners Meeting July 15, 2021

In Attendance: Charles Heshion, Dan Duross, Robyn Day, Keith Nastasia, Rick Kotouch, Attorney Ray Jennings and Leo Reardon representing Article 15 Brewery.

Motion made by Chuck Heshion, 2nd by Dan Duross to begin the meeting at 7:03 pm, July 15, 2021. All in favor 2-0.

Introductory Remarks

Chuck Heshion, Commissioner.

Approve Minutes of Previous Meetings

Motion made by Dan Duross, 2nd by Chuck Heshion to approve minutes of May 6, May 19 and June 17, 2021. All in favor 2-0.

Note: correction to be made to June 17 minutes on a comment made by Rick Kotouch on 1.5 MGD but should read 2.5 MGD

Drain Layer License

Robert B. Our Co., Inc., Harwich, MA - all paperwork and fees provided and paid in full.

Motion made by Chuck Heshion, 2nd by Dan Duross to approve the Drain Layer license for Robert B. Our Co. All in favor 2-0.

New Connection Request(s)

Keith has visited the site of a proposed brewery (Article 15) previously occupied by Kathy Corrigan Day Care. The daycare had 20+ bathrooms, showers and a pool. Less flow is anticipated with the brewery as most of the bathrooms, the showers and the pool have been removed. A tight closed-loop system will be utilized for the brewery itself.

Attorney Ray Jennings has not reviewed the plans yet. He agreed that there will be zero discharge from the brewery into the sewer system; just the normal discharge from the bathroom.

Attorney Ray Jennings agrees to provide a letter confirming the zero discharge from the Brewery into the wastewater system.

Motion made by Chuck Heshion, 2nd by Dan Duross to accept and approve the permit for the Article 15 Brewery. All in favor 2-0.

Chuck states this should clear up all previous connection requests for Rockland; both residential and commercial.

Concord Meadows at 365 Concord Street was approved on January 30, 2020. They took no action for over a year. At a meeting in May of 2021 that permit was rescinded and they will have to re-apply and are subject to the moratorium. The fee structure in place at the time of their original appearance will be used for any future approval of their project. They will be 1st on the waiting list.

324 Howard Street requested information about the moratorium.

Keith advised the developers of the Academy at the Monahan Rink that the moratorium is in effect. They opted to move forward with their project utilizing a septic system. We will not collect any connection and I&I fees which would have been in excess of \$200k.

Chuck advises that we must keep a waiting list of future projects while the moratorium is in effect. The list will be 1st come, 1st served once we remove enough I&I and lift the moratorium.

Other future projects in town include Senior Housing proposal for Holy Family and 320 Concord Street.

After a brief discussion it was decided to add permit information to our approval letter for future development projects.

We will also add permit information to our project database where we track the applicants, # of units, maximum flow, fees and I&I removal requirements.

Old Business

- **EPA Update – EPA has granted us an extension to August 27 to submit our data in response to the RFI (request for information).**

There was a brief discussion of funds collected by the Sewer Dept since 2006, whether funds were deposited and/or spent on I&I. Chuck questioned whether the funds went into the General Fund.

Keith stated that we have an approximate balance of \$451k sitting in our sewer account since 2015.

We've spent \$3,173,000.00 on I&I.

Keith will review the data for the RFI response with Chuck and Dan individually before forwarding the RFI documents to the EPA.

– **I&I Removal**

Chuck reiterates that we need to remove 11 gallons of water for every gallon approved per our 11:1 ratio; keeping track for future availability. Ex. If 100,000 gallons are removed, 9,100 becomes available.

– **CWMP (Comprehensive Wastewater Management Plan)**

Keith has started putting bid/scopes together. He states that the bench test is not needed at this time as we don't know what our permit will be and will be a waste of money.

Chuck believes the CWMP has been awarded to Wright-Pierce as part of the Phase (2) Study Article in the May town meeting.

The project has 3 phases; Phase (1) is the study, Phase (2) is the CWMP and Phase (3) is the design.

Chuck wants the contract with Wright-Pierce for Phase (2) CWMP signed by Tuesday, July 20. Chuck disagrees that it needs to go out to bid as Phase (2) CWMP does not fall under the scope of chapter 30B or under the scope of Design Service Contract.

Motion made by Chuck Heshion, 2nd by Dan Duross to award the CWMP contract to Wright-Pierce. All in favor 2-0.

Chuck questions Keith's motives in mentioning that we need to put the CWMP out to bid as he believes it has been settled since April. Keith reminds Chuck that he was not employed with the Town in April. Since his employment, he has spoken to Accounting and believes that it should go out to bid. Keith agrees to speak with Accounting again for clarification.

The bench (phosphorous) test should be done in Spring or Fall during Phase (3). Keith says that the motion to approve the contract should include language for the contract "not to exceed \$180,000". Chuck agrees that the additional \$72,000 for the phosphorous test should be removed from the contract and advises Keith to speak to Wright-Pierce about the \$180,000.

Keith also has concerns regarding the additional costs for the Town and Suez in the draft proposal from Wright-Pierce. The town does not have funds for additional work and Suez does not have man hours to spare. Keith will speak with Wright-Pierce about the contract being a not-to-exceed contract.

Suez has a vendor coming in on Wednesday regarding phosphorous removal. The vendor is offering to conduct a pilot study on phosphorous removal at our facility at no charge to us. Rick will give an update at the next meeting.

– **Senior Discount**

Not the right time to implement a discount. We need to move forward with a rate study as our expenses have exceeded our revenue. The rate study will include \$50M for the plant, \$20M for

infrastructure and our budget of approximately \$3M. Chuck will speak to the resident that made the inquiry.

Chuck states that the moratorium can be revisited at any time; he felt we needed the moratorium in place before we started dealing with the EPA.

Keith had previously suggested we base our connection pricing on bedrooms rather than units. He did a lot of comps with nearby towns, not to target the top prices but remain competitive while keeping it attractive for future development.

A brief conversation regarding the fees for single vs. multi resulted in approval of Keith's recommended fees at this time. Chuck states that we can revisit the fees in the future if development opens up.

Motion made by Chuck Heshion, 2nd by Dan Duross to approve the fees submitted by Keith. All in favor 2-0.

The fees will go into effect on July 19, 2021. Keith will provide a copy of his recommended fee increases by July 19, 2021.

Permits are issued after a project is approved and when the fees are paid in full.

Superintendent Update

SSES Study Update – AECOM has been reviewing all of the camera recordings and will propose recommendations on how to move forward to the design phase of the project in October.

Articles for the September Special Town Meeting will include a request to repurpose unspent balances in our sewer accounts from FY21 that will be used to help fund replacing the digester boiler.

Keith suggests that some ARPA (*American Rescue Plan Act of 2021*) funds may also be available to be used for the digester boiler.

Chuck mentions requesting \$1.3M from the town for I&I removal.

Chuck claims that we did not comply with our corrective action requirements and questions if Town Hall prepared for the possibility that we could be fined from the EPA? He wonders if we should plant the possibility of a fine. Chuck is hoping that if the EPA issues a fine, they don't go to the nutrient side as we would not be eligible for % financing.

Keith is confident that EPA will not issue a fine and suggests setting up a meeting with the EPA to also include Rick Kotouch.

Chuck agrees that the EPA is not in the business of issuing fines and that the EPA would rather see us correct the situation rather than fine us.

Suez Update

Infra-red came in and finished the electrical maintenance and testing of all mcc buckets. They found no issues and Rick is waiting for their final report.

Rick spoke with Neil Handler, EPA Senior Enforcement Coordinator, regarding a 2021 multi-sector general permit for stormwater discharges. Do any contaminants at the facility have the potential for getting into stormwater, who do we use for sludge hauling, grit screenings, how do we store our chemicals? It was determined that, at this time, Rockland will not be required to have an MSG permit and that we are doing a good job. Neil Handler will provide us with a letter stating the same.

Flows are up due to heavy rain and we maxed out at 5.8 MGD. Rick had to activate the high flow management plan and staff the plant around the clock for (2) nights. We did not discharge into the receiving stream; we were able to hold everything in our empty storage tanks on-site.

12 days during July we recorded 6.5" of rain and Rick is anticipating a July flow violation. This will be the first July violation that Rick will have experienced in his 20+ year history of working at the Rockland plant.

Facility is running excellent, even though we're at 4.0 MGD. Chuck congratulates Suez on doing a good job.

Sludge market is still up and down; Rick is expecting a new rate for sludge disposal this month.

Commission Vacancy

The Board of Selectmen has (2) candidates to review. The BOS will schedule a joint meeting with the Sewer Commissioners to discuss.

Items for Next Meeting Agenda – August 19

Approve articles for town meeting. Keith to meet individually with Chuck and Dan to review the articles.

Keith estimates that he and Suez have identified about 100,000 gallons of I&I over the past few weeks.

Motion made by Chuck Heshion, 2nd by Dan Duross, to adjourn at 8:05 pm. All in favor 2-0.