

TOWN CLERK, ROCKLAND
DEC 17 '21 AM 8:39



Town of Rockland SEWER COMMISSION

Post Office Box 330
MASSACHUSETTS 02370

Tel. 781.878.1964
Fax. 781.871.1909

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

**Remote Teleconference
Recorded for Public Playback on WRPS
(local cable access tv)
www.wrpsrockland.com**

Rockland Sewer Commissioners Meeting November 17, 2021

In Attendance: Chuck Heshion, Dan Duross, Douglas Cope, Keith Nastasia, Robyn Day, Rick Kotouch, Jonathan Mongie, Ed McAuliffe, Elizabeth Zaleski, Mark Meserve (AECOM), Heidi Scheller (52 Gardner Street, Hingham)

Introductory Remarks

Chuck Heshion, Chairman, welcomes Douglas Cope to the Board as a Sewer Commissioner.

Approve Minutes of Previous Meeting

Motion made by Chuck Heshion, 2ⁿ by Dan Duross to approve the minutes of previous meetings (August 19 and September 16). All in favor 3-0.

Motion made by Chuck Heshion, 2nd by Dan Duross to begin the meeting at 7:03 pm, November 17, 2021. All in favor 3-0.

Abatements

12 Hobart Lane – water heater failed, receipt provided for repairs, documenting that the water leaked into the ground under her home.

Motion made by Chuck Heshion, 2nd by Dan Duross to approve the abatement. All in favor 3-0.

4 Crabapple Circle – pipe broke under the home, receipt provided for repairs, documenting that the water leaked into the ground under her home.

Motion made by Chuck Heshion, 2nd by Dan Duross to approve the abatement. All in favor 3-0.

511 Union Street – water pipe burst, receipt provided for repairs and insurance company, documenting that the water leaked into the ground under the business.

Motion made by Chuck Heshion, 2nd by Dan Duross to approve the abatement. All in favor 3-0.

New Connection Requests

- **452 Gardner Street, Hingham – Heidi Scheller (homeowner).** 452 Gardner Street is in Hingham and the barn is in Rockland. She would like to convert the barn into a residence for her stepson in the future. She is requesting permission to install a stub in front of her property, at her own expense, for future tie-in to Rockland sewer if and when the sewer moratorium should be lifted. Hingham is currently beginning the process to resurface the road in front of her home. Once the work is completed, the town of Hingham will implement a 10 year moratorium on opening the street, so she'd like to install the stub prior to Hingham resurfacing the street. Chuck Heshion will contact counsel for advice and advises Ms. Scheller to come before the board again at our December meeting.

A brief statement from Chuck Heshion highlights the idea that we need to do what we can to lift the moratorium as soon as possible to allow for growth and to generate revenue.

- **AECOM – Sewer System Evaluation Study (Mark Meserve)**

AECOM has done (4) studies for the Town of Rockland going back to 2006.

The purpose of this meeting is to provide a summary of the latest SSES completed this year. The scope of work included performing flow isolation of about 90% of the piping in Rockland with pipe diameters of 8-12". Based on the results of the flow isolation, tv inspection was performed inside the sewer pipes to locate areas of I&I.

About 66,000 GPD can be cost effectively removed for about \$134,000 in the main pipeline and manholes. 153,000 GPD can be cost effectively removed for about \$675,000 in the service connections.

An overview of the main line and service connections was given.

Most infiltration comes at service connections where each home is connected to the main line. Leaking joints / cracked pipes are where most of the inflow & infiltration (I&I) comes from. Historically, the town has targeted the worst areas of I&I to address first.

A brief discussion was had regarding a 300' pipe extending to the soccer field area of Memorial Park High School that may have infiltration of 8,600 GPD. This is not related to the construction of the new school. Mark approximates a cost of \$3.00 per foot to camera and a mobilization fee, it would cost approximately \$4,000. to fix. Keith Nastasia advises that we should plug it @ the manhole and deal with it later as there are other areas of I&I that are more urgent.

Overall, we're looking at spending \$809,000 to remove 219,000 GPD of infiltration. Service connections are usually considered to be private property which is why AECOM separated those out from the main pipeline.

AECOM advises that we focus on service connections first and that we address those areas in groups to avoid moving the issue from one service connection to the next (*migration of infiltration*). We should see about a 50,000 GPD reduction in I&I for every group of 10.

Most of the service connections identified are older and consist of vitrified clay pipe indicative of the 60's and 70's. By the late 70's and 80's connections were made of poly vinyl chloride (PVC) which has much more distance between joints, therefore allowing for less areas of joint penetration.

There are two types of service connections: wide branch (one home) vs vertical chimney (2 homes). Wide branches are easier and less costly to fix, so the focus is on areas with wide branches.

Another on-going concern is sump pumps dumping into the sewer. Mark provides an example; if we could redirect 200 sump pumps @ 5,000 GPD each, we could remove 1M GPD. A survey of 1,000 homes approximately (3) years ago identified only 10 sump pumps. A letter from the Sewer department offering to redirect the sump pump at our cost did not generate any interest. Mark advises that we consider requiring an inspection prior to home sale transfers of property.

All (3) areas, main line, service connections and sump pumps need to be targeted together when developing a plan for I&I removal.

Flow Isolation identified broken pipe segments of 4,000 GPD or more. Those pipes received tv inspection.

It's very difficult to quantify how much I&I is removed due to migration of the I&I. Keith Nastasia suggests that a comprehensive plan would divide the town into quadrants. Camera 20% of the town at a time and then work through each quadrant. As long as funding is available, we should be able to address 40 miles of piping over 5-7 years.

There was a brief discussion of how to handle the 11:1 ratio of I&I removal that is required of new development.

How do we balance the SSES with the CWMP? How do we balance growth with our I&I?

Poor road drainage contributes to I&I; although as we fix sewer mains, we redirect water into the drainage system.

Continuation of Old Business from the Previous Meeting

– RATES (Elizabeth Zaleski)

Elizabeth Zaleski previously recommended a rate study for user rates as she's noticed a disparity in revenue and expenses since she started working for the town as the Town Accountant in May of 2109.

The town is responsible to the Department of Revenue, the Board of Selectmen, The Board of Sewer Commissioners, and the town residents. The town has a fiscal responsibility to cover our budgeted expenses. Revenue allowed for budgeting purposed comes directly from sewer user fees (rate).

Elizabeth Zaleski shared (4) graphs to illustrate the disparity between our revenue and our expenses.

In 2010, the rate was \$3.00; 2011 the rate was raised to \$3.90; 2016 raised to \$4.49; 2020 raised to \$4.94. The 2020 rate increase was not enough to fund operations. We have a structural deficit that continues to grow. Each year we are progressing with a loss.

We have not been bringing in enough revenue to cover our budget. If we continue on this course with no rate increase, we won't have enough money to fund our budget and any potential capital projects. Without a rate increase, we are looking at a potential budget cut of \$260,000.

This is an immediate need, and we cannot wait for the rate study to be completed. Elizabeth Zaleski recommends an interim rate increase of .99 to our current rate (effective January 1) until we have the results and recommendation from the rate study. The new rate would be \$5.93 per 100 cubic feet.

Our budget has increased 27% while our user rates have only increased 4.59% over that same period. The 20% recommended rate increase gets us closer to closing that gap.

Elizabeth Zaleski further recommends that sewer development fees (revenue) should automatically be deposited into a sewer capital account to be reserved for capital projects and can only be spent by vote at town meeting. We should also set up a Sewer Stabilization Fund that can hold the funds from the sewer capital account from year-to-year.

Elizabeth Zaleski requests that the board make a motion to appoint an interim superintendent.

Motion made by Chuck Heshion, 2nd by Dan Duross to approve appointment of David Taylor as the interim Sewer Superintendent, effective Monday of next week. All in favor 3-0.

Chuck Heshion requests that Keith Nastasia advise David Taylor to move forward with the rate study after confirming that the CWMP does not include a rate study.

– **Butternut Pump Station**

\$100,000 was approved at town meeting for repairs to the Butternut pump station. We have a quote for \$86,400.

Motion made by Chuck Heshion, 2nd by Douglas Cope to approve the quotation. All in favor 3-0.

– **Digester Boiler**

\$230,000 has been consolidated and re-allocated from existing articles as approved at the special town meeting. Wilkenson had the lowest bid at \$315,222. We have (30) days to award the project. The shortfall of \$85,000 has been requested through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) pending approval of the bid. Elizabeth Zaleski applied for pre-approval and feels it will be favorable. If we do not get approved for funding through APRA, the project will not move forward.

Motion made by Chuck Heshion, 2nd by Dan Duross to approve and award the bid. All in favor 3-0.

Motion made by Chuck Heshion, 2nd by Douglas Cope to approve and move forward with the rate study. All in favor 3-0.

EPA Update

Tabled indefinitely

Superintendent Update

Keith Nastasia resigned his position as Sewer Superintendent.

The (3) biggest items are the digester boiler, Butternut pump station and the rate study which were all addressed this evening.

The year-end report is complete to date and is ready for the new Sewer Superintendent to review, add to and pass along.

I&I work has been completed outside of the AECOM study. Flows have gone down in spite of us having 20" more rain this year than last year. All of this has been included in the year-end report.

Suez

So far in November the capacity is hovering at 3.4. We violated our permit capacity limit of 2.5 in September at 3.1 and again in October with 3.1.

Chuck Heshion would like to keep the I&I discussion going at next month's meeting. The next meeting is scheduled for December 16, 2021 @ 7:00 PM on Zoom.

Motion made by Chuck Heshion, 2nd by Douglas Cope, to adjourn at 9:08 pm. All in favor 3-0.

These minutes are a brief synopsis of discussions that occurred during the meeting. For more in-depth information, please refer to the meeting video on <https://www.youtube.com/WRPSRockland>