

Board of Public Works

07/20/23 – Minutes

Conference Room A

DPW Board Members: Thomas A Nephew, Chair (TN); John Patrick Harrington, Vice-Chair (PH); Jose Mercado (JM), Lewis L. Lunn (LL), James T MacDonald (JTM)

Not in attendance:

DPW Staff: Kenneth Kalinowski, PE, Dir. DPW; Paul Brinkman, DPW Business Manager

Also in attendance: Derek Flanders, Cemetery Division

Call to Order

Chair, Tom Nephew, called the meeting to order at 5:35 p.m., announcing that it was being broadcast and recorded. The video recording can be seen at <https://pepperell.vod.castus.tv/vod/?video=c8d334f1-34de-4201-a660-aec92d39102f>

Acceptance of Meeting Minutes

None

Abatements

None

Water / Sewer

Groton IMA Update

Paul provides the latest IMA updates. Our new Compliance Analyst is starting on Monday, they will be pulling data together, and help with analysis to get a better handle on usage data. We believe we have an agreement on most of the document, with the exception of flows and other minor points. We continue to work on developing a plug-in formula that will be used if they want to buy more capacity. Groton would like us to provide the document now, knowing the formula is not in there at this time as to not hold up the review process.

PFAS Update

The pilot program to create “good water” has been a very difficult process. PB notes that we should be up and running in 30 days. KK notes that there have been a couple of really good meetings with management and engineering staff of the Town of Groton with regards to the first steps in coming to a Tri-town agreement to tie into our system to assist with their PFAS issue at the high school. They are now willing to accept Pepperell Water “as is” for the school until we build our plant. Their Town Manager is meeting with their Select Board this week and will let us know if there is a problem. Paul and Ken met with Groton’s engineers today and had a good meeting. Ken adds that Paul had a great idea about how to route the water main to best serve our and their needs. Dunstable is still on board. Our PFAS levels are holding steady and there has been no news on the regulatory front.

PB shares that we will pick up more customers which spreads out the cost. Groton is saying they are going to pay for the entire first phase and contribute to the Jersey Street treatment. PB predicts this first phase won’t be ready until the end of next year. We continue to monitor the PFAS levels at Jersey and Bemis. We would be notified if our PFAS levels go over current MCL levels.

Misc. Updates

- *Water consumption is up, there are still people that are outside watering, even with the rain.*
- *PB didn’t predict high water usage for this season, and expects a hot spell in August would dry things out and usage will increase.*
- *The odd/even water ban is a recommendation implemented by the state (not mandated) for all water systems, and we adhere to that recommendation.*

DPW

Project Updates

- *Heald Street culvert project is 85-90% done, and progress has been weather and contractor dependent.*
- *Riverside Neighborhood (Merrimack/Suncook/Deerfield) will tentatively begin milling on August 14th. The the milling contractor will move to Heald Street, and then Maple to Chestnut. The plan is to pave everything at one time.*
- *The plan is to go back in a year or two, funding dependent, to remove and replace the asphalt sidewalks in Riverside.*
- *The paving contractor notified us they were invoking their asphalt escalation clause, which resulted in increasing paving prices by 25-30% overnight.*
- *We are meeting with the contractor tomorrow regarding the Rotary, Railroad Square, etc. to see what work we can finalize this year, however, some work may need to be pushed out to next year.*

Staffing Updates

- *Valerie Brock will begin on Monday, July 24th as our new Compliance Analyst. This is a newly created position, and replaces an unfilled water operator position. Valerie will assist PB with permitting, data collection and monthly reporting requirements. Valerie has her Master's Degree in Microbiology.*
- *We still have our message board posting a vacancy in the Highway Division. One of our new hires has resigned his position. We are still recruiting, and we may be doing some internal shifting to best fill the vacancies.*
- *Tom Hurley is working out great with Cemetery and Parks.*

Review, Approve and Sign Any Documents Requiring Board Signatures

- June Commitments
June Commitments were signed by the Board.
- Rates as Approved at the Rate Hearing
New FY24 Water and Sewer Rates were signed by the Board and have been posted on the website.

Commissioners Comments

None

Next Meeting Dates

- *August 17, 2023 – Regular BPW Meeting*

Any other matters that may arise which the chair could not reasonably anticipate

KK notes that we have been addressing problem intersections to improve visibility. Weed whacking and mowing overgrown vegetation is being done on priority rating basis.

Adjournment

*Pat Harrington motions to adjourn the meeting of the Board of Public Works, Lewis Lunn seconds the motion. **The motion passes unanimously.***

The meeting adjourned at 6:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Donna Lane-McPartlan
DPW Program Administrator, Highway Division