

**Board of Public Works**  
**8/20/20 – Minutes**  
**“Go To Meeting”**

**Present via remote login:**

DPW Board Members: Chair – Tom Nephew, George Clark, Paul Brinkman, Pat Harrington, Lewis Lunn, DPW Director – Ken Kalinowski, Conservation Administrator - Paula Terrasi, MA Dept. of Agriculture Christine Chisholm, Mr. & Mrs. Jon Kaiser, DPW Admin Susan Tocci.

**Call to Order at 5:30 p.m.**

Chairman Tom Nephew called the meeting to order at 5:29 p.m. and announced that it was being recorded and potentially being broadcast.

**Acceptance of Meeting Minutes:**

July 16, 2020 (Regular)

Paul Brinkman made a motion to accept the minutes from July 16, 2020 as amended. Pat Harrington seconded the motion.

The following roll call was taken:

Pat Harrington – Aye  
Paul Brinkman – Aye  
Tom Nephew – Aye  
Lewis Lunn – Aye  
George Clark - abstain

The motion to accept the minutes as amended passed.

**Abatements (as requested)**

None

**WATER / SEWER**

• **65 Brookline Street Sewer Connection**

Ken Kalinowski explained that this was before the Board because the property does not lie within the sewer district, but effectively abuts it and can be allowed by vote of the Board.

Ken noted that he had discussed the process with the applicant, but to date had not received any plans or other supporting data. The applicant was also made aware of the Board meeting and agenda, but was not present for this discussion. Ken noted that in addition to the inability to cross the agriculture fields with a utility line (sewer), there was a potential issue with the actual sale of the property associated with the permanent Agricultural Preservation Restriction (APR). Paul Brinkman asked for clarification as to what role the Board would play with their approval, i.e., the Board's decision on a sewer connection would not impact the sale of the property. It was explained that the Board could allow for a sewer connection, but there may be other considerations such as the routing of the line that could be driven by other agencies. Paul also noted that this case was unusual in that the proponent had not submitted any supporting documentation for the request. Tom Nephew suggested that since the applicant was not present, the Board hear from the MA Dept. of Agriculture rep who was under a time constraint this evening. Christine Chisholm explained that the 4 acre parcel with house, barn and care-takers cottage was not under any APR, and thus a utility line serving a non-APR parcel would not be allowed to cross an APR restricted property, i.e. the abutting farm fields. Christine was not sure as to if or how the non-restricted parcel could or would be placed under an APR, either via a new APR or modifying one of the existing APR's. Tom suggested that the Board table the discussion until such time as the applicant provided sufficient information regarding the proposal. Paula noted that there were a couple of other parcels near Prescott Street that are associated with the farm, but also not under APR protection. Paul Brinkman reiterated that the intended use needed to be characterized before a final decision as to the adequacy of the proposed system. Ken asked for clarification as to the sign-off process for the sale. Christine stated that she believed both the Town and the State needed to sign off, but wanted to review the APR as it was an older document and may differ from the current APRs being issued. Paula offered to follow up with Christine on this matter. George Clark asked if anyone knew why he wanted to connect to sewer, and Ken replied that this was the first question we had asked the applicant. It was also noted that the bylaw states that the Board's permission should be predicated on a demonstrated hardship.

- **MA Drought status**

Ken informed the Board that in the past month the state had progressed from "moderate" to a "level 2 significant" drought, and that we had experienced two low well level alarms in town over the past week. Therefore, in order to be prudent and proactive in protecting the towns' drinking water supply, a mandatory outside watering ban was implemented, to be in effect until further notice.

*(NOTE: at this point, Jon and Ann Kaiser joined the meeting via telephone)*

- **65 Brookline Street (cont.)**

Tom Nephew explained that the Board had finished discussing the matter, but offered a recap. He stated that the Board was not willing to discuss the matter further until such time as a plan and more details were provided, included whether or not the existing system could be repaired. He suggested that he work with the town engineer to come up with a plan. Jon stated that the contractor had discussed the connection with Ken and it was all set. Ken stated that Mr. Walsh had met to talk about connecting the property to sewer, but it was explained that the Board would need to approve any such connection because the property is not in the sewer district, and that given that the sales closing was several months out, there was ample time to prepare the plan and present it to the Board. Ken explained the level of detail that would be required to install such a lengthy service, and that it would likely require an engineer. Ken stated he would be available to review any plan prior to the next Board meeting to expedite matters. Paul Brinkman suggested that a detailed list of data be provided to the applicant and it was determined that Ken would supply a clarifying email. Tom noted that the next meeting was on Sept 17<sup>th</sup> and Mr. Kaiser promised that everything would be ready well before that, as they had been expecting approvals tonight.

- **Drought update (cont.)**

Pat Harrington asked about the enforcement vehicle for non-compliance. Ken explained the process which starts with a letter notifying of the infraction and the ability to fine incrementally up to \$500/day per violation. As a last resort, a water service could be throttled back or diminished to allow sufficient flow for cooking/cleaning but to essentially render sprinklers ineffective.

- **Bemis Treatment Facility**

Ken stated the Bemis Well treatment project was progressing quickly.

- **Final Read Outs**

Due to Joe Jordan's absence, this item was tabled until the next Board meeting.

- **Water Base Charge & Rate Increase (clarifying vote)**

Ken stated that, upon the opinion of Town Counsel, a vote needed to occur to clarify that it was the Boards intention to increase the water base charge when the rates were increased.

This intent was verified through a polling of the Board at the July meeting, but it was not a binding vote as it was not an official agenda item in July.

Paul Brinkman made the following motion:

*I move that the Board of Public Works clarify the vote taken at the May 28, 2020 Rate Hearing. More specifically, that it was the intent of the Board to increase the water base charge from \$21.85/quarter to \$30/quarter in addition to increasing the consumption rates by 10%, with all increases to be effective July 01, 2020.*

George Clark seconded the motion. The following roll call vote was taken.

Pat Harrington – Aye

Paul Brinkman – Aye

Tom Nephew – Aye

Lewis Lunn – Aye

George Clark - Aye

The motion passed unanimously.

## **DPW**

- **2020 Roads Program**

Ken updated the Board on the list of streets that were scheduled to be paved as part of this year's Roads Program. Most of the streets were scheduled to be paved in early September and the remaining streets would be completed by October. Ken also reported that the hand railing had been installed at the culvert on Leighton Street. It was repurposed from Mill St near Shattuck Oil as part of a previous road project.

- **Review & Approve any Documents Requiring Board Signatures**
  - **July Commitments**

Paul Brinkman made a motion to have Tom Nephew chair sign the July commitment in lieu of the whole board. George Clark seconded the motion.

Paul Brinkman - aye

Pat Harrington – aye

George Clark- aye

Lewis Lunn – (computer transmission frozen)

Tom Nephew – aye

The motion passed.

## **Commissioners Comments**

- As an FYI, Ken noted that due to the timing of the recent water/sewer billings, any abatement requests would be pushed to the September meeting.
- George Clark inquired about the Stormwater rate review. Ken explained that it was under review, but the availability of staff had not allowed for a thorough exploration of the impacts of any potential revisions.
- Pat Harrington thanked Ken, Joe and Adam for the tour of the Bemis facility. It is an impressive facility and all are looking forward to completion and a public open house.
- Ken made a note to the Board that with regards to the Stormwater billing, the August bills incorporated a change to annual billing for Stormwater-only customers, and that there was some confusion from customers as to why they were getting a \$60 bill instead of \$15. This move was done in response to multiple requests from stormwater only customers. An explanation was placed on the website.
- George Clark raised the possibility of instituting monthly consumption readings for certain multi-family accounts, and asked that Joe Jordan look into this suggestion. Ken noted that this would be of limited value to the majority of the town, and whether or not it was fair to place the burden/cost on the remainder of the customers.

### **Next Meeting Dates**

The next BPW meeting will be held on September 17<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 p.m.

### **Adjournment**

Lewis Lunn made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Paul Brinkman seconded the motion.

Paul Brinkman – aye

Lewis Lunn - aye

Pat Harrington – aye

George Clark – aye

Tom Nephew – aye

The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 6:17 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kenneth Kalinowski, PE

Director of Public Works