



TOWN OF HOPEDALE

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**Board of Water & Sewer
Commissioners**

Ed Burt, Chr
James Morin
Donald Cooper

Hopedale Board of Water & Sewer Commissioners Minutes of May 6, 2021

The Hopedale Board of Water & Sewer Commissioners met on May 6, 2021 at 6:00 P.M. via zoom. Members present were Chairperson Burt, Commissioner Morin and Commissioner Cooper.

Consent Items

Minutes of the April 8th meeting – Commissioner Morin made a motion to approve the minutes of April 8th seconded by Commissioner Cooper and made unanimous by Chairperson Burt.

Correspondents – None

New Business

- A. Town Meeting draft warrant – Tim wanted to reiterate to the Board that this warrant is truly a draft. Our Special Town Meeting warrant changed to include 2 articles. Annual Meeting will have one for prior year bills which are small and the other for procurement. Town Administrator, Diana Schindler would like to change the bidding procurement to follow MA general law. Water/Sewer Board will not be needed for this. Board of Selectmen will need to vote on warrant first.
- B. PFAS Pilot Testing – PFAS pilot testing was submitted to DEP for proposal. Should take 2 to 3 weeks. There will be raw water PFAS testing done before and after pilot testing. This would have to be completed prior to June 30th.
- C. Vertical Well Drilling – Vertical drilling was scheduled for May 25th but got moved to May 17th. This will tell us if a new source has been found. We have cleared a path to the drill site and there were no conflicts with the golf course.

Old Business

- A. Sewer Main Relining – Phase I cleaning and cameraing, is complete. Phase II, relining, is complete and now Phase III, grouting, will start on May 10th and will take 5-8 days to complete.

Tim informed the Board that the Sewer Department has been very conscientious in regards to their budget and if there is money left Tim would like to have 2 wet wells vacuumed out and a commercial mower purchased. Chairperson Burt asked if it would

be beneficial to split purchase with Highway or Parks Department. Both Tim and Commissioner Cooper feel we should have our own.

- B. New Employee pay scale** – Tim was hopeful that we would have a prospective employee after reaching out to 5 but only had 3 responded, 1 without his licenses. Tim interviewed one from a surrounding town, but it came down to money. Tim stated he increased the starting hourly rate, but it was still rejected. Tim also reached out to 2 others with no qualifications. Commissioner Cooper asked if Tim had to start the process over again in which he responded that he did. Some of the suggestions from the Board and Eli Potty (Road Commissioner) were to contact MA Water Works, NEWWA and MA Municipal. In the budget, Tim increased the new employee from \$24.58/hour to \$26/hour.
- C. Budgets/Rates** – Chairperson Burt went over his spreadsheets, estimating that revenue will be short approximately \$39,104.58. According to his spreadsheets it looks like revenue will be down next year by approximately \$20,000. Tim stated he is already seeing an issue with demand. There is currently a water ban that does not allow residents to do any outside watering between the hours of 9AM and 5PM. Tim wanted to inform the Board as well as residents that we may see additional bans in the next 2-3 weeks. Great for conservation but unfortunately revenue will take a hit. We are not going to have the water to sell this year. Need to discuss the shortage of \$39,104 and possible rate increases to cover this. Tim came up with spreadsheets showing a 5% increase to the tiers, which would be an annual increase of approximately \$15. Then showed a 15% increase to the tiers which would be way over what is needed. A 10% increase would be an annual increase of approximately \$20-\$25. This would not only support our budget but support our free cash. Commissioner Cooper asked Tim what he would recommend. Tim responded that he would go with the 10% increase and that the lower rate users will not get hit as hard. It would be an increase of approximately \$5 per invoice. Tim stated that budgets are based on the departments needs. Would like to leave the assessment alone and do a rate increase of 10% to the tiered amounts. The Board confirmed that they would like to leave the assessment charges alone. A public hearing will be scheduled for the next meeting to discuss a possible increase and set assessment charges.
- D. West Street (cost sharing agreement)** - Chairperson Burt asked that an additional 5 or 6 documents be posted to the website. Commissioners Morin and Cooper stated they had no issues with those additional documents being posted to the website. We will continue to hold off on the cost sharing request.

Manager's Report – Tim stated he had 2 requests to carry over vacation time. Mike Brown is asking to carry over 5 days and John Schreiber is asking to carry over 5 ½ days. Commissioner Cooper stated he is fine with the carryover in which Chairperson Burt and Commissioner Morin both stated they were fine with this as well.

Public and Board Member Comments – None

Joint Meeting with the Road Commissioners was opened at 7:00 P.M. Members present were George Lovewell as acting Chair and Eli Potty.

Chairperson Burt made a motion to adjourn regular session at 7:02 P.M. and move into executive session not to reconvene, pursuant to M.G.L. c.30A Sect 21(a) item (3): to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the public body and the chair so declares.

Roll call vote: Commissioner Cooper - Aye, Commissioner Morin - Aye, Chairperson Burt - Aye

I attest to the best of my knowledge that this is a true and accurate recording of the minutes of May 6, 2021.



Ed Burt – Chairperson



James Morin



Donald Cooper