



TOWN OF HOPEDALE

78 Hopedale Street - P.O. Box 7
Hopedale, Massachusetts 01747

Tel: 508-634-2203 ext. 212

Fax: 508-634-2200

Board of Water & Sewer Commissioners

Ed Burt, Chr
James Morin
Adam Anderson

Hopedale Board of Water & Sewer Commissioners Minutes of January 11, 2024

The Hopedale Board of Water & Sewer Commissioners met January 11, 2024, at 6:00 P.M. in the Draper Room of Town Hall. Members present were Chairperson Burt, Commissioner Morin and Commissioner Anderson.

Consent Items

Minutes of the November 9th meeting– Commissioner Morin made a motion to approve the minutes of November 9th, 2023, seconded by Commissioner Anderson and made unanimous by Chairperson Burt.

All in favor, Anderson – Aye, Morin – Aye, Burt – Aye

Correspondence - None

New Business

A. DEP Inspection WWTP – the DEP surprise inspection went well and typically happens every few years. We have not received the report as of yet. Tim explained that they went over financials as well as I & I. He also stated that Mike and Willy from the plant did a great job. Commissioner Burt asked Tim to let the staff know that he said thank you for the job well done.

B. December 18th Storm (damage and issues) – both departments were hit hard. The sewer plant went through approximately 2M gallons per day when the normal is approximately 588,000 gallons per day. Lost power at both locations so had to be manned 24 hours straight for a day and a half. The water department lost a lot of trees and could not get in or out of driveway due to live wires. One of the meter pits flooded and took out all the electronics. An electrician will be coming to assess. The Greene Street well flooded so had to be shut down. No final costs as of yet but everything is back up and running.

C. Technical Grant for Service Line Inventory – the plan was to do the work in house, but time was going to be a factor. EPA stated there is a mandatory 10-year replacement plan. It was originally 15 years which was approximately 13 service lines per year. With this new timeline it will push it to 17 service lines per year. The grant will take care of replacement plans and inventory. Tim stated he is not sure of the ramifications if we do not complete the 17 replacements a year. Tim stated if a resident does not want their end replaced then we will just let it be. Chairperson Burt asked if the grant could be extended to cover our costs and Dave Buter from the water department informed him it could not.

D. Service Line Replacement Agreement (Homeowners) – Tim stated we used a copy of an agreement from CA, that will cover us for liability purposes. Chairperson Burt asked if we should have an opening paragraph to explain. Tim stated we could, but we will be going door to door to explain. Commissioner Morin asked about residents that previously had their service line replaced since it has been brought up recently. Chairperson Burt stated that he did call that resident to explain what he was told by DEP and that we would not be reimbursing previous work done. Chairperson Burt stated that we did volunteer to clean up what the previous contractor had done to his basement when replacing the line. Chairperson Burt asked Tim about the term “negligent” in the agreement and Tim stated it’s more the residents not indulging information. Chairperson Burt asked Tim if he could discuss with either KP Law or Jerry Moody, the towns in house attorney.

E. Asset Management Grant – this is a \$150,000 grant that Tighe and Bond went out for. This will help with GIS curb stop locations and will help us with shut offs and rate analysis. Part of this grant will be for in kind service which will be used to purchase tablets to help locate curb stops.

F. Well Cleaning – Mill Street has been cleaned as well as two at Greene Street, found the 3rd one at Greene Street has a hole in it. The motor was plugged in and found the pump was worn. It will be reinstalled tomorrow and awaiting a price for replacing the screen. This is the same thing we did with well number one.

G. Greene Street Well Exploration – numerous holes were drilled, pumped and rated. Seemed to have good material but not enough water. Came up with three recommendations, 1 large gravel packed well, 2 or more 16x10 production wells and an infiltration gallery. The first and second recommendation would be similar to what we have now, with costs between \$60,000 and \$70,000 to clean. Hoping there is a way for us to clean the new well ourselves in order to reduce costs. With option number three we wouldn’t have to stop all wells while others are being cleaned. Tim stated option number three would cost approximately \$500,000. Chairperson Burt asked the risk of this not working. Tim stated that he does not know of any risks and doesn’t see that how this wouldn’t work. Weston and Sampson did recommend the third option. Tim stated we would need time for funding with option number three so will give us time to ask about screening options. The Board agreed to focus on option three.

H. Weston & Sampson Engineering Contract (PFAS) – a draft copy of engineering costs were sent to town counsel for review then sent back to Weston & Sampson. We are currently waiting to hear back from them. Once it starts, the bid process will take 6 to 7 weeks so Tim is thinking we wouldn’t see anything until start until the October time frame. Chairperson Burt stated he would like to reach out to Kyra from the PEER Foundation just to review.

I. New Hire – Stephen Salvucci, a Hopedale resident has been hired by the water department and seems to be fitting in well. He will start school in March to obtain his licenses. Tim mentioned that Adam Oliveira, a current water department employee has really stepped up.

J. Consider February Public Hearing (update rules and regs) – a few updates to the rules and regs need to be made. One being that on call needs to be increased to make it match one and a half times the highest paid employee. This will need to be posted in the newspaper.

Old Business

- A. Budgets/Retained Earnings – passed over until end of meeting. Water Department retained earnings for FY23 was \$375,942 and the sewer department was \$496,642 both were what we had expected. Regarding the FY25 budget, we have a 2% decrease from the working budget but an 8% increase with reserve fund. We had based our rates on an odd/even water ban schedule but in actuality residents were only allowed to water one day a week which affected our usage numbers. Tim feels we should look at our lowest quarter usage numbers and base our rates off of those numbers. The departments did their best to keep level funded or a slight decrease, which was accomplished. Unfortunately, our expenses continue to increase, and our retained earnings safety net cannot cover both the increases and capital projects. Tim informed the Board that he feels water restrictions are only going to worsen which will affect revenue.
- B. Scada Upgrades – these upgrades will cost approximately \$52,000 and all computers have been ordered.
- C. Water Tank Status – going along nicely. The road was moved slightly in order to avoid going through ledge. We have until May to pour slab. Commissioner Anderson asked when it should be complete in which Tim responded August.
- D. IFAS – it was removed and disposed of and there is no issue with operations.
- E. West Street Update – Town cannot take property by eminent domain. The Federal case has come to a close. The State case will be heard in March. There have been quite a few documents filed in this case. New documents will be posted to our website. The current case between Delki Priscoli and Milanoski could be coming to a close.
- F. Zone II Updates – Town Administrator, Mitch Ruscitti would like to reach out directly to the railroad owner regarding Zone II but has not done so yet.

Manager's Report – nothing additional


Commissioner Anderson made a motion to adjourn at 7:46 P.M. seconded by Commissioner Morin and made unanimous by Chairperson Burt.

Anderson – Aye, Morin – Aye, Burt – Aye

I attest to the best of my knowledge that this is a true and accurate recording of the minutes of January 11th, 2024.



Ed Burt – Chairperson



James Morin



Adam Anderson