



TOWN OF HOPEDALE

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Board of Water & Sewer Commissioners

Ed Burt, Chr
James Morin
Adam Anderson

Hopedale Board of Water & Sewer Commissioners Minutes of March 14, 2024

The Hopedale Board of Water & Sewer Commissioners met March 14, 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 February 8th meeting – Commissioner Anderson made a motion to approve the minutes of February 8th, 2024, seconded by Commissioner Morin and made unanimous by Chairperson Burt.

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

Correspondence - None

New Business

- A. Open public hearing to discuss changes to Water and Sewer rates – Commissioner Morin made a motion to open the public hearing to discuss changes to the Water and Sewer rates, seconded by Commissioner Anderson and made unanimous by Chairperson Burt

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

Commissioner Burt stated there was no one in the audience live or via Zoom. Commissioner Burt wanted to look at budgets to help explain the increases. Tim stated that indirect costs are going up, which we have no control. Retained Earnings will be used to front the grant money for the PFAS project and the cleaning of the Greene Street wells. The new well is needed immediately, \$50,000 was put to emergency reserve but the Board will bring to town meeting for approval in May and start the replacement well once approved. The new truck is being accounted for in Capital Projects. The bottom line for water is a 1% increase over last year's total budget. Regarding the sewer budget, Retained Earnings will be used for the \$150,000 grant money, the \$25,000 grant match and \$22,000 for sludge work. The new truck and the lift pump will be paid from Capital Projects. Due to the emergency reserve fund, sewer has an 11% increase but only a 3% increase in the operating budget which includes the truck and the lift pump.

Sewer Assessment has a \$45,000 positive balance but a total operating shortfall of approximately \$216,000. Chairperson Burt stated the delta to be addressed is \$368,156

less the \$150,000 grant money, which leaves a balance of \$218,156. Tim explained it could be two years before we see the grant money come back since it's a two-year project. Since usage is down, revenue is also down. The Board explained the first option being looked at is to increase sewer rates from \$7.48 to \$8.30, which would increase revenue by approximately \$98,190.87. The second option would be to increase rates from \$7.48 to \$8.85 and would increase revenue by approximately \$164,050.65 which would work out to be approximately \$75.00 per user per year. The Board decided that option one seemed too low but option two would work. Tim explained that these numbers reflect winter usage so anticipated revenue should be a little higher.

On the water side, the assessment is approximately \$44,000 in the positive. Chairperson Burt feels there is a much smaller gap in water versus sewer. After reviewing numbers, Commissioner Anderson stated that he feels comfortable with starting the sewer increase with the next billing but would prefer to hold off a quarter on the new water rates until they have a better understanding of the water numbers.

- B. Close public hearing (vote on changes will be held)** - Commissioner Anderson made a motion to close the public hearing, seconded by Commissioner Morin and made unanimous by Chairperson Burt.

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

Commissioner Anderson made a motion to approve the water and sewer budgets, seconded by Commissioner Morin and made unanimous by Chairperson Burt.

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

Commissioner Anderson made a motion to approve an increase of the sewer rate from \$7.48 to \$8.85 per 100 cu.ft., seconded by Commissioner Morin and made unanimous by Chairperson Burt.

Morin – Aye, Anderson – Aye, Burt – Aye

- C. Greene Street well #3 replacement** – Tim informed the Board this would happen next week.

- D. Sewer Tox Testing** – the Board was informed that the newest test came back fine. Tim does not want to do split testing in the future since it will become expensive.

Old Business

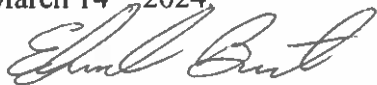
- A. New Water Tank Update** – there is a little more electrical work to be done in the street. Tim feels the tank could be up and being filled by May. Chairperson Burt asked that an update be posted to the website.

- B. PFAS Upgrades – sub bids for general contractors were opened today. Should be awarding the bid in approximately 30 days. This part of the bid includes the solar portion.
- C. Sewer Plant Operations Update – nothing further discussed
- D. Budget Discussions– were discussed during public hearing

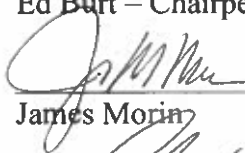
Commissioner Anderson made a motion to adjourn at 6:54 P.M. seconded by Commissioner Morin and made unanimous by Chairperson Burt.

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 March 14th 2024.



Ed Burt – Chairperson



James Morin



Adam Anderson