



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

Christine Burke, Chair
James Morin

Hopedale Board of Water & Sewer Commissioners Minutes of January 10, 2019

The Hopedale Board of Water & Sewer Commissioners met on January 10, 2019 at 7:00 P.M. in the Draper Room of the Town Hall. Members present were Chairperson Burke, Commissioner Morin and Commissioner Burt.

Chairperson Burke welcomed Mr. Ed Burt to the Board of Water and Sewer. She also referenced a thank you letter received from the Hopedale Friends of Elders for their personal contribution in memory of Mr. Robert Burns.

Consent Items

Minutes of the November 8th meeting – Commissioner Morin made a motion to approve the minutes of the November 8th meeting and made unanimous by Chairperson Burke.

Appointments - None

New Business

- A. WWTP Change Order – Two new secondary clarifiers will be installed. This will be the first change order, costing \$2,000 of the \$205,000 we have in contingencies. Tim stated the job is moving along quite well. Chairperson Burke signed the change order.
- B. WWTP Primary Clarifier - the Board was informed that the primary clarifiers have been spinning for 34 years, 7 days a week. Midway through December the center drive on one of the clarifiers failed. All is now going through one clarifier. This is OK during the slow season, but we will be getting to the busy season shortly. Changing the entire clarifier would cost approximately \$111,000 plus \$11,000 for the outside tank. The engineers have recommended that we buy the drive and have it installed before the busy season. Chairperson Burke asked why this wasn't brought up with the project. Tim responded that it was, but it was part of phase II. To do both clarifiers it would cost approximately \$206,000 and we could use the difference between the 6.6 and 5.2 million. Contract was for 5.2M but we were authorized for 6.6M.
- C. Budgets – Regarding the water budget, the Board was informed that the increases are based on expenses over the last 6 months. Each line of the budget with changes was explained. He informed the Board that union employees would be getting a 3% raise beginning FY20. He explained that account 5380, Other Purchased Services will be going down by \$8,440 for stipends that will be moved to the salary line. We have not yet received the numbers from the town for liability, pension, workers comp or accountant/treasurer. The energy/chemical lines increased by \$8,700, it was assumed that since all wells go through a booster station we'd be much more efficient and the chemical line

would go down but unfortunately the opposite happened. We are also in need of a new transfer pump and a new residual pump. Capital projects are up \$12,000 for well cleaning. We are currently cleaning the pumps once a year, but due to all the water we need to clean them twice a year. We are also looking at main replacements for shut offs (Prospect St. are about 100 years old). We have \$100,000 in that account that cannot be spent without Board and Finance approval. Lastly, debt went up, we are paying more in principle and less on interest.

Regarding the sewer budget, salaries and stipends are the same as they were for the water department. Account 5383, composting was under budgeted last fiscal year so will be increased this fiscal year. Increased account 5890, capital projects by \$70,000, we have a discharge permit that we have to meet certain criteria. One of the criteria is doing a flow test. Hoping also to do some relining and possibly repairing the roof at the plant. Regarding debt, the principle payments went down a little but the \$5M will be added next fiscal year. We were given a \$70,000 forgiveness on the loan for meeting certain criteria.

We will be meeting with finance on January 19th at 9:00 A.M.

- D. Discussion on Rates – there has not been a rate increase in either department since July 2014. Tim stated that our rates compared to other towns are low. Current water rates are as follows:

0-500 cu.ft.	\$2.99 per 100 cu.ft.
501-2,000 cu.ft.	\$3.40
2,001-4,000 cu.ft.	\$4.42
>4,001 cu.ft.	\$6.55

Current sewer rate is \$6.01 per 100 cubic feet.

Tim informed the Board that since we do not have a minimum usage charge we had 92 water users that did not get charged for water at all. If we added a \$15 minimum that would bring in an additional \$1,400 per quarter.

Chairperson Burke asked why we have to raise rates. Tim stated that we are not supporting our budget. Tim's first recommendation for sewer is that we increase to \$7.02/100 cu.ft, which is still lower than all other local towns.

Second recommendation would be to go to \$6.52/100 cu.ft..

Board decided to hold off until next meeting.

- E. Future Capital Needs – previously discussed under budgets

- F. 1 Fitzgerald Drive – since we are an abutter, we were notified by Mr. Shwachman's attorney that there would be a meeting January 15, 2019. The meeting is regarding a piece of land in front of the Gerrity building to see if wet lands were violated and if the necessary permits were pulled. Our board scheduled a meeting on January 17th with the Board of Health regarding ground water. Chairperson Burke stated she contacted DEP to ask if in their opinion if we are at risk and as of tonight has not heard back. Tim stated he had spoken with DEP a month earlier asking the same thing and he had not received a response back either.

Old Business

- A. Mini Excavator Update – a letter was sent to Steve Sette's assistant, Susan Brouwer, asking her to notify the insurance company that we are dropping the claim regarding the issue with the mini excavator

Manager's Report – nothing additional to discuss

Other topics not reasonable anticipated by chairman within 48 hours –

Commissioner Burt made a motion to adjourn at 8:43 P.M. seconded by Commissioner Morin and made unanimous by Chairperson Burke.

I attest to the best of my knowledge that this is a true and accurate recording of the minutes of January 10th, 2019.


Christine Burke – Chairperson


James Morin


Ed Burt