

Bob E.

Carl L.

Jay S.

Butch B.

**TOWN OF LUNENBURG
SEWER COMMISSION
960 Mass. Ave.
LUNENBURG, MA. 01462**

*approved
1/31/12*

Minutes of January 11, 2012 Meeting held at Ritter Memorial Building

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 pm, with Carl Luck, Jay Simeone, Butch Billotta, and Bob Ebersole in attendance. Also in attendance were Jack Rodriquez, DPW Director, and Pat Cotton and Steve Pederson of Weston & Sampson. John Londa, Facilities Manager for Lunenburg Schools, joined the meeting after the start.

Appointments

7:00 pm Weston & Sampson Steve Pedersen & Pat Cotton

Steve noted that they had completed the **Pump station analysis** – Report has been delivered Barb, Jack & Corey. Overall, pump stations are in good shape. They've seen that the cleaning of the wet wells were done – very important. There was alot of grease so it is important for them to get cleaned regularly. Steve mentioned that there were issues with generators – the one at Meadowwoods wasn't working, but it has been fixed. There was also a cracked pipe at Mass 2 which was identified and repaired. Steve noted that they had estimated the repair at \$2,000 and the invoice came in at that amount. Jack Rodriquez noted that Hall Pump had recently done another repair, separate from these. Repair had to be done quickly and Jack went with Hall Pump. Steve noted that the report contains suggested repairs/maintenance and the Commission should budget \$8000 for next year. Nothing too big – Corey should take a look at the list and prioritize. There were no long term recommendations due to the station's relative age – no big ticket items need to be replaced in the 5yr forecast. Steve noted that rodents are an issue and exterminators should be contacted before damage occurs.

Bootlegger Grease trap design review – Steve had just received Whitman & Bingham's plan for the external grease trap today and had quickly reviewed it with their grease trap specialist. There was an old 4,000 gallon septic tank that can be used. Bob advised Steve to begin the peer review. He can work directly with W&B and cc the Sewer Commission office to keep the Commission in the loop. When it comes time for the final recommendation for approval, he should send it to us. Steve discussed that it would be a gravity system. Bob wants Weston & Sampson to follow all the pipes, internal & external, to make sure that they comply with our regulations.

Rules & regs & fees review status update- Steve noted that it is not ready yet but that he hopes to have an outline soon. Bob noted that Fitchburg is doing a review of regulations as well, focusing on grease traps, and that we may have to get non-renovating establishments to comply, not being able to wait until they take out a permit as our regs currently require.

FY12 contract – Steve noted that they would like to have a general service contract for services going forward, that could include work sessions, the rules & regulations review, and general work as needed. This way the Town & Weston & Sampson would be ready when something came up. The last one was in FY11 and the review of the grease trap will be covered by that. Last one started at \$17,000, but was approved for \$14,000 and Steve will probably bring in the FY12 contract for that amount again. Barb will have it on the agenda for the January 31 meeting.

Smoke & Dye Testing– Per Bob, the report was presented at the 12/14 meeting. The only remaining action is the inspection of homes. In their discussions with Fitchburg recently, Bob was informed that it is not legal to enter a home for inspection and Fitchburg uses their plumbing inspector. Discussion followed about having Corey do the inspections. Bob asked Steve if he could check about the authority to enter homes in the review of regulations. Steve noted that the Board of Health is the usual authority. Bob asked Steve to look and see how other communities accomplish these inspections. Bob spoke of issues with the Town Plumbing Inspector and the concern of the commission whether he will keep us legal and support the Commission's regulations. Steve continued on with the discussion of the Inflow testing regarding the 2 different reports. The August 2011 flow metering report showed inflow issues centered in Graham St. & Leominster Road areas. There was high inflow of 945,000gpd in those areas. The second report in December 2011 resulted from the smoke testing and showed 85,000gpd in removable inflow (8-10%) which indicates that the issue is private inflow or sump pumps. Weston & Sampson is proposing doing building inspections for \$65,000. Steve discussed basic process – notifications are sent from the Sewer Commission to the homeowners (approximately 450 homes in the Graham/Leom Rd section) that inspections coming up, the scheduling of appointments, then commencing inspections, going door-to-door with a 2-person team. If no one is home, they leave a notice to call back. Weston & Sampson uses an I-touch program, allowing them to fill out the inspection report, take pictures, and provide report. \$61,000 covers these visits to approximately 450 homes. Discussion followed on the 2nd person in the team being a town employee to save money (\$15k) but that Corey really would not have the time it would take. Pat had presented a potential Private Inflow removal policy at a previous meeting that should be adopted and in place prior to these inspections, that sources of private inflow once identified must be removed. Clay pipes were considered, but would not be identified with home inspections but with camera'ing the lines. Carl would prefer to use the *fear* of inspection to motivate residents, than paying for each home to be inspected. Can we do surprise inspections, instead of giving homeowners a chance to hide or temporarily remove sump pumps? Carl maintained that the

threat of inspections is cheaper than actual inspections. Pat noted a town that charged a resident a penalty for not allowing entrance, assuming that since they would not inspectors in, then an illegal sump pump existed. Bob asked that Steve incorporate a regulation such as that in the regulation review. Commission agreed that they are not ready to do these home inspections but that we may come back to it in the future. Clay pipes are another consideration – per Jack, camera'ing lines run about \$125 from the main to the house. Bob confirmed with Steve that the school sump pump issue was included in the 85,000gpd. Going forward, we need to talk to the Plumbing Inspector and Pat will put together a proposal on investigating the clay pipes, doing one area at a time. Our responsibility is to the main – it is the homeowner's responsibility from the main to the home. Homeowner's were supposed to replace all clay pipes with PVC –we need to find out who has replaced and who hasn't. We discussed how to accomplish this – give them 6 months' notice, then if it isn't done, we do it at their cost, unless they provide proof that it was done. Bob asked Pat to come up with a proposed letter to homeowners which we'll send to all homeowners. Then, in conversations with Fitchburg, we can point to the steps taken to curtail I/I. Pat suggested to target the problem area first, providing a deadline of this spring, giving a larger group til the following spring. Letter will state that this area has clay pipe issue and we will camera in the spring.

Grease traps cleaning – Schools – Bob moved to this agenda item since John Londa, facilities manager for the Lunenburg Schools, was present, and while Weston & Sampson were still here to listen. John had submitted a report 1/10 for the cleanings which occurred on 12/27/11 with Corey in attendance and noted that all grease interceptors had been cleaned out. Corey took photos. John provided 1 page summary of data, with information on Passios' 2 grease interceptors (dishwasher & pot sink), the Primary School with 2, and the High School which only has 1 grease interceptor that is on the dishwasher, and was installed in 2009. The HS trap is a low profile grease interceptor which doesn't work with the 25% rule. The Middle School has the 2 oldest grease traps, and the design is substantially different from any of the other locations. When they opened the dishwasher trap cover, the grease slid down and they were unable to get a reading. The unit is also so old that John was unable to get the design specs and therefore didn't get depth measurements, so they weren't listed on the summary. Pot sink is the same size trap and had the same cover, but tray at bottom was not in place so sliding grease was not an issue. John recorded the numbers on each slip – we didn't have numbers before, so we are unable to make a comparison between the cleaning in June 2011 and December's but now have a baseline. Bob re-stated that the grease trap regs state that each trap should be opened weekly, cleaned monthly, but the schools had applied for a waiver. Bob stated that the question becomes – take a risk and wait til June or have another cleaning in February or April, during school vacations. He recommended that they issue the school a conditional waiver, accepting December's readings and doing it again in June to see if 2 times a year will be enough. Carl questioned whether the next cleaning shouldn't be closer? If there were 19% at 4 months, what will it be after 6 months? Also, why only 1 trap at the High School? Bob pointed out with school renovations, he doesn't want them to have to do major work. John will look into a short term solution for the pot sink. Barb pointed out that Corey felt it was important for a Sewer representative to be present, but he would also like one with grease trap expertise, to know what they were looking at and its efficiency. Bob stated we would like Weston & Sampson present at the next cleaning in June, for training Corey, for compliance, and for renovations going forward. Corey's going to need help soon – we can't keep asking him to do more and more. Also, Bob gave John the grease trap maintenance record and noted that he doesn't have to use the form, but must provide all the information that it lists. John added that the line from the Brooks House to the High School has been closed and filled in, alleviating the infiltration issues. They are working on correcting the sump pump issue in the High School.

CONSENT AGENDA

337 Mass Ave. –Asian Imperial - tech meeting will be in the Spring, demolition has begun and Bob wanted to know if the work being done had anything yet to do with grease trap. Jack responded that it did not, and also noted that they are changing the way the sewer will be routed to the street, to avoid cracked PVC issues. **Weston & Sampson** – holiday greetings was provided to the Commission. **Wireless capability on Sewer Tech laptop** – Commission was advised that Corey's laptop was delivered to office 12/19 for Corey. Broadband device is no charge but cost will be \$39.99 /mo to give Corey access around town.

Youngs Rd letter was sent out 12/30/11 as a result of discussions at the meeting of 11/29 - responses have started to come in. Barb had 11 responses of 51, 7 for 4 against. Jack stated he has created a file with the ones received at the DPW. Barb asked if she could have them in central file to track responses. Bob noted he has an issue with the current requirement for 2/3 majority to install a sewer extension. Carl clarified that it was done to ensure there would be enough users if a line went it. Bob noted that forcing residents to connect was already on the list for Weston & Sampson to review and he'd like them to add the 2/3 rule to the review and what other towns practice as far as supporting extensions. Could we have a section that says you have to connect within so many years? Carl stated that his position doesn't support forcing residents to connect, that his preference is for private systems so as not to deplete local water supply. Bob stated that we need more users and proposed requiring that people cannot replace a septic system, if they are on sewer. They can maintain it, but if it needs to be replaced, then they must go to public sewer? He noted that St. Boniface has septic – do we let them put a new system in, or should they go on sewer?

BUDGET FY13- Bob noted that there is no update and will be on the agenda for the next meeting.

Rate increase 2012 – Bob reviewed that at the meeting of 12/14/11 a 20% increase was voted on by the Commission, effective 1/1/12, and to be applied on 4/1/12 invoices and the proposed insert to go in with the January bills was reviewed for editing.

Leominster Clay pipe issues in Whalom area - Wallis Park & Pierce Ave –Barb announced that the sites that had been connected to Leominster through the manhole had connected to Lunenburg effective 1/3/12 and hopefully those issues will be resolved. There is one more location which has a sump pump connected to the manhole and Barb sent them a letter 1/11 and Jack was copied. As far as a scope of work, Jack believes the Town can decommission the manhole themselves by filling and grading. In the Spring he would propose excavating to have the connection capped on Elizabeth where it comes in from the manhole. Jack recommends leaving the spider web of clay pipes for now.

Twin City Baptist – Barb noted that Pastor Burke was in Jan 4 and is still waiting on an explanation of betterments from the Sewer Commission. Barb had emailed Paula Bertram, past chairman to see if she thought there was if there were any reason she knew of we couldn't send out letter. She has no problem, nor Bob, so Barb will re-do the letter when she receives the updated information from the Collectors office. Bob reviewed that they have seven betterments, and that there were reductions throughout the process. Bob asked Barb to send the proposed letter to Carl and to Jack for one last review before sending. Barb brought up the **EPG SOLAR FARM PROPOSAL** on the back land for Twin City. A local representative came in 1/11 for permit signoff and Barb wanted to know if it should be put on 1/31 agenda. The back land (18 ac) would be leased from Twin City. Per Bob, the back acreage is not in the Sewer Service Area so cannot be considered for sewer so no vote is necessary. Barb will contact the representative to let them know they do not need to attend the next Sewer meeting

Revised Sewer map as approved at 12/5/11 Special Town Meeting was provided. Bob noted that the new status of pending was added this year to the map. Lunenburg Village shows on the map as 'pending' sewer.

Pat Cotton (W&S) brought up the proposed **homeowner letter** to be sent in response to the smoke & dye testing. It was determined that it will state that it is the homeowner's responsibility to maintain their pipes and they need to contact their plumber. Pat will send the letter to Barb in Word format with the spreadsheet of addresses to which we'll send the letter.

Emerald Place – built an office building 1Carousel Lane. At time of building permit app, we were told it was not an increase to total sewer connections. However, when they came for occupancy, it was clarified that it was indeed an extra connection. Barb alerted Jack that a permit to connect will be coming and another connection fee.

Online bill pay –Barb noted that Jeff U was working with Fidelity Bank on this before he left – we should have both online payment and **lockbox payments** in place by the April billing.

Betterment deferrals for 36 Whalom & 15 Hamlin - –Commissioners signed off on 2 deferral certificates for FY12.

Minutes for approval 12/14/11 – Commission had reviewed the minutes and Bob asked for a motion to approve the minutes of 12/14/11, Butch made the motion, Jay seconded, vote taken was unanimous

Minutes – Bob has talked with Kerry about Barb's issue of participating in the meeting and taking minutes. Per Kerry, there is some training associated with open meeting law training. We'll find out more.

Barb noted that the only **scheduled time off** before 1/31 is January 20th.

Next meeting – Regular Sewer meeting – January 31 – Town Hall – Carl will be not be there... Commission members discussed new rulings allowing remote participation in public meetings, if there is a quorum already present. However the Town still needs to adopt measure and the Sewer Commission would have to also agree to allow it as well.

Bob asked for a motion to adjourn to go into Executive session to discuss contract negotiations (Fitchburg IMA) and litigation (Hollis Hills), and not resume the regular meeting? Butch made the motion, Carl seconded, and by roll call vote each member voted to enter Executive Session to discuss strategy related to contract negotiations. Regular meeting was adjourned at 8:52 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Barb Lefebvre
Sewer Business Manager