

Meeting Minutes – Sewer Commission
Northfield Town Hall
69 Main Street, Northfield MA
Nov 29, 2023– 4:30 pm - Conference Room First Floor

Commission:	Present		Additional:	Requested:
Chair – Dan Gray (DG)	A			
Tom Walker (TW)	P			
Karen Boudreau (KB)	P			
Chief - Isaac Golding (IG)	P			

Call to order: TW 4:32

Review and Approval of Minutes: Approved and Signed.

Citizen’s Communication: Dave Quinn – Asked to be placed on a January Agenda.

Business:

Budget Review.

- The FY24 budget was reviewed. Due to some equipment failures and projects, the budget is running tight at this point in the year. No vote needed.
- Multiple FY24 projects, the AMP 1.0/Consent order projects, and FY25 budget models were deliberated. 3 Models for FY25, Models A, B, and C were reviewed. The Department and Commission needed to have a certified Enterprise Fund amount which we just received before we could solidify upcoming projects.
- Tom spoke to the Highland Ave Streets project. The scope is “Sidewalks and Culvert” per Tom and previously per Andrea. The project will happen. The next steps will be Engineering, bid process, a required set of plans, funding via a grant process, a carry-over amount from the Winchester Rd project of \$140,000 and also a Mass works grant.
- The Sewer Dept wants to determine if any FY25 AMP/Consent upgrades can be coupled with the Highland Ave. project so as to dig once, thereby saving time and money. Isaac will contact a minimum of 3 other engineering firms as a next step for estimates. He will find out who the Engineering firm is for the Highland Ave streets project.
- The FY25 budget review by line item. This is a line-item approval process. The FY25 rate will be \$1247.53/EDU billed in 4 quarterly cycles of \$311.88. The Flat Fee accounts will increase to \$11,700.00 billed in 4 quarterly cycles of \$2925.00. The billing cycles will have an extended due date from 30 days to 45 days.
- The cost increases are caused by the AMP 1.0/Consent order mandated upgrades, a mandated staffing requirement to hire a second full time position, previous rate setting math from the EDU conversion, and supply chain shortages/inflation. Going into FY24, we attempted to reduce overtime by \$6000.00. However, the actual overtime budget was negatively impacted by storm related overtime. The initial FY25 rate from the Asset Mgmt Project (AMP 1.0) came in at \$1810.76 or a 117% increase. The Commission and Department fully realize the excessive nature of that rate. We eliminated/reduced some of the 2025 AMP requirements. Our future goals are to fund AMP/Consent projects where possible with grants and to utilize the 2nd full time position to install the projects in house. In-house staff performing the work is substantially less than outsourcing projects and acquiring loans.
 - **Motion for Budget Model C as Written by: Tom Walker, 2nd by Karen Boudreau, All approved.**

- Water Line Update and Railroad.
 - Arc Engineering is working with Genessee to move this project forward. No vote needed.
- Accountants - Rate Adjustment, Enterprise Fund Certification/Adjustments
 - The Enterprise Fund is certified by the accountants for \$284,887.
 - Rate Adjustment details were reviewed one last time. Andrea will announce the details at the Select Board meeting, so that everyone is made aware of the needed adjustment. A Newsletter will also be published. Post adjustment and holiday timeframe, the Utility Report, accounts, abatements, edu classification sheet and any other rate documentation will be updated and made current. The adjustment per EDU is \$59.87/edu additive and a \$500.00 additive per flat fee sent out in January 2024. The March bill will be based on ½ the FY24 EDU rate of 905.13 and \$4500.00 per Flat fee account.
 - **Motion to accept the Rate Adjustment by Karen Boudreau, 2nd by Tom Walker. All approved.**
 - Going forward, the accounting firm and the Department of Revenue are working closely at all figures and mandates. They are a welcomed and knowledgeable acquisition to the team. The Sewer Commission has called for a deep review of all records from 2019 forward.
- Easements And Deeds, Plant– Article money – Status update from Isaac.
 - Isaac is working with a survey firm to relocate and update easements around the plant. The cost is covered by a previous article. This work should also give us a good idea of actual costs for other easement updates per the Consent order. There are 2 people from Daniel Salls Land surveying.
- DEP communication. Unless otherwise approved, Karen reports to the DEP Bureau Chief weekly regarding the status of work at the Northfield Treatment plant and the projects.

Billing:

- Abatements
- Questions/Correspondence/Applications

Operator Report: Isaac Golding

- **Status only** – no discussion/deliberations
- **Status with discussion/deliberation-** Known before the meeting.
Main St south - Parker Ave. Isaac and Karen
- **Items not reasonably anticipated by the Chief Operator:**
The plant is severely aged and under a Consent order. Regularly emergencies occur between posting of the agenda and the meeting.

Items not reasonably anticipated by the Chair/Commission:

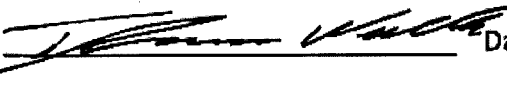
Next Meeting Agenda:

Next Meeting Date: 12/13/2023

Adjourned: 5:52 pm

Approved:

Signature:  Date: 12/27/2023

Signature:  Date: 12/27/23

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

These minutes are being posted in compliance with Massachusetts Open Meeting Law.