



SEWER COMMISSIONERS WORKSHOP

September 27, 2023

11:00 AM

ROOM 204

ACTON TOWN HALL, 472 MAIN STREET

MEETING MINUTES

Present: Jim Snyder-Grant, Fran Arsenault, Dean Charter David Martin, Alissa Nicol

Absent: None

Additional Present: Ellie Anderson, Financial Solution Analyst, Jack Troidl, Woodard and Curran, Kevin Olson and Adam Higgins, Wright-Pierce

1. Presentations Regarding the Sewer Program in Acton

Ellie Anderson, Financial Solution Analyst presented the history of the sewer system and cost analysis, current usage trends, and expected projects to be added to the system.

Ms. Nicol questioned relating to the 5-year plan regarding the revenue and expenditures that didn't reach the budget and did it result in things in maintenance not being done

Mr. Martin clarified that the privilege fee is held – Ms. Anderson stated the privilege fee is not held in the operating account but the enterprise fund

Mr. Snyder-Grant noted the presentation is a new level of transparency, questioned on the timeline slide to remind of the two failed attempts a Town Meeting to expand the sewer system, questioned how the capacity increased from 250,000 gallons to 290,000 gallons

Ms. Nicol questioned if the increase in the rate of electricity was due to Acton Power Choice

Jack Troidl presented to the Board an update on capital projects, wastewater capacity and PFAS update.

Mr. Charter questioned about connections that would be sub-surface

Ms. Arsenault questioned the life expectancy for pumping stations – Mr. Troidl noted approximately 25 years for equipment, and less for electronics, housing is approximately 50 years.

Mr. Snyder-Grant questioned regarding the capacity from slide 5 are potential customers in the sewer district and paid betterment and would potentially increase the capacity to 50,000 gallons, and if they are currently on septic and if their septic fails they would be required to connect to sewer- Mr. Troidl confirmed.

Ms. Nicol questioned about the customer bills covering the cost and maintenance and a need for the increase in rate, Mr. Mangiaratti noted that the rates charged 20 years ago did not cover the maintenance and had to pay out of pocket, with the increase in rates it covers the cost of maintenance, if there was a plan for a replacement before the system is at end of life, questioned about what the flow peaks represent if not a rain event, Mr. Troidl noted that it can be as a result of maintenance, questioned life span of pumping stations if they were more 15 years than 20 years. Mr. Mangiaratti questioned if the Select Board want a more aggressive INI approach can they be directed to do so.

2. Presentation of Great Road Corridor Waste Water Solutions Study by Wright Pierce

Kevin Olson and Adam Higgins from Wright Pierce presented on the Great Road corridor wastewater solutions, including the reasons for the study, the background, wastewater flow estimates, management solutions, and funding and financing and thanked those they worked with

at the town level, Acton Water District, Concord Water and collaborating with Jack Troidl at Woodard and Curran.

Ms. Nicol questioned why the Grandview parcel was added to the Great Road plan, Mr. Mangiaratti noted it needed to be added for funding and would offset the cost of the project, questioned about the smaller wastewater treatment areas and combining commercial properties with property owners, questioned about the WR Grace site was able to provide a bit more than needed for discharge capacity and would provide the existing 1/3 of the service area

Mr. Martin commented on the needs of Great Road to be connected to the sewer system with some of the commercial properties should there be a failure and the need to add a package plant and that none of the commercial parcels have any extra property to allow for discharge.

Mr. Snyder-Grant commented on the concern that a system is needed, however if betterment, it could hurt commercial businesses more than help, and would need outside resources for funding, suggested rather in the interim businesses consider conservation of water usage and use a composting toilet to extend the life of their current septic system.

Ms. Arsenault suggested hearing from businesses on Great Road

Mr. Charter commented on the 100,000 for the SBU. Mr. Mangiaratti mentioned that as part of Rapid Recovery Program was that they heard from the businesses on Great Road interested in connecting to a sewer system.

Ms. Nicol questioned about some neighborhoods such as Phlox Lane and Bayberry Road were considered for connection, Mr. Olson noted that if this were to move forward, additional households could be connected and that the flow would be coming down in that direction and by adding would bring down the betterment fee if the town would consider moving forward, but three could be further discussions on the parcels to be potentially added. Also, expressed that if there is any documentation from business owners that it should be made public due to lack of information online as a result of tabling events or through conversation with town staff.

3. Meeting Evaluation and Next Steps

Ms. Nicol thought all presentations were excellent and encouraged the public to reach out with questions to the Select Board. Mr. Snyder-Grant noted there will be further discussion and that the meeting went well. Other Board members noted that the presentations were excellent, and noted previous or earlier rates were not sustainable for the maintenance of the system and revisit how to fund the expansion without a betterment system and generate more revenue.

Mr. Martin moved, seconded by Ms. Nicol to adjourn and approved unanimously 5-0. Meeting adjourned at 1:10 PM