

Town of Hingham



Hingham Sewer Commission Meeting Minutes

December 10, 2019

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:01 p.m. in the South Central Hearing Room, Hingham Town Hall.

Commissioners Present

Robert Higgins, chair; Stephen Harold; and Kirk Shilts

Chairman's Message

Mr. Higgins welcomed back Mr. Harold and said the Commission is happy to see him back.

Department Personnel & Staff Present

Randy Sylvester, DPW Superintendent; Stephen Dempsey, Sewer Supervisor; Liz Welch, DPW Office Administrator; and Pat Cotton (Weston & Sampson), Commission's Contract Engineer.

Agenda

The Commission reviewed the draft agenda.

Dr. Shilts made a motion, seconded by Mr. Higgins, to approve the agenda as drafted; the motion passed by unanimous vote.

Meeting Minutes

The Commission reviewed the October 22, 2019 public meeting minutes.

Dr. Shilts made a motion, seconded by Mr. Higgins, to approve the October 22, 2019 minutes as drafted; the motion passed with Mr. Harold abstaining.

The Commission reviewed the November 19, 2019 public meeting minutes.

Mr. Higgins made a motion, seconded by Dr. Shilts, to approve the November 19, 2019 minutes as amended; the motion passed with Mr. Harold abstaining.

On-Call Sewer Services Contract FY20-21:

Mr. Cotton explained that four contracts are being bid out for 2020 for 1-year terms:

Contract 1: Cleaning and Inspection of Sewers

Contract 2: I & I Trenchless Sewer Repair

Contract 3: Sewer Dig Repair – Emergency & On Call

Contract 4: Sewer Pump Stations – Emergency & On Call Services

In 2014 and 2017, Contracts 1, 2 & 3 were awarded with an option to extend to a second (1-year) term at contract price and third term at a negotiated price. The Commission is bidding the three Contracts for a third term at the same price, and bidding Contract 4 for the first time. Bid opening is Thursday, December 12, 2019 at 11:00am. Mr. Cotton explained that once the bids are opened, he will review the lowest bidder for each contract and check references. The contracts will then be awarded. The contracts were signed by Mr. Higgins, Chair and Mr. Harold.

Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Grant Program, Broad Cove Force Main Study:

Mr. Cotton recommended including a Broad Cove force main repair within the Town's MVP priority list for state grant consideration. He said failure of this vulnerable sewer infrastructure component would be catastrophic to the Town.

He said the first step is to conduct a feasibility study. He will perform a hydraulic model on the Broad Cove force main's current flows and configuration. There would be three repair options – Option 1: to replace in kind or next to it in similar trench; Option 2: a slip line where a smaller pipe is inserted into the existing force main; or Option 3: cure in place lining the entire force main. Mr. Sylvester explained we could look at a combination of the three options which may be most cost effective. Mr. Cotton agreed, and explained that the existing force main is at the end of its useful life.

To get the project eligible for a MVP grant, the Town's MVP grant committee would need to re-convene and include the study. Mr. Cotton is hoping to get this onto the spring application. Mr. Sylvester will talk with Emily Wentworth, the Town's MVP coordinator, to find out what needs to be done to get this sewer project onto the priority list. If the grant is selected, there is a 25% state-match. Mr. Cotton said the MVP grant program has a requirement that the full sum of the project has to be appropriated by the Town first, and then reimbursed by the grant. He said the cost of the study would be \$150,000.

Dr. Shilts made a motion, seconded by Mr. Harold, to have Mr. Sylvester ask the Hingham MVP Grant Committee to include a Broad Cove Force Main Repair feasibility study within the Town's MVP priorities list; the Motion passed by unanimous vote.

FY2021 Sewer Budget and Capital Plan:

Mr. Sylvester presented the FY2021 Sewer Operating Budget and the FY2021 Sewer Capital Budget to the Commission.

Mr. Sylvester highlighted the dramatic electricity expense increase which he said is due to Hingham Light changing its method of billing to a demand charge rather than just KWH used. He explained when our pumping stations' pumps turn on, for a few seconds they initially draw a lot of amperage and our rate is based on this initial load amount. He said vehicle fuel expense is another increase. Mr. Sylvester estimates a 7% MWRA assessment increase, and a 15% Hull Intermunicipal assessment increase.

Mr. Harold made a motion, seconded by Dr. Shilts, to approve the FY2021 Sewer Operating Budget of \$3,352,157.00 as presented; the motion passed by unanimous vote.

Mr. Sylvester discussed and recommended \$286,000 in capital projects.

Dr. Shilts made a motion, seconded by Mr. Harold, to approve the FY2021 Sewer Capital Budget of \$286,000 as proposed; the motion passed by unanimous vote.

Preliminary FY2020 Sewer Bill Commitment

Ms. Welch reported that the FY2020 Preliminary Sewer Bills have been processed and will be mailed out on December 13, 2019 with a due date of Friday, January 24, 2019. The total Sewer Use Charge Assessment is \$1,347,308.40 which will be reported to the Town Accountant.

Dr. Shilts made a motion, seconded by Mr. Higgins, to accept the FY2020 Preliminary Sewer Use Charge Assessment of \$1,347,308.40; the motion passed by unanimous vote.

Sewer Bill Abatements:

None

DPW Superintendent/Sewer Supervisor Reports:

Mr. Dempsey reported that three licensed drain layers have recently incurred violations to the Town's Sewer Regulations. The issues include not having the proper permits and backfilling without inspections. Mr. Dempsey would like direction from the Commission on a next step.

Mr. Sylvester said if any licensed drain layers is not following the rules and work isn't getting inspected, there is a problem - and this could cost the Town money. He said the Town has written regulations and everybody must follow proper process. He said if they don't, they need to present to the Commission for potential disciplinary action. A consensus of the Commission was to send out a generic letter to all permitted drain layers reiterating the rules and regulations.

Thereafter, the Commission gave staff direction to send an information letter to all permitted drain layers reminding them to review and adhere to the Town's sewer regulations.

Mr. Sylvester said a draft update to the Town's sewer regulations has been posted on the website for over a year. Ms. Welch said that no comments have been received to date, nor has Town Counsel replied to the Commission's request for professional review. Dr. Shilts suggested removing the posted draft from the website, and the Commission again review the proposed changes at its next meeting, including particularly the new section on private sewer systems.

Thereafter, the Commission gave Dr. Shilts direction on updating the Town's Sewer Rules & Regulations for review at the next meeting.

New Business:

none

Scheduling

The next meeting was not scheduled.

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Liz Welch

DPW Office Administrator

Documents reviewed during public meeting:

- *Meeting agenda for 12/10/19*
- *Draft meeting minutes of 10//22/19 and 11/19/19*
- *FY-2021 Sewer Operating Budget*
- *FY-2020 Sewer Capital Budget*