

## **Town of Hingham**

### ***Board of Health Joint Meeting with the Sewer Commission***

**02/25/26**

A posted public meeting of the Town of Hingham, Board of Health (the Board), was held at the Hingham Town Hall in the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor, East Hearing Room @ **7:03 pm**.

#### **Members Present**

Elizabeth Eldredge, M.D., Chair

Rosemary Byrne, N.P., Member

Mark Lundin, Member

#### **Health Department Staff Present**

Susan Sarni, Executive Health Officer

#### **Sewer Commission Present**

Clark Frazier, Chair

Joe Fisher, Member

Richard Eisen, Member

#### **Sewer Department Staff Present**

Russel Tierney, Managing Director/Superintendent, Weir River/Water Sewer

Liz Welch, Administrator

#### **Items for Vote**

No Items for a Vote

#### **Items to Discuss:**

Dr. Eldredge requested an open communication within the town regarding sewer expansion.

#### **Comprehensive Wastewater Management Plan & Sewer for the South Hingham Industrial Park Area**

- Dr. Eldredge asked if the Sewer Commission has been involved with the Bristol Brothers project for the land at 177 Old Derby St and whether or not this is considered a sewer district that could be created.
- Mr. Frazier stated that there is only a South Hingham Sewer District “on paper” in the 2013 South Hingham Study Group Final Report, from November 2017.
- Mr. Tierney believes that the Bristol Brothers Project located at 177 Old Derby St would like to build their own WWTP or connect to MWRA. However, discussions are needed regarding how and from where they will access water on this property.
- Mr. Tierney suggested that a South Hingham Sewer Study Group is developed. This group would consist of one member from each board, department staff, in addition to a member from the Zoning and Planning Boards and department.

- Mr. Fisher stated that the project has many unknowns and water and wastewater are part of this discussion with the town.
- Dr. Eldredge believes that we need to protect our water as our golden resource.
- Mr. Patch, a resident stated that the issue with MWRA regarding expansion of sewer for Hingham is that they need the entire town to be in the district.
- Mr. Robert, Assistant Town Administrator for Operations, reported that he has held numerous meetings with AW Perry and Bristol Brothers regarding potential future development. He noted that the primary limiting factors for these projects are the availability of water and wastewater capacity. He added that the Town has completed an Economic Development Plan to evaluate development opportunities across Hingham and highlighted that the major challenges moving forward involve zoning relief and establishing pathways for mixed-use development.
- Dr. Eldredge asked Mr. Robert what input the Select Board has on the he type of development in the South Hingham Industrial Park areas. Mr. Robert explained that development decisions are governed by Zoning, and that the role of the Select Board is to support projects that maintain the town's character while considering potential revenue opportunities.

### **1983 Language vs Article 23**

- Mr. Tierney educated the Boards that the updated bylaw language that became Article 41 in 2016 and was presented to town meeting vote after approval from both the Sewer Commission and Board of Health in December 2015. He explained that this updated language would give both the Board of Health and the Sewer Commission the flexibility to weigh in on any proposed sewer expansion projects.
- Dr. Eldredge voiced concerns regarding potential expansion of the sewer based on want instead of need. She would also like to bring back the pre-existing wording from the 1983 Town Meeting which states that the Board of Health must approve any sewer expansion projects to prevent those particular situations.
- Mr. Tierney reassured the boards that potential expansion of the sewer based on want instead of need would not occur and that any expansion required for health reasons must take place within an existing sewer district. .
- Mr. Fisher stated that even when an expansion occurs within an established sewer district, the town is not required to fund the infrastructure. Dr. Eldredge expressed interest in discussing how the Board of Health would have input on future sewer expansion projects if Town funding were to be involved.
- Mr. Frazier stated that this discussion should be aligned with the Comprehensive Wastewater Management Plan.

### **Sewer for Worlds End**

- Dr. Eldredge noted that many septic system variances have been granted in the World's End area. She added that the end of Martin's Lane, also known as Cedar Gables may face future issues with the septic disposal systems being flooded by seawater as water levels rise
- Mr. Tierney handed out a map of World's End Proposed Sewer Expansion showing flow estimates in GPD. He also included line items in the FY27 budget for consultants to conduct an analysis of the possibility of extending sewer service to World's End.
- Mr. Lundin agrees that there are many challenging systems that the BOH hears regarding variances for septic system.
- As per the EHO, currently the BoH has only one failed Title 5 report in Hingham.
- Dr. Eisen asked whether any of these septic failures have resulted in leakage into the harbor.

- Ms. Sarni stated that, to her knowledge, no failures have leaked into the harbor.
- Mr. Fisher understands the importance of this conversation about expanding sewer to World's End and the look ahead, and suggested including the Planning Board in future this conversations because of development impacts. Mr. Frazier expressed concern that nitrogen impacts are most significant in Porters Cove, noting that he has observed a large algae bloom in that area.
- Mr. Tierney stated that creating a new sewer district would be required and may involve special legislation. He also noted that Hull has 100,000 GPD available for Hingham at their sewer plant. He recommended that the Board of Health send a letter to the Sewer Commission expressing its concerns about potentially extending sewer service to Cedar Gables.

**New Business:**

No New Business to Discuss.

**EHO Report:**

No EHO Report to Discuss.

**Scheduling:**

Dr. Eldredge would like to have another meeting to continue this discussion. TBD.

**Adjournment**

The public meeting of the Hingham Board of Health and Sewer Commission Meeting adjourned @8:58pm.

Respectfully Submitted,  
*Susan Sarni, Executive Health Officer*

***Documents reviewed during the Public Meeting:***

*The Board of Health Joint Meeting with the Sewer Commission Agenda  
 Letter from Attorney Jeffery Tocchio, DTM Law, Re: Preliminary Subdivision Plan  
 Form B Application for Approval of Preliminary Plan to the Hingham Planning Board  
 Preliminary Subdivision Plan – Old Derby Street Extension – Connector Supplemental Narrative  
 Old Derby Street Masterplan Layout V9 (6/24/25)  
 South Hingham Study Area – Map  
 Article 23 Sewer Appropriation by Law  
 Letter from Attorney General Martha Coakley Re: Hingham Annual Town Meeting of April 25, 1983 – Case #6641  
 Warrant Article #28 (General)  
 World's End Proposed Sewer Extension/GPD to Sewer World's End*