

Town of Hingham



Hingham Sewer Commission Meeting Minutes

May 9, 2023

Call to Order

A posted meeting of the Hingham Sewer Commission was held on May 9, 2023 in the East Hearing Room, Hingham Town Hall, 210 Central Street

As presiding member, Dr. Shilts called the meeting to order at 6:09 p.m.

Introduction of New Member

Dr. Shilts welcomed Mr. James Henry Byrne to the Sewer Commission. He is an Assistant District Attorney and has volunteered in the Town of Hingham.

Members Present

Kirk Shilts; Clark Frazier and James Byrne.

Staff Present

Randy Sylvester, DPW Superintendent; and Liz Welch, DPW Office Manager.

Meeting Minutes

The Commission reviewed the draft minutes of 4/13/23. Mr. Frazier offered a few minor changes.

Vote: Mr. Frazier moved to approve the minutes of April 13, 2023 as amended; seconded by Mr. Byrne and VOTED (roll call);

members in favor: Byrne, Shilts and Frazier

members opposed: none

Action Items:

Election for Commission Chair

Dr. Shilts opened nominations for Sewer Commission Chair for the 2023/2024 term.

Dr. Shilts nominated Mr. Frazier. No other nominations were offered.

Vote: Mr. Byrne moved to elect Mr. Frazier to be Chairman of the Sewer Commission; seconded by Dr. Shilts and VOTED (roll call);

members in favor: Byrne, Shilts and Frazier

members opposed: none

FY23 Sewer Rate

Ms. Welch explained the FY2023 Sewer Rate was calculated on actual expenses and income from FY2022 and the anticipated expenditures (appropriations) and credits for FY2023. The new proposed rate would be \$11.67 per hundred cubic feet.

Dr. Shilts suggested keeping the rate the same. He said due to the COVID-19 pandemic there was a sharp decrease then a rebound increase in spending. He said the Commission decided to give the savings back to ratepayers due to COVID. He said we now we have rates going up and down and would like to level it out. Mr. Frazier recommended keeping the rate the same gives a leg up on the major capital work that we have to do.

Vote: Dr. Shilts moved to set the FY2023 Sewer Rate at \$14.06 per hundred cubic feet, seconded by Mr. Byrne and VOTED (roll call);

members in favor: Byrne, Shilts and Frazier

members opposed: none

Reopening of the Weir River Sewer District

Mr. Frazier wanted to rescind the moratorium on sewer connections in the Weir River Sewer District. Dr. Shilts said the Commission had already voted to open the district on a case-by-case basis last fall, but an affirmation would be useful.

Vote: Mr. Byrne moved to rescind the moratorium on the connections of February 2017 in the Weir River Sewer District. Unbuilt or not connected parcels originally in the Phase I or Phase II of the Weir River Sewer district shall be eligible to connect with up to three bedrooms or the number of bedrooms otherwise defined when the district was created once the betterment is paid, and houses already connected with fewer than three bedrooms shall be allowed to add bedrooms upon application to the Sewer Department once all other Town of Hingham legal requirements are met, and that applicants must apply to the Sewer Commission for additional bedrooms beyond the original allocation and pay the applicable additional fees upon approval of the application, seconded by Mr. Frazier.

And VOTED (roll call);

members in favor: Byrne, Shilts and Frazier

members opposed: none

80 Kilby Street, Application for Additional Bedroom - WRSD

Dr. Shilts would like to provide applicants with a form to fill out for sewer hook-ups and additional bedroom requests. Ms. Welch believes that the building department form has all the documentation that is needed for this additional bedroom.

Mr. Frazier discussed sump pump discharges, where the applicant (in attendance) confirmed having a sump pump. Mr. Sylvester explained that the water has to stay on their property. It cannot be put on the public way or into the sewer. He said the Commission has the right to tell applicants where to put their discharge.

Mr. Frazier believes the application should be approved conditional on inspection of their sump pump.

Vote: Dr. Shilts moved to approve the additional bedroom for 80 Kilby Street, conditional on a favorable inspection of the dwelling's sump pump by Sewer Supervisor Dempsey, seconded by Mr. Byrne and VOTED (roll call);

members in favor: Byrne, Shilts and Frazier

members opposed: none

Discussion:

Rt. 3A Sewer Project Scope of Work

Mr. Frazier stated that the 2023 sewer Warrant Article is not clear on what we can do, including performing some construction. Dr. Shilts interpreted the recommended motion by the Advisory Committee voted by Town Meeting as being principally a study. Mr. Sylvester explained that it was for the design. He said it was also worded to use available federal grant funds. He said the engineering for the force main portion is done but the gravity main on state land is not done yet.

Mr. Sylvester said this will have to go out to bid for qualifications (RFP). He is working with Kathy Reilly, the Town's Procurement Officer. He said we can't use any of these funds until July. Ms. Reilly will put the RFP together for the Commission's review. He said there needs to be an investigation of the gravity main, more borings done and look at the integrity of the lines which could possibly take 6-months.

Dr. Shilts stated that the Broad Cove pump station conveys more than 90% of the Hingham Sewer District's total flow. He said we should look to have some of this flow re-routed from this pump station and its force main under pressure. We should investigate taking current flow from the West Street area that presently snakes through downtown and instead bring up Beal Street to our redesigned 3A gravity main. He also suggested thinking about other parts of Hingham for potential future flows, like World's End and South Hingham. Dr. Shilts suggest we put a scope together that may consider these things.

Mr. Sylvester explained that the MWRA has a current limitation on the amount of flow that we can send them. There is defined district with only a 200 foot reach in. There is a limit on the Stodder's Neck pump station. We should be looking at a design of what we have and what we could potentially have in the sewer district now including going to PVC pipes and duplicate lines so if we had to take one out of service we could. Mr. Sylvester explained that to move to another part of Hingham or add stations so it all goes to gravity is not economical.

Mr. Frazier explained that the scope of construction work is for existing pump stations. He also said if we aggressively reduce Inflow and Infiltration (I&I) that would give us more capacity.

Dr. Shilts stated that starting in 2004 he was a member of the Comprehensive Wastewater Master Planning Committee. This was a \$400,000 study that determined a need for sewerage South Hingham. He said the plan's author, Camp Dressler McGee Inc., estimated that we could put a sewer line from South Hingham to Stodder's Neck for \$12 million dollars. Dr. Shilts said we should thinking about the next 70 years and do some planning as opposed to just engineering pieces of pipe in the ground. Dr. Shilts would like to discuss this at a future meeting.

Mr. Sylvester stated that the Town's water supply is an important consideration when discussing additional sewerage. He said the MWRA replaced their force main about 10 years ago. Mr. Frazier said Stodder's Neck may not be viable in 100 years due to climate change.

Mr. Frazier explained that we have capacity if we reduce I&I. Dr. Shilts stated that the Commission's job is planning and the Sewer Department's job is operations including reducing unwanted I&I.

DPW Superintendents / Sewer Supervisor Reports:

Mr. Sylvester said they hope to install a new generator by the end of the month and new gas service for a heater at Broad Cove pump station. The generator will be inside the station approximately 2 feet off the ground.

Scheduling:

The next meeting is scheduled for June 13, 2023 at 6:00pm

Adjournment

Vote: Mr. Byrne moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:21 p.m.; seconded by Mr. Frazier and VOTED (roll call):

members in favor: Byrne, Shilts and Frazier

members opposed: none

Respectfully submitted,
Liz Welch
DPW/Sewer Office Manager

Documents reviewed during public meeting:

- *Meeting agenda 5/9/23*
- *Draft minutes of 4/13/23*
- *Sewer Use Rates 2010-2023*
- *Sewer Use Rate FY2023 Calculation*
- *Sewer Use Rate FY2022 Calculation*
- *Updated Weir River Sewer Capacity Memo 5/5/23*
- *Weir River Sewer District Capacity Spreadsheet as of 5/5/23*
- *80 Kilby Street Memo 4/21/23*
- *Article 26 – Route 3A Sewer Project – 2023 Town Warrant*