

Town of Hingham



Hingham Sewer Commission Meeting Minutes

October 22, 2019

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 p.m. in the South Central Hearing Room, Hingham Town Hall.

Commissioners Present:

Robert Higgins, Chairman and Kirk Shilts.

Department Personnel & Staff Present:

Randy Sylvester, DPW Superintendent; Stephen Dempsey, Sewer Supervisor; and Liz Welch, DPW Office Administrator.

Agenda

The Commission reviewed the draft agenda. Dr. Shilts suggested that the Harbor Concession Stand Sewer Project Update should be discussed as a standalone item. Mr. Higgins agreed and added it to the "New Business" section of the agenda. Dr. Shilts also would like Mass Pavement Reclamation, Inc. Drainlayer License discussion item added. Mr. Higgins suggested it be put on a future agenda, as he has not had time to review it yet. The Commission agreed to put on future agenda.

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

Meeting Minutes:

The Commission reviewed the September 10, 2019 public meeting minutes. Dr. Shilts made some minor corrections to the minutes that were immaterial.

Dr. Shilts made a Motion, seconded by Mr. Higgins, to approve the September 10, 2019 minutes as amended; the Motion passed by unanimous vote.

Sewer Easement Alteration Request - 6 New Towne Drive:

Spokespersons: Gabe Crocker, engineer & D. J. MacKinnon, owner's representative

Mr. Crocker explained that the property owners are looking to modify their driveway, which is partially within sewer easement, due to its sharp angle and winter-time safety concerns. The proposal is to raise the grade above the existing sewer line by about 7.5 feet and change the grade from a 20 degree slope to 7.5 degrees. He said the proposal includes installing two rows of removable 3x2x5 concrete blocks to form a six-foot retaining wall.

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Mr. Higgins said the pipe is already 8 feet deep and is unsure if doubling its depth would compromise the pipe. He explained the Commission is concerned about safety, and future maintenance and restoration costs if we have to dig up the sewer line in the future, as well as legal costs.

Dr. Shilts said the cost of any restoration to the driveway should be borne by the homeowner. He explained the purpose of the easement is to give the sewer department unfettered access to our underground sewer infrastructure. He said it may be helpful to develop a written guideline for these types of requests. He said denials would come from placing a structure or planting trees within the easement, or if the additional fill compromises the infrastructure's integrity, or if any utilities are being installed across the easement.

Mr. MacKinnon agreed that the homeowner would be responsible to restore the driveway if excavation of the sewer main is needed. He said that there is a recorded plan showing a "Sewer Easement" but no recorded easement document. It was suggested that the Sewer Commission will require a new easement agreement with the owner including if the sewer department needs to get to the pipe to repair or replace it, we will have no restoration obligations to the property owner.

Mr. Dempsey said there should be a pre-construction video taken of the pipe and any repairs made prior to construction. A post construction video should be required as well.

Dr. Shilts explained the Commission should have all the documentation to review before it votes.

Dr. Shilts made a Motion, seconded by Mr. Higgins, to continue the 6 New Towne Drive sewer easement construction request for up to 60 days; the Motion passed by unanimous vote.

Delegation of Actions to DPW Superintendent:

Mr. Higgins would like to revisit the delegations granted to the DPW Superintendent related to contracts and bills amounts that Mr. Sylvester has the authority to sign. Mr. Higgins has seen budgeted MWRA monthly bills and inflow & infiltration (I & I) related bills that are over \$100,000. Mr. Higgins would like to give the authorization for Mr. Sylvester to sign off on larger amounts especially on any budgeted item.

Dr. Shilts agreed that Mr. Sylvester should be able to sign these commonly encountered bills that may exceed \$100,000.

Dr. Shilts made a Motion, seconded by Mr. Higgins, to delegate to the DPW Superintendent the ability to sign sewer related contracts and bills for amounts less than \$200,000; the Motion passed by unanimous vote.

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Dr. Shilts made a Motion, seconded by Mr. Higgins, to delegate to the Sewer Commission Chairman the ability to sign off on contracts and bills related to sewer related work on behalf of the Sewer Commission on amounts that are \$200,000 and over; the Motion passed by unanimous vote.

Sewer Bill Abatements:

None

Sewer Supervisor Report:

Mill Street Pumping Station Update

Mr. Dempsey explained that the Mill Street station was recently rehabilitated. The total cost of the completed project was \$75,000.

New Business:

Harbor Concession Stand Sewer Project Update

Mr. Sylvester explained that he has taken over this project since the Town Engineer has resigned. He said he is working with Mr. Dempsey, the Board of Health and the Commission to get the project done correctly. Mr. Sylvester explained that there have been a few issues, one of which was the Plumbing Inspector signed off on cast iron pipe when it should have been a coated cast iron pipe. He said the pipe has since been changed out. Mr. Sylvester explained he is also meeting with Triumph regarding electrical concerns.

Mr. Sylvester said state regulations require that external grease traps need to hold 1,000 gallons, but the Town of Hingham FOG regulations state it should hold 1,500 gallons. He said the grease trap that is currently installed is only 1,000 gallons. He said calculations done by the Town's consultants show expected low volume use. Dr. Shilts said the Hingham Board of Health can grant a variance for installation of the smaller tank.

Scheduling:

The next meeting was tentatively planned for December 3, 2019 at 7:00pm

The meeting adjourned at 8:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Liz Welch

DPW Office Administrator

Documents reviewed during public meeting:

- *Meeting agenda for 10/22/19*
- *Draft meeting minutes of 9/10/19*
- *Email with architectural plans (3) from G. Crocker, RE: 6 New Towne Drive, dated 10/7/19*