

Water Commission Minutes  
10/5/2020

Called to Order: 6:00 PM

Present by Zoom: Fran Huntoon, David Sander, Bard Hill, Don Marin  
Absent: Katie Mather

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Others Present by Zoom: Josh Arneson, Town Manager; Kendall Chamberlin, Water & Sewer; Kathy Daub-Stearns, Admin. Assist.; and the meeting was recorded for MMCTV Channel 15

**1. Welcome** by Bard. No comments.

**2. Additions or Deletions to the Agenda.**

Josh said there is a preliminary allocation request for 112 East Main St, the board agreed to hear it between D & E in the agenda.

**3. Items for Presentation or Discussion with those present**

**a. Discussion of wastewater permit**

Josh reported:

- that each wastewater facility in the state is required to renew their permit every 5 years adding that the 2010 permit has been administratively continued until now.
- that last Monday he and Kendall met with the state with the big thing being a reduction of phosphorous allowed going to 134 lbs./yr. from the current level of over 400.
- that the current level of discharge is 42.6
- that there are other ways phosphorus gets into the environment but that wastewater facilities are easier to manage than road run off
- that the budget will increase approx. \$4000 for the additional testing requirements

Discussion included:

- that Bard asked what is the regulatory framework that takes us from a permit of over 400 to 134. Kendall answered design flow x 2 is the formula being used. Bard asked if every facility was being held to the same standard. Kendall replied, yes, in the Champlain Valley
- that Bard asked to have the State cite where the formula comes from. Kendall replied that was the reason for his memo adding that written comments are reviewed during this 30 days.
- that David asked how many new permits have been granted. Kendall replied that Hinesburg has one, they are just out of litigation, South Burlington too.
- that Bard asked that if we are up against the limit with customers, is the goal to limit the amount of septage? Kendall replied, it is about the total limit. Bard said so to stay under our total limitations we could have to stop taking septage. Kendall said it is not just reducing septage, it's about management change, and upgrades to facilities adding we will not be allowed to increase the amount of phosphorus we are permitted

to emit, ever, once the permit is issued. Kendall felt we should fight the allowable amount.

- Kathy asked, if the facility stops taking septage what happens to Richmond residents with septic tanks that need emptying? Bard said that the facility is meant to treat the wastewater of customers, not the residents of Richmond, it is the customers that pay in and so it is designed to serve the customers, not haulers.
- Don asked Kendall where we stand on removal of phosphorus compared to other water districts. Kendall replied that our removal is so good we were not included in the first round of new permits.
- Bard asked what the penalty for systems that discharge more than .2. Kendall said looking at Hinesburg, they have \$20,000,000 of upgrades they are required to do to continue operating.
- Bard asked if other facilities appealed, who they are and why they appealed.
- Fran thought once we hit 80% of capacity then a new plan needs to be done. Kendall said, yes, we really don't have to 134, at 108 would need a new plan, including upgrades.
- Bard said from this point forward the commission will have to consider phosphorus impact with each new allocation.
- Don asked about the deadline for the new permit. Kendall thought it was by the new year. Josh will find out what will happen if the application is delayed. Don thought the commission should be cautious.
- Bard would like to know the phosphorus contributions made from agriculture, facilities, and roads.
- Josh said he had the questions and would follow up with the State.

**b. Discussion of water tank**

- Bard said this is continued from a previous meeting and is here for Don's benefit. He offered to let Josh or Kendall begin.
- Don said he would like to understand, adding spalling is different than an active water leak. He did not think that having the engineer who designed the tank was the way to have it determined ok. Kendall said that there is a tank inspection coming up and that there are no water leaks, and the tank is in very good shape.
- Kendall said that the scuba inspection comes with a video and this could be discussed when that is available. Don said that the report said there are active leaks, now there are none adding that if in 5 years we have a problem with the tank then we have made a mistake not having someone, other than the design engineer, give us an opinion. He would like to have an expert look at it, not the design engineer.
- Bard asked if any other members of the commission would like to comment.
- Fran asked if the underwater inspection showed no leaks. David said there is a difference between seeps and leaks.
- Don said if the tank were buried it would be different, but the tank is exposed. He said if the commission wants to not do the inspection, he is not in favor of that. He wanted to know what the problem is with having someone else look at it. Don restated that he would like to know what the issues are and the solutions.
- Bard thought depending on the results of the inspection, the commission would then revisit this. Kendall said he thought the inspection would be in May of 2021 and there would be a complete inspection, including video and recommendations adding that the inspection would not be done by the design engineers.
- Bard suggested setting Don up with the inspectors to have his questions answered. Don said he contacted the State by email who told him that if there are seeps a

structural engineer should be doing an inspection. Bard asked that he share the email and continue the discussion.

- Kendall restated to the customers that there is no problem with the tank per the inspection.

### **c. Review of FY21 expenses and revenue to date**

Josh reported:

- that in theory we are about  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the way through the year.
- that everything hits the water account first, then gets distributed to wastewater so the numbers look skewed.
- he noted septage receipts are high

Discussion include:

- Don asked why administration is at 80%. Josh said 30% is water, 70% is wastewater adding that In real time everything comes out of water, it will get reallocated later.
- Don asked why it is charged to water? Is it a mistake? Josh said no, it is a way of managing the funds. Bard asked that Connie make the adjustment so it can be seen more clearly. Kendall said he thinks Connie does it at the end of the year just before the audit. Bard said that did not help the commission and would like to see the adjusted numbers. Josh will ask Connie to prepare the numbers for the board.

### **d. Update on Water and Sewer payments as of Sept. 30**

Josh reported:

- that payments wer due 9/30 and more information will be available at the next meeting. Bard said that in other areas of the country 30% of customers have not been able to pay their utility bills.

### **e. Preliminary allocation 112 East Main St-**

Josh reported that the allocation increase request for water is 200 gpd and sewer would go up 210gpd adding the town engineer agreed the calculations were an accurate assessment of the need for this property.

David moved to preliminarily approve the increased water and sewer allocations for 112 East Main Street as presented; Fran seconded. Roll call vote: David, Don, Fran and Bard voted unanimously. Motion passed.

### **f. Superintendent's Report**

Kendall reported on repairs being made around town and suggested that prior to the Route 2 paving a line be replaced.

Discussion included:

- that Don asked Kendall about the ideal depth of boxes on the work that was just done on Bridge Street. Kendall, just below pavement, not at grade because plows take them off. Don thought that 2" is too low. Kendall said 2" ok.

## **4. Approval of Minutes, Warrants and Purchase Order**

### **Minutes:**

David moved to approve the Minutes of 9/21/2020; Fran seconded. Roll Call Vote: Bard, David, and Fran voted affirmatively. Don abstained. Motion passed.

**Purchase Orders:**

David moved to approve PO #4049 to US Bank for a loan payment in the amounts specified for Water and Sewer, not to exceed \$58,249.32; Fran seconded. Roll Call Vote: Bard, David, and Fran voted affirmatively. Don abstained. Motion passed.

**Warrants:**

David moved to approve the electronic warrant as presented, Fran seconded. Roll call vote: Fran, David, Don, and Bard voted affirmatively. Motion passed.

**5. Discuss Items for Next Agenda and Adjourn**

Route 2 repaving and line replacement

**6. Adjourn**

David moved to adjourn; Fran seconded. Roll call vote: Fran, Bard, Don, and David voted affirmatively. The meeting adjourned at 6:59PM.