

Water Commission Minutes
3/15/2021

Called to Order: 5:30 PM

Present by Zoom: Fran Huntoon, Don Morin, David Sander, Bard Hill, Cody Quattrocci
Absent: NONE

Others Present by Zoom: Josh Arneson, Town Manager; Kendall Chamberlin, Water & Sewer; Kathy Daub-Stearns, Admin. Assist.; Steve Palmer, Bob & Joy Reap, Ricketro, Rod West, David Thomas, the meeting was recorded for MMCTV Channel 15

1. Welcome by Bard. Bard welcomed Cody to the WS Commission. No comments.

2. Additions or Deletions to the Agenda. None

3. Items for Presentation or Discussion with those present

a. Discussion of expansion of sewer system into the Gateway District

1) Review of answers to questions posed to Green Mountain Engineering

Bard suggested starting with the answers from Green Mountain Engineering (GME)

Josh reported:

- that Steve Palmer from GME was on the call to answer the questions in more detail if needed.
- that the questions/ answers reviewed are attached to this document

Discussion included:

- that the width of the road is an ongoing discussion
- that things that need to be worked around will be part of the ongoing discussion
- that there are no retaining walls along the cemetery portion of Route 2
- that there is a four (4) rod right of way on Route 2 and if we stay within that space then there is no reason to do a separate agreement with landowners
- that there are two (2) property owners of the cemeteries -the Town and the Catholic Church
- that the design and cost of the pump station in phase one would be borne by the Reap's- that Kendall said that previously the private costs would have been rolled into the project but were found to be logistically challenging.
- that question six (6) was tabled to another meeting to determine if GME should be hired to give more details

2) Update on potential CWSRF, USDA, and Bond Bank funding

Josh reported:

- that we do not qualify for the CWSRF funding
- that USDA funding was interested in getting to the mobile home park
- that it is a competitive process to apply for the USDA funding

- that there may be grant money available that is based on income levels where the project would be installed
- that there may also be subsidies available
- that Josh will ask the USDA for their definition of a failed system
- that the Bond Bank funding rates will be available for the next meeting

Discussion included:

- that Bard said there is a fourth possibility in the COVID rescue bill that was just signed and should be explored when more information is available
- that Josh will ask our representative about the COVID relief possibility
- that Kendall said NCBR has 9 million for projects, Josh added that we applied two (2) years ago for this project, but we did not get that but could consider applying for it again. Josh was not sure we would meet the requirements for the funding. Bard thought the funding had specific job requirements as well as the need to be considered rural
- that Bard thought that if the costs could be spread out over 20 or 30 years it would make it easier for people to hook on to the system
- that Don thought the Bond Bank might be the best way to go, Bard agreed that they are the most predictable
- that Don was surprised that the cost of the pump station is not included in the costs
- that Rod West thought a real numbers person should be hired to bring the numbers to the table. He thought having different scenarios vs phases and put together a financial package that way. Bard said he was not convinced yet that was necessary asking Rod West to expand on his thoughts. Rod West said the Selectboard has been focused on the construction costs, that adding customers adds to the equation. Bard said town staff has been doing that for years and thought that we could do that with our existing rate spreadsheet. Josh said if we have the data the rates could be extrapolated out. Bard said that if something changes in the way things at the plant work now the rates would change and have a ripple effect. Bard thought we should continue with the process we started. Rod West said that breaking it down and getting to whether the mobile home park is interested or not was important. Bard replied that is what we have been working on and is in the timeline.
- that Don Morin said somebody is going to have to pay for the pumpstation and we need to include the cost of it in our calculations. Kendall said that every individual property owner will have their own pump station to pump into the force main. Bard thought Don might be thinking about having to pump up the hill. Don said yes. Kendall said that on Route 2 it would be the same as on Cochran Road with individuals having a pump station that goes to the force main.
- that Don asked how it would work with the mobile home park. Would there be one or many pump stations. Bard said that the mobile home park owners would be responsible to get the septage to the force main. Kendall agreed.
- that Rod West asked Kendall about the cost of the Cochran Rd pump stations, he was concerned that each pump would need the velocity to carry solids. Kendall said that no one on Cochran Road paid more that \$5000 and some were as low as \$1000 by converting their existing system.

- that this will be an ongoing discussion

With time running later than expected Bard suggested moving on to item 3, then moving on the b, c, and d.

3) Review of guidance from attorney and VLCT on procedure to expand the sewer district

Josh reported:

- that a special meeting of the district was called when past expansions had occurred
- that the people that vote are required to reside in the district, both the new and voting would be both the current and proposed users
- that VLCT agreed with the legal opinion received from the town attorney
- that for example, the mobile home park owner would not get a vote, but every resident in the mobile home park gets a vote. Residents, not businesses get to vote on the expansion

Discussion included:

- that if the districts are contiguous, they become one district and not a different district
- that if you do not reside but own property in the district you do not get to vote
- that the tenant and not the landlord, unless they lived in the district would not have a vote
- that Rod West asked if the mobile home park be considered a separate district since the property is not contiguous. Bard suggested that we would need to have a legal opinion. Josh added that if we went uphill that went through the conserved land would that make it a separate district.
- that Joy Reap asked if they had a private system if someone joined their system would it be considered contiguous. Josh will add that to the questions being asked of the town attorney.
- that this will be a continued discussion

4) Review of project planning timeline

This item tabled until the next meeting.

Discussion included:

- that Don said if he were a landowner, he would be hesitant about the uncertainty of the costs. Bard replied, the law is the law.

5) Other topics related to the expansion of the sewer system

This item tabled to the next meeting.

b. Update on bond vote and timeline for Bridge Street Water Main Replacement – Church Street to Volunteers Green

Josh reported:

- that the bond passed, voters have until April 2 to comment

- that Green Mountain Engineering has a few months of work with the state before going out to bid in June
- that construction could take place this year
- that there is an engineering estimate for the project of \$400,000

Discussion included:

- that the Town is looking at 75% forgiveness on the project
- that Kendall said we do not have a deadline yet on getting this done

c. Update on appointment process for Water and Sewer Commissioners

Bard reported:

- that Cody is here on an interim bases, noting that Katie Mather was no longer on the Selectboard and therefore could not be on the Water and Sewer Commission as her seat was that of a Selectboard member.

Josh reported:

- that May 18th is the date of the Annual meeting and noted that advertising for positions had started and that by June 7th letters would be available to be reviewed by the Water and Sewer Commission, then at the June 21 meeting the Selectboard would appoint the seats based on the recommendations made.
- that letters of interest are needed for those members that want to continue in their position

d. Superintendent's Report

Kendall reported:

- that an old stormwater drain was the problem was not a waterline problem and Village View Condos will be paying the bill
- that April 15th will be the E Main start for repairs

4. Approval of Minutes, Warrants and Purchase Order

Minutes:

David moved to approve the Minutes of 03/01/2021; Fran seconded. Roll call vote: Fran, Cody, David, Don, and Bard voted affirmatively; Motion passed.

Purchase Orders:

David moved to approve PO 4028 to Various Vendors for Emergency Repairs to the East Main Street waterline in an amount not to exceed \$40,000: seconded by Fran. Roll call vote: Fran, Cody, David, Don, and Bard voted affirmatively; Motion passed.

Discussion included:

- that Kendall reported that this was emergency services to East Main Street that required three vendors. David asked about the note that said it should not cost more than \$20,000 when the PO is for \$40,000. Kendall said that it includes costs that are unknowns for sidewalk and paving, that known costs are \$20,000.

Warrants:

David moved to approve the warrant as presented; Fran seconded. Roll Call Vote: Fran, Cody, David, Don, and Bard voted affirmatively; Motion passed.

Discussion included:

- that Fran asked about the Williston Observer advertisement. Josh replied that the ad was for the bond vote.

Line of Credit Update:

Josh reported:

- that this was being looked at because it was opened in case it was needed for the Bridge Street Construction, we did not need it, but Josh recommended keeping it open for other projects because it does not cost anything.

5. Discuss Items for Next Agenda and Adjourn

-Attorney responses to additional questions

-The next meeting is April 5th and will begin at 5:30 – Fran suggested that business be taken care of first with topics second. Bard suggested trying it as a trial. David agreed. Josh will put warrants, superintendents' report, minutes first.

Discussion:

Bard thought that getting Cody up to speed on topics should be done in the next few day and will be coordinated by email. Josh will send out an invite.

6. Adjourn

David moved to adjourn; Cody seconded. Roll call vote: Fran, Don, David, Cody, and Bard voted affirmatively. The meeting adjourned at 7:07PM.