

**WATER & SEWER COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES – MARCH 22, 2022**

5:30 PM – Conference Room B, 63 Main Street Northborough, MA 01532

MEMBERS PRESENT: John Meader
Bryant Firmin
David Pepe

ALSO PRESENT: Scott Charpentier, Public Works Director
Tim Davison, Water/Sewer Supervisor
Robert Luke, Administrative Assistant
Julianne Hirsh, Board of Selectmen Liaison

Commissioner Meader opened the meeting at 5:28 PM.

CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES FROM THE FEBRUARY 22, 2022 REGULAR MEETING

Commissioner Firmin moved to approve the meeting minutes of the February 22, 2022 regular meeting as written; Commissioner Pepe seconded the motion; the vote was unanimous with all in favor.

FY2022 PROJECTED WATER REVENUE SHORTFALL

Mr. Charpentier presented the Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 projected revenue and expenditures as well as the FY2023 proposed expenditures. The FY2022 revenue is projected to have a shortfall which will be addressed through two means: a reduction of expenditures and utilization of a portion of the fund balance use that was approved at the 2021 Annual Town Meeting. The shortfall is attributed to a substantial increase in the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA) assessment as well as the lowest town-wide consumption in nearly 10-years. The expectation is that the resulting fund balance will provide for approximately 40-days of reserve which is less than the goal of 75-days but still in-line with that of other departments.

The FY2023 revenue is required by the Massachusetts Department of Revenue (DOR) to be based upon the FY2022 consumption. This requires a reduction in the proposed FY2023 operating budget. Those reductions include a \$50,000 lowering of the reserve budget, a one-year elimination of hydrant replacement in the amount of \$65,000, and a \$251,513 reduction in the MWRA assessment. This, coupled with a proposed fund balance use of approximately \$250,000.

The Commission discussed the information presented. Commissioner Meader had a question on the annual hydrant replacement plan and how the delay might impact the overall schedule. Mr. Davison explained that he expects minimal impact from the delay as we already replaced all hydrants from the 1950's as well any broken/failing units that were discovered.

FY2023 PROPOSED CAPITAL PLAN

Mr. Charpentier presented the proposed FY2023 Capital Plan which only includes Inflow and Infiltration (I&I) Elimination. This is the second I&I project and the projected removal is 50,000 gallons per day (GPD), which accounts for 50% of the 100,000 GPD that were found in the two recent years of I&I evaluation.

FY2023 PROPOSED WATER AND SEWER OPERATING BUDGETS

Mr. Charpentier present the two FY2023 operating budgets. The water budget was previously discussed and the only item to add is that there are two line item increases to support the currently being installed Supervisory And Data Acquisition (SCADA) system. The expectation is that water will require a modest (3%) rate increase in light of the aforementioned revenue concerns.

The sewer budget includes similar SCADA support increases and proposed a 10% increase to the City of Marlborough use charge.

UPDATE ON 3G ENDPOINT SWAPOUT PROGRAM

Mr. Charpentier reiterated that supply chain issues continue to limit the availability of new 5G endpoints, however the Town did receive a shipment very close to the date we expected to exhaust our supply, thus averting any disruption to the scheduling process. He also noted we are expecting another delivery of 667 units sooner than expected, which will ensure adequate supply of endpoints through summer 2022. Additionally, we have not sent any follow-up letters to unresponsive customers as we are completely booked through mid-August. Those letters will be forthcoming as scheduling allows.

UPDATE ON ASSABET TANK REHABILITATION

Mr. Davison explained that the tank is cleaned, repaired and coated, and that the Tideflex mixing system is being installed this week. Commissioner Meader asked if Commissioners could visit the site to observe the mixing system. Mr. Davison scheduled a site visit for March 23, 2022 at 11:00 AM.

UPDATE ON WATER-SEWER GARAGE CONSTRUCTION

Mr. Charpentier stated that the interior fit-up is nearing completion with only finish work remaining. The project is on schedule to be completed this school year by the Assabet Valley Regional Technical High School students. Commissioner Meader suggested that a ribbon cutting event be held as this is a community facility. Mr. Charpentier agreed and said that one would be scheduled before the end of the school year.

NEXT MEETING

The next regular meeting is scheduled for May 2022; with the exact date to be determined in the coming weeks.

ADJOURN

Commissioner Firmin moved the Board vote to adjourn at 6:42 PM; Commissioner Pepe seconded the motion; the vote was all in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert Luke
Administrative Assistant

Documents used during meeting:

1. March 22, 2022 meeting agenda
2. February 22, 2022 regular meeting minutes
3. Water Operating Budget
4. Sewer Operating Budget
5. Capital Improvement Plan
6. Revenue Projection Communication