

TOWN OF AUBURN
Minutes of the Board of Sewer Commissioners Meeting
Town of Auburn D.P.W. – 5 Millbury Street
January 12, 2023 – 4:30 P.M.

In-person and by remote participation in accordance with Chapter 22 of the Acts of 2022

The Auburn Board of Sewer Commissioners held a regularly scheduled meeting on Thursday, January 13, 2023 in the Conference Room at the DPW Office, 5 Millbury Street, and remotely via <https://global.gotomeeting.com>

Those attending in person were:

Department Staff:

Ms. Joanna Paquin, DPW Director

Mr. Nicholas Schwartz, Assistant DPW Director/Sewer Superintendent

Mrs. JoAnne Donahue, Principal Clerk

Board Members:

Mr. Wayne Belec, Vice Chairperson

Mr. Mark LaPlante, Secretary

ITEM ONE-CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 4:39 P.M. by the Vice Chairperson, Mr. Wayne Belec.

Mr. Belec announced that the meeting was being operated as a hybrid format under Chapter 22 of the Acts of 2022. For the public to join the open meeting remotely by telephone, they can call 1-872-240-3311 and enter Access Code: 244-343-037, or the public can join via computer at: <https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/244343037> All supporting materials that have been provided to members of this body are available on the Town's website www.auburnguide.com and the public is encouraged to follow along using the posted agenda. Mr. Belec stated that the meeting was being recorded by global.gotomeeting.com.

ITEM TWO –APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. October 13, 2022 Regular Meeting Minutes: (This item was handled out of order after Item Eleven). The Board reviewed the minutes of the October 13, 2022 Regular meeting. Mr. LaPlante motioned to approve the minutes of the October 13, 2022 regular meeting. Mr. Belec seconded and it was so voted.

ITEM THREE- NEW BUSINESS

A. FY2022 Sewer Use Abatement Applications: The Board reviewed the Fiscal Year 2022 sewer use abatement applications received to date and provided their recommendations on each:

1. 30 Berlin Street: Mr. LaPlante motioned to approve the fiscal year 2022 sewer bill abatement application for 30 Berlin Street in the amount of \$368.99 per installment. Mr. Belec seconded and it was so voted.
2. 143 Prospect Street: Mr. LaPlante motioned to approve the fiscal year 2022 sewer bill abatement application for 143 Prospect Street down to \$287.60 per installment. Mr. Belec seconded and it was so voted.
3. 15 Meadowbrook Road: Mr. LaPlante motioned to approve the fiscal year 2022 sewer bill abatement application for 15 Meadowbrook Road in the amount \$95.91 per installment. Mr. Belec seconded and it was so voted.
4. 10 Linda Avenue: Mr. LaPlante motioned to table the fiscal year 2022 sewer use abatement application for 10 Linda Avenue until Fiscal Year 2023. Mr. Belec seconded and it was so voted.
5. 11 Magna Vista Drive: Mr. LaPlante motioned to table the fiscal year 2022 sewer use abatement application for 11 Magna Vista Drive until Fiscal Year 2023. Mr. Belec seconded and it was so voted.
6. 36 Wellman Street: Mr. LaPlante motioned to table the fiscal year 2022 sewer use abatement application for 36 Wellman Street until Fiscal Year 2023. Mr. Belec seconded and it was so voted.
7. 35 Oakwood Avenue: Mr. LaPlante motioned to send a letter to the homeowner with information regarding qualifying for a Real Estate Tax exemption in order to qualify for the 20% sewer discount. Mr. Belec seconded and it was so voted.
8. 714B Southbridge Street: Mr. LaPlante motioned that more information be requested from the owner of the property due to the lack of documentation provided with the abatement application to support the actual amount of water that did not enter the sewer system. Mr. Belec seconded and it was so voted.
9. 10 Westlund Avenue: All of the documentation for the abatement application for 10 Westlund Avenue had not yet been submitted by the homeowner and was therefore not discussed.

B. Drainlayer License Applications:

1. G.H. Excavation of Spencer, MA – the Board reviewed the Drainlayer License Application and supporting documents from G.H. Excavation of Spencer, MA. Mr. LaPlante motioned to recommend issuance of a drainlayer license by the Board of Selectmen to G.H. Excavation of Spencer, MA. Mr. Belec seconded and it was so voted.

ITEM FOUR – I & I SEWER REHABILITATION

A. Sewer System Evaluation Study: Mr. Schwartz advised the Board that Environmental Partners Group had not quite completed their final report with their recommendations. He stated that their preliminary draft included about a million dollars in repairs, and that they will look at prioritizing their recommendations once their final report is received.

B. CCTV Camera Purchase: Mr. Schwartz stated that they had purchased a CCTV camera that was due to be delivered within the month or so. He said that the camera will allow a lot of the camera work and sewer line cleaning to be done in-house once everyone receives the necessary training.

ITEM FIVE - UPPER BLACKSTONE CLEAN WATER

A. Ms. Paquin informed the Board that the Upper Blackstone Board was currently discussing the FY2024 budget and that the Town's assessment would be increasing by approximately 8%. She stated that the price increases in the chemicals, employee retention and energy costs all contributed to the budget increases, as well as some capital improvement projects.

ITEM SIX - REVIEW OF BILL SCHEDULES

A. The Board reviewed the Sewer Division Bill Schedules for Fiscal Year 2023 which had been processed since the last meeting on October 13, 2022.

ITEM SEVEN - NEW SEWER CONNECTIONS

A. The Board reviewed the updated list of new sewer connections through January 12, 2023.

ITEM EIGHT – SEWER DIVISION/D.P.W. WORK LOG

A. The Board reviewed the DPW Work Log that Mr. Schwartz had prepared which included the work done by Sewer Division employees for the Highway Division, and the work done by the Sewer Division Employees for the Highway Division through January 10, 2023.

ITEM NINE - BUDGET REVIEW

A. The Board reviewed copies of the monthly operating budget reports prepared by Mr. Schwartz as of January 10, 2023.

ITEM TEN – CAPITAL PLANNING

A. Pinrock Pump Station Bypass Force Main: Mr. Schwartz advised the Board that the expectation was that all of the materials would be delivered before the end of February and that the bypass would be installed at that point. He also stated that he had asked Onsite Engineering for an Operation and Maintenance Plan so that they have a definite procedure in place prior to the project being finalized and tested.

B. Warren Road Pump Station Replacement: Mr. Schwartz informed the Board that the project was in the design phase and that a Notice of Intent for the Conservation Commission had been filed. He stated that he was hopeful that the project would be going out to bid by March.

C. VFD (Variable Frequency Drive) Replacements at Holstrom and Sword Street Pump Stations: Mr. Schwartz stated that they had applied and were awarded a GAP Energy Grant to replace the soft starters at the Holstrom and Sword Street pump stations with VFDs which will save on energy costs.

ITEM ELEVEN – OLD BUSINESS

A. Sewer Division Personnel: Mr. Schwartz informed the Board that the Sewer Division was fully staffed, and that Alan Henrichon had been promoted to Operations Foreman.

B. I&I Fees: Mr. Schwartz stated that he has not yet been able to confirm with Town Counsel what steps would be required to change the Sewer Regulations.

ITEM TWELVE – DATE OF NEXT MEETING

A. The next meeting was tentatively scheduled for Thursday, February 16, 2023 at 4:30 p.m.

ITEM THIRTEEN – ADJOURNMENT

A. Mr. LaPlante motioned to adjourn the meeting at 6:24 P.M. Mr. Belec seconded and it was so voted.

DOCUMENTS:

The following documents were part of the Board of Sewer Commissioner’s Meeting on January 12, 2023 and are maintained in the Sewer Division office:

- Agenda
- Minutes of October 13, 2022 Regular Meeting
- FY2022 Sewer Use Abatement Applications received through 1/12/2023
- Drainlayer License Applications and supporting documents for G.H. Excavation of Spencer, MA
- Copies of Sewer Division Bill Schedules dated October 18, October 27, November 2, November 7, November 15, November 16, November 23, November 28, November 30, December 7, December 14 (2), December 20, and December 28, 2022; January 3 and January 10, 2023 (2)
- Sewer Connection List as of 1/12/2023
- DPW Work Log through 1/10/2023
- Monthly Budget Reports as of 1/10/2023