

TOWN OF AUBURN
Minutes of the Board of Sewer Commissioners Meeting
Town of Auburn D.P.W. – 5 Millbury Street
August 17, 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, August 17, 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. Thomas Healey, Chairperson

Mr. Wayne Belec, Vice Chairperson

Mr. Mark LaPlante, Secretary

ITEM ONE-CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 4:38 P.M. by the Chairperson, Mr. Thomas Healey.

Mr. Healey 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. Healey stated that the meeting was being recorded by global.gotomeeting.com.

ITEM TWO –APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. June 8, 2023 Regular Meeting Minutes: The Board reviewed the minutes of the June 8, 2023 Regular meeting. Mr. LaPlante motioned to approve the minutes of the June 8, 2023 regular meeting. Mr. Healey seconded and it was so voted. Mr. Belec abstained due to his absence from the June 8, 2023 meeting.

ITEM THREE- NEW BUSINESS

A. Hybrid Meeting Status: Mr. Schwartz informed the Board that after speaking with the Town Clerk's office, it was determined that it was up to the Board as to whether to continue having hybrid meetings. The Board decided to default to in-person meetings, unless otherwise determined on an as-needed basis.

B. FY2022 Sewer Use Abatement Applications: The Board reviewed the Fiscal Year 2022 sewer use abatement applications for 64 Berlin Street, 29 Burnap Street, and 106 Southold Road. Mr. Belec motioned to approve the abatement for 64 Berlin Street in the amount of \$395.60 for each installment. Mr. LaPlante seconded, Mr. Healey voted in favor and it was so voted. Mr. Belec motioned to approve the abatement for 29 Burnap Street in the amount of \$428.26 for each installment. Mr. LaPlante seconded, Mr. Healey voted in favor and it was so voted. Mr. Belec mentioned to approve the abatement application for 106 Southold Road in the amount of \$644.06 per installment. Mr. Belec seconded, Mr. Healey voted in favor and it was so voted.

C. Hardscrabble Road Sewer Line: Mr. Schwartz brought to the Board's attention that the gravity sewer, pump station, and force main on Hardscrabble Road is privately owned, which may create complications for neighboring properties that want to tie into sewer. One property on West Street is also tied into that private force main, but Mr. Schwartz believes that they may have entered into an agreement with the force main owner in order to do so, based on some tangential documentation that he found. Additionally, a developer wants to develop 122 West Street and has been asking about how they might get sewer service. Mr. Schwartz also indicated that there is a town-owned parcel in the area, which may be suitable to build a municipal pumping station to service those properties as well as potentially 40-50 properties along West and Rochdale Streets. The Board recommended that Mr. Schwartz reach out to the Town's Counsel to get a recommendation about how to deal with privately owned infrastructure within public right of ways, as well as to find out more about the petition process for residents to follow if they want their area sewer. The Board also recommended getting more information from the developer to determine what actions they might need to take to get sewer service to that area.

D. Sewer Billing Rate Structure: Mr. Schwartz indicated that this item would be kept on the agenda in order to discuss the topic at a future meeting, per the discussion at the previous Board of Sewer Commissioners meeting on June 8, 2023.

E. Holstrom Court Force Main Break: Mr. Schwartz discussed the recent (6/28/23) force main break with the Board, including the costs, impacts to the department, location and potential causes. The Board requested to be notified earlier when these types of events occur. It was determined that preventative evaluations of these force mains are likely infeasible, and that the Division should get them on a schedule for rehabilitation based on their age. Mr. Schwartz indicated that the Sword Street Force main would be lined in the near future, with money already appropriated for the design of that project. Due to the cost of lining large diameter force mains, rehabilitation projects may need to be spaced out significantly.

ITEM FOUR – I & I SEWER REHABILITATION

A. Sewer System Evaluation Study: Mr. Schwartz indicated that he was in the process of developing an RFP for the most critical recommendation from the SSES project, the lining of the 24" concrete sewer off of Goddard Drive.

ITEM FIVE - UPPER BLACKSTONE CLEAN WATER

A. Ms. Paquin indicated that Upper Blackstone Clean Water continues to make improvements on the facility, while also making an effort to minimize any large increases to fees paid by member communities. The future construction of a phosphorous facility is included in the City of Worcester's Integrated Plan, the details of which are currently being discussed by the City of Worcester and EPA.

ITEM SIX - REVIEW OF BILL SCHEDULES

A. The Board reviewed the Sewer Division Bill Schedules for Fiscal Year 2023 and Fiscal year 2024 which had been processed since June 8, 2023.

ITEM SEVEN - NEW SEWER CONNECTIONS

A. The Board reviewed the updated lists of new sewer connections from June 8 through June 30, 2023 for Fiscal Year 2023 and also July 1 through August 17, 2023 for Fiscal Year 2024.

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 August 17, 2023.

ITEM NINE - BUDGET REVIEW

A. The Board reviewed copies of the monthly operating budget reports prepared by Mr. Schwartz as of June 30, 2023.

ITEM TEN - CAPITAL PLANNING

A. Pinrock Pump Station Bypass Force Main: Mr. Schwartz indicated that materials for a requested change order component (air release valve replacement on Rose Lane) were expected to arrive soon, and an updated schedule for the completion of that work and the remaining punch list work is expected within the next week.

B. Warren Road Pump Station Replacement: Mr. Schwartz went over the bid results of the project and indicated that, despite bids coming in higher than expected, the project would be completely funded by ARPA. The project schedule is under development, and work could begin either this fall or next spring depending on equipment lead times.

C. VFD (Variable Frequency Drive) Replacements at Holstrom and Sword Street Pump Stations: Mr. Schwartz indicated that he was finalizing the grant agreement with MassDEP and expected to have that in place in September, at which point he could enter into agreement with Guardian Energy to begin the work.

D. SCADA Upgrade: Mr. Schwartz stated that he expects the quote requests for this project to go out next week, and also reminded the Board that this project would be completely ARPA funded.

E. Future Projects: Mr. Schwartz briefly mentioned several potential future projects, including the Sword Street force main lining, the Goddard Drive sewer lining, and miscellaneous I&I removal projects. He presented the Board with a condition assessment of the Pinrock Pump Station odor control system and informed the Board that significant work would be needed to rehabilitate the system, with a quoted cost of approximately \$60,000. Mr. Schwartz indicated that he intended to request that money from Retained Earnings at the Fall Town Meeting to begin that work, to which the Board agreed.

ITEM ELEVEN – OLD BUSINESS

A. Board of Sewer Commissioners Membership Status: Mr. Healey indicated that he would likely be willing to complete the year as needed if the Board positions were not filled, and that he was just re-appointed in the interim. Mr. Belec indicated that he planned to attend one more meeting, and Mr. Schwartz reminded him that he may need to contact the Town Clerk's office to determine what would be needed considering his letter of resignation from the Board listed an end date of September 1st. Mr. Belec also indicated that he has several potential Board candidate leads, and that he expected one potential candidate to accompany him to the next Board of Sewer Commissioners meeting.

B. I&I Fees: Mr. Schwartz presented the Board with the proposed regulation changes (as were presented at the previous meeting on June 8, 2023). The Board reviewed each change and made some additional proposed amendments. Mr. Schwartz indicated that he would revise the changes and present them at the next meeting for final review and approval. He also indicated that the process for changing the regulations would include public notification of the changes and posting the changes to the Town of Auburn website.

ITEM TWELVE – DATE OF NEXT MEETING

A. The next meeting was tentatively scheduled for Thursday, October 19, 2023 at 4:30 p.m.

ITEM THIRTEEN – ADJOURNMENT

A. Mr. Belec motioned to adjourn the meeting at 6:59 P.M. Mr. LaPlante seconded, Mr. Healey voted in favor and it was so voted.

DOCUMENTS:

The following documents were part of the Board of Sewer Commissioner's Meeting on August 17, 2023 and are maintained in the Sewer Division office:

- Agenda
- Minutes of the June 8, 2023 Regular Meeting
- FY2022 Sewer Use Abatement Applications for 64 Berlin Street, 29 Burnap Street, and 106 Southold Road
- Orthophoto of the area around Hardscrabble Road
- Map showing Holstrom Court Sewer Force Main Break

- Copies of Sewer Division Bill Schedules for FY2023 dated June 13, June 14, June 20, June 23, June 30, July 6 (2), and July 10, 2023
Copies of Sewer Division Bill Schedules for FY2024 dated June 23, July 21, August 1 (2), August 8, and August 15, 2023
- Sewer Connection List as of 6/30/2023 and 8/17/2023
- DPW Work Log through 8/17/23
- Monthly Budget Reports as of 6/30/2023
- Envirogen Technologies Inspection and Test Report of Pinrock Biofilter System
- Copy of Weston & Sampson Bid Results for Warren Road Pump Station Project
- Draft Regulation Changes 6/8/2023