

Town of Hingham



Hingham Sewer Commission Meeting Minutes

April 2, 2019

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:11 p.m. in the South Hearing Room, Hingham Town Hall.

Commissioners Present

Kirk Shilts, Chairman and Robert Higgins.

Department Personnel & Staff Present

Stephen Dempsey, Sewer Supervisor; and Liz Welch, DPW Office Administrator.

Chairman's Message

Dr. Shilts stated that both he and Mr. Higgins have been regularly attending the Water Company Acquisition Study Committee meetings. Dr. Shilts said they never both spoke at the same meeting or discussed Sewer Commission business.

Agenda

The Commission reviewed the draft agenda. Mr. Dempsey asked that 1 Foley Court be added to the agenda.

Mr. Higgins made a Motion, seconded by Dr. Shilts, to approve the amended agenda; the Motion passed by unanimous vote.

Meeting Minutes

The Commission reviewed the draft 12/4/18 public meeting minutes.

Mr. Higgins made a Motion, seconded by Dr. Shilts, to approve the December 4, 2018 minutes as drafted; the Motion passed by unanimous vote.

Commissioner Resignation

Ms. Welch said the Selectmen received an email from Stephen Harold resigning from the Sewer Commission. But according to the Secretary of State's office, all elected positions need to submit a signed letter not an email. The Selectman's office sent Mr. Harold an email to explain this and asked him to send a signed letter to the Board of Selectmen's office at the Hingham Town Hall, 210 Central Street. Such letter has not yet been received.

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Mr. Harold called Dr. Shilts Sunday night. He feels bad that he hasn't been able to attend the meetings due to an illness. It appears as though he may be inclined to return to the Commission because his health has improved.

FY2019 Sewer Rate

Ms. Welch explained the FY2019 Sewer Rate has been calculated based on actual expenses and income from FY2018 and the anticipated expenditures (appropriations) and credits for FY2019. The new proposed rate will be \$10.95 per 100 cubic feet which represents a 9.6% increase over the current rate of \$9.90 per 100 cubic feet.

Mr. Dempsey said the increase is due to a 20.3% increase in the Hull IMA and a 5.5% MWRA increase over the past two years. Last year's Rt. 3A force main break, emergency dig repairs on Green Street and Emerald Street, and the FY19 pump station improvements all contributed in the calculation.

Mr. Higgins made a Motion, seconded by Dr. Shilts, to approve the FY2019 sewer Rate of \$10.95 per 100 cubic feet for the Hingham Sewer District and the Weir River Sewer District; the Motion passed by unanimous vote.

Sewer Bill Abatement Approvals

The Commission reviewed the sewer bill abatements from residents at 57 Bel Air Road, 9 Cole Road, 14 Del Prete Drive, 39 Eldridge Court, 275 Rockland Street, 57 North Street and 9 Bradley Woods Drive.

Mr. Higgins made a Motion, seconded by Dr. Shilts, to approve the submitted abatements for 57 Bel Air Road for \$329.90, 9 Cole Road for \$1,980.00, 14 Del Prete Drive for \$217.80, 39 Eldridge Court for \$237.60, 275 Rockland Street for \$564.30, 57 North Street for \$801.90 and 9 Bradley Woods drive for \$356.40; the Motion passed by unanimous vote.

Proposed Hull/Cohasset/Scituate Inter-municipal Sewer Plan

Mr. Higgins said he attended a meeting last month in Cohasset with representatives of the Hull, Cohasset and Scituate sewer departments. He said Wayne Sawcuk of the Cohasset Sewer Commission said Cohasset has excess capacity and is willing to discuss sewer treatment options with Hingham. Cohasset could reportedly add 14,000 gallons per day. Mr. Higgins explained that Hull is going to need significant improvements to their plant. Mr. Higgins suggested it may be prudent to talk with Cohasset and Hull as we approach the end of our current IMA with Hull.

As Hull's rates have gone up significantly most every year, Mr. Higgins suggested that Commission consider meeting with Cohasset before any renegotiation with Hull.

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Sewer Regulations Update

Dr. Shilts said that regulations on private septic systems should be put into the Town's sewer regulations. He suggested adding language to the draft update that is currently under review by Town Counsel that creates a financial assurance component. He said this financial assurance mirrors what the Board of Health and the State DEP currently use with private septic treatment plants. This requirement would apply to the private sewer systems like Broadstone Alliance and Avalon. Dr. Shilts stated that this would be in addition to the draft regulation's proposal to require a flow meter with the larger developments to help them identify I&I issues.

Since Superintendent Sylvester is not at the meeting, Dr. Shilts suggested discussion about water meters in multi-unit buildings and developments could wait till the next meeting.

Dr. Shilts would like to add the financial assurance language to the draft sewer regulations Atty. Coughlin is currently reviewing.

Mr. Higgins made a Motion, seconded by Dr. Shilts, to forward the amended regulations dated 4/2/19 for Town Counsel to review and to post on the town's website for public comment; the Motion passed by unanimous vote.

Delegation of Actions to DPW Superintendent

Postpone since Superintendent Sylvester is not at this meeting.

DPW Superintendent / Sewer Supervisor Reports:

- **Building Drain Inspections Update (Bel Air Station Area)**

Stephen Dempsey explained that we are getting into a lot more homes since we added a police detail to accompany our inspections. Sewer personnel have been doing four-hour inspections on Saturday mornings. He said there have been about 1,000 inspections over past two-years. He said we have completed approximately 50 homes so far in the Bel Air area in just the past two-weeks.

- This year's camera inspection process started on April 8th on Ocean View Drive.
- Pumps station inspections showed the Broad Cove has a faulty check valve that's stuck. He said the valve is only two years old and should have a warrantee, but regardless it needs to get replaced.

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New Business

Ms. Welch said the owners at 1 Foley Court would like documentation that the gravity sewer main on Thaxter Park property that services 2 and 3 Foley Court is still maintained by the Town. Mr. Dempsey confirmed that the sewer line is maintained by the sewer department.

Scheduling:

The next meeting will be Tuesday, May 7, 2019.

The meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Liz Welch,
DPW Office Administrator

Documents reviewed during public meeting:

- Meeting agenda 4/2/19
- Draft minutes 12/4/18
- Proposed Sewer Rules and Regulation Changes – Pages 6 and 20, 4/2/19
- Sewer Commission & Sewer Department 2018 Town Report