

BOARD OF SEWER COMMISSIONERS

5 MILLBURY STREET

AUBURN, MASSACHUSETTS 01501

MEETING MINUTES

May 20, 2021

The Auburn Board of Sewer Commissioners held a regularly scheduled meeting on Thursday, May 20, 2021 remotely via <https://global.gotomeeting.com>

ITEM ONE-CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Healey called the meeting to order at 4:34 p.m.

Those in attendance remotely were:

Board Members:

Mr. Thomas J. Healey, Chairperson

Mr. Wayne Belec, Vice Chairperson

Mr. Mark LaPlante, Secretary (5:05 p.m.)

Department Staff:

Ms. Joanna Paquin, Sewer Superintendent

Mr. William Coyle, D.P.W. Director/Town Engineer

Mrs. JoAnne Donahue, Principal Clerk

ITEM TWO –APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. January 28, 2021 Regular Meeting Minutes: This item was handled out of order after Item Twelve. The Board reviewed the minutes of the January 28, 2021 regular meeting. Mr. LaPlante motioned to approve the minutes of the January 28, 2021 regular meeting. Mr. Healey seconded and it was so voted.

B. March 4, 2021 Regular Meeting Minutes: The Board reviewed the minutes of the March 4, 2021 regular meeting. Mr. Belec motioned to approve the minutes of the March 4, 2021 regular meeting. Mr. Healey seconded and it was so voted.

ITEM THREE– NEW BUSINESS

A. Drainlayer License Applications:

1. Vegas Builders, Inc.: The Board reviewed the drainlayer license application and supporting documents from Vegas Builders, Inc. of Berlin, MA. After a brief discussion, Mr. Belec motioned to recommend conditional approval to the Board of Selectmen upon receipt of two additional acceptable letters of recommendation by the Sewer Division. Mr. Healey seconded and it was so voted.

2. Gold Star Builders, Inc.: The Board reviewed the drainlayer license application and supporting documents from Gold Star Builders, Inc. Discussion included the fact that they had been licensed previously in the Town but not since 2013 and that there was only one letter of recommendation from 2017. The Board asked if there had been any issues with their work. Mrs. Donahue explained that there was no record of any permits being issued to Gold Star Builders that she could find, but they did renew their license every year from 2007 to 2013. After further discussion, the Board agreed to approve their application since they had previously been licensed from 2007-2013, they were currently licensed in the city of Worcester, and had a letter of recommendation from Millbury. Mr. Belec then motioned to recommend issuance of a drainlayer license by the Board of Selectmen to Gold Star Builders. Mr. Healey seconded and it was so voted.

B. Fiscal Year 2020 Sewer Use Abatement Applications: The Board reviewed and discussed the Fiscal Year 2020 abatement application which had been received since the last meeting, for 30 Bridle Path. The homeowner had applied due to a deduct meter being installed but the necessary paperwork had not been returned to the Sewer Division. In addition, there was a leak in their irrigation system which caused a huge spike in water usage during the billing period. After reviewing the application and supporting documents, Mr. Belec motioned to approve the Fiscal Year 2020 Sewer Use Abatement application for 30 Bridle Path for both the 1st and 2nd Installments to an amount of 5,525 cubic feet total water usage for the year. Mr. Healey voted in favor and it was so voted.

C. Auburn/Oxford Inter-Municipal Agreement: Ms. Paquin stated that the Auburn/Oxford Inter-Municipal Agreement had been extended by the Auburn and Oxford Board of Selectmen for one year. The extension will allow them to renegotiate another agreement which had been delayed due to many issues including COVID and all of the changes and projects that are currently pending in Oxford and Auburn, as well as the complications that may arise with DEP from additional flow and the interbasin transfer limitations.

ITEM FOUR – I & I (INFLOW & INFILTRATION) SEWER REHABILITATION

A. Ms. Paquin advised that she had spoken with Environmental Partners in regard to the I&I study, and that they will be preparing a proposal for smoke testing during the dry season to try to further identify areas of inflow and infiltration. They will also be looking into trying to camera the sewer lines later in the season. Mr. Healey questioned if there would be any repair work in 2021. Mr. Coyle mentioned that unless there was something that needed immediate attention, any necessary work would have to go through a design phase and then go out to bid and would probably not begin until 2022.

ITEM FIVE - U.B.W.P.A.D./UPPER BLACKSTONE CLEAN WATER

A. Mr. Coyle stated that there was nothing new to report under this item.

ITEM SIX - REVIEW OF BILL SCHEDULES

A. The Board reviewed the Sewer Division Bill Schedules dated March 12, March 29, March 30, April 6, April 26 and May 10, 2021 which had been processed since the last meeting.

ITEM SEVEN - NEW SEWER CONNECTIONS

A. No new connections since the last meeting.

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

A. Ms. Paquin stated that she had not yet updated the Sewer Division/D.P.W. Work Log; she advised the Board that the only updates needed would be for a few Highway employees working with the Sewer Division when two of the Sewer employees were both absent.

ITEM NINE - BUDGET REVIEW

A. The Board reviewed copies of the updated monthly operating budget report for Fiscal Year 2021 through April 30, 2021.

ITEM TEN – CAPITAL PLANNING

A. Update on Current Projects: Ms. Paquin informed the Board that there would be pre-construction meetings on June 7, 2021 for the Pinrock Road Sewer Main Bypass project and the Bancroft Street Bridge Sewer Line Replacement project. She also stated that due to a delay in delivery of some materials, the start of construction on the Pinrock project would be delayed as well. Mr. Coyle stated that the easements for the Pinrock Road project have all been secured and the right of way process has been completed, and that they are still hopeful that they may be able to begin construction during the current year.

ITEM ELEVEN – OLD BUSINESS

A. I&I Fees: Ms. Paquin stated that this item had been postponed from prior meetings due to all of the Commissioners not being present. She also stated that it had been determined that they do have the ability to collect I&I fees, but that as of yet they have not been instituted. She asked the Board how they would like to proceed as far as collecting I&I fees. Mr. Belec mentioned that his experience has been that the developers should pay the bulk of the I&I fees and that the rate payers are paying enough already. He stated that when a subdivision is in the approval process, the developers should be made aware of the I&I fees. Mr. Healey stated that while they should be sympathetic to the rate payers, he did not feel that the developers should be solely responsible for the I&I fees. Mr. Healey stated that the Board really needed to spend more time discussing the subject of I&I fees. He would like to have a search done of the prior meeting minutes to determine why the fees did not get charged after the regulations were changed to include the I&I fees. Mr. Coyle stated that he thought it would be helpful to continue looking into other surrounding Towns to see which ones are collecting I&I fees (Ms. Paquin had previously started compiling a list of other Towns that were collecting I&I fees). After much discussion, the Board agreed that they would continue discussion of the I&I fees at future meetings. Mr. Healey would like to have something prepared for them to review and discuss at the next meeting. Ms. Paquin stated she would forward them the I&I section of the regulations and the spreadsheet that she had prepared.

ITEM TWELVE – DATE OF NEXT MEETING

A. Ms. Paquin stated that she would send out an email in July to check on the Boards' availability to meet at the beginning of August.

ITEM THIRTEEN – ADJOURNMENT

A. The meeting was adjourned at 5:55 p.m.

DOCUMENTS:

The following documents were part of the Board of Sewer Commissioner's Meeting on May 20, 2021, and are maintained in the Sewer Division office:

- Agenda
- Minutes of the January 28, 2021 and March 4, 2021 Regular Meetings
- Drainlayer License Applications and supporting documents from Vegas Builders, Inc. and Gold Star Builders, Inc.
- FY2020 Sewer Use Abatement Application and documents for 30 Bridle Path
- Copies of Bill Schedules dated March 12, March 29, March 30, April 6, April 26 and May 10, 2021
- Monthly Departmental Budget Report as of April 30, 2021