

**MINUTES
PUBLIC WORKS COMMISSION
WATER POLLUTION CONTROL BOARD
JOINT MEETING
June 18, 2013**

PRESENT: Robin Young, Chair, Public Works
Wolfgang Fattler, Member, Public Works, Water Pollution Control Board
Paul J. Canniff, D.M.D., Member, Public Works
Thomas Mullen, Vice Chair, Public Works

ABSENT: Al Baker, Member, Public Works, Water Pollution Control Board

STAFF: Daniel W. Santos, P.E., Director
Robert R. Steen, P.E., Asst. Director
Len Gobeil, Special Projects Coordinator

PUBLIC: Mr. and Mrs. Richard Andres

I. Call to order

A quorum for the Public Works Commission being present, the meeting was called to order at 1:05 PM. There was no quorum for the Water Pollution Control Board. The agenda was approved.

Santos introduced Rob Steen, the recently appointed Assistant Director.

II. Act on minutes of May 21, 2013

The Minutes of the May 21, 2013 meetings were approved as amended.

III. Communication from Committee Members: None

IV. Communications from Councilors and Staff: None

V. Old Business: Fattler asked for a follow-up on the SEMASS negotiations. Santos said talks are still underway throughout the County. One issue is PAYT. Implementation tends to reduce the waste stream, which would reduce tonnage and could lead to penalties. In response to a question about a SEMASS competitor for the Town's solid waste, Santos said that the New Bedford firm has no permitted facility; there is a risk in pursuing that avenue. The Town's contract with SEMASS expires 12/31/2014, at which time rates could be substantially higher than they are today.

Young wants to continue to build the Commission's knowledge base on solid waste disposal. Mullen said that the local trash haulers do not want to be part of a town-wide pick-up plan. Santos said that one option is to do nothing; there is no data to suggest that anyone wants a change in the management of the Town's solid waste program.

Re-organization: Young suggested consideration of a change in the time of the meeting in order to attract new members who may work during the day. He has received an email from Asst. Town Manager Ells stating that the Town has hired a consultant to recommend changes to boards and committees, working through the Town's Legal Department. Canniff said he thinks a seven member board would be unwielding. Young said he is looking for expertise in members.

Young asked Santos to consider what sort of issues the Commission should address.

- VI. New Business: Santos said he has tasked Steen with preparing a report on grinder pump issues. Steen said that he has been talking with 8 to 12 communities across Massachusetts and nearby states on how they manage grinder pumps. He is also speaking with F.R. Mahoney, a local distributor of pumps. Cohasset has handled grinder pumps both ways, with the homeowners maintaining and with the town maintaining pumps. They are willing to speak to the Commission about their experiences. Canniff said that the Commission is coming from the side of the homeowner regarding the costs of operating the pumps. Young said you have the town experiences, what about the people that are served – have you any comments from them? Steen said he will get some. Canniff said most towns have a sewer commission, you should talk to them. Mullen said to talk to both residents and commissions.

Steen said that in reality, homes that are on grinder pumps are out of technical solutions. Young said the Commission needs a knowledge base. Canniff said we are coming from the user/taxpayer side.

Len Gobeil, the Town Manager's Special Projects Coordinator and ombudsman/citizen's advocate for the Stewarts Creek sewer project, gave a brief background on his position. He said that 3 or 4 Stewarts Creek families have been very vocal. He has noticed some conflicts between Public Works and the Health Department – it's not clear where residents should go with various questions. He has received 12-15 calls in the last two months. Questions mostly concerned buying of property, sending out the list of installers. He has not received any questions on grinder pumps. The Assessors Office will be sending out the assessment bills in December, he expects to hear from people at that time. Assessments will be due at that time, although the requirement to connect to sewer may be years in the future. He did encounter one resident who had an issue with his grinder pump and high ground water.

Steen said that his research indicates that pump operation and maintenance runs 10 to 15 years for design life, the annual cost is \$45-\$55 and electricity is about \$22 per year. Homeowner maintenance programs are usually available.

Mullen said that the same questions and answers have been raised since this project was first brought to the public in 2002. Canniff said the negligible cost can be put on the user

fee. Santos said there are other issues than the cost. Access to the pump can be a problem with they are located on private property or in a basement. Fattler said the high cost of a breakdown is still an issue. Young said that a FAQ should be available.

Santos said that sometimes decisions are out of the Department's hands. Young asked if the Town could have a maintenance agreement on the pump for replacement.

The Commission thanked Gobeil for attending the meeting and asked him to return next month.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Denise Geoffrion

Handouts: Minutes of last meeting