

## Town of Hingham



# Hingham Sewer Commission Meeting Minutes

October 4, 2016

### **Call to order:**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm in the Central South Meeting Room, Hingham Town Hall.

Mr. Higgins welcomed our newest Sewer Commissioner, Stephen Harold, who was just sworn in with Eileen McCracken, Town Clerk, just before the meeting.

### **Commissioners:**

Robert Higgins, Chairman; Kirk Shilts; and Stephen Harold

### **Department Personnel & Staff:**

Randy Sylvester, DPW Superintendent; Stephen Dempsey, Sewer Supervisor; and Liz Welch, DPW Office Administrator

### **Agenda:**

The agenda for the meeting was established as amended.

### **Approval of Minutes:**

**Dr. Shilts made a Motion to approve the September 6, 2016 meeting minutes as drafted; the Motion was seconded by Mr. Higgins and passed by majority vote. Mr. Harold abstained.**

**Dr. Shilts made a Motion to approve the September 29, 2016 meeting minutes as drafted; the Motion was seconded by Mr. Higgins and passed by majority vote. Mr. Harold abstained.**

### **Scheduling:**

The next meeting of the Commission will be Tuesday, November 1, 2016 at 7:00pm.

### **140 North Street, Nuisance Complaint:**

Mr. Higgins stated that this discussion would be postponed where the complainant failed to show up.

### **10 Malcolm Street, Easement Discussion:**

Mr. Jason Stefani, the property owner at 10 Malcolm Street, wanted to discuss removing the existing easement on his property. He said when he bought the property it had an easement that goes through the back of the yard. It starts at his house but is not being used. Mr. Stefani would like to see if he can remove the easement and cap the sewer leader at the downstream side of property. He said this would allow him to better remodel his home. Mr. Dempsey performed a dye test and determined that there is no impact on anybody downstream. Mr. Higgins said that we need to speak to Town Counsel and find out the legal implications and what would have to be done. Mr. Dempsey recommends that we abandon the easement as long as we can legally do it.

## Town of Hingham



**Thereafter, the Commission gave the homeowner direction; and Mr. Sylvester will contact Town Counsel on this matter.**

### **Proposed New Sewer Connection:**

#### **4 Kilby Street Subdivision**

Property owners William and Debora Sullivan are seeking a sewer connection for a proposed subdivision at 4 Kilby Street to support a new five (5) bedroom dwelling. Mr. Higgins said the Commission cannot act on this request because the Planning Board does not have an approved and recorded plan.

**Thereafter, the Commission gave the homeowner direction suggesting he have his plan re-approved by the Planning Board, and return to the Commission with the updated plan, fill out connection application, and pay the connection fee.**

Mr. Higgins reopened the discussion after Mr. Sullivan returned to the meeting stating that he found stamped plans and a receipt from the Registry of Deeds. Mr. Sullivan was told he still needs to go to the Planning Board before the Commission can consider this application.

### **Hingham Comprehensive Wastewater Master Plan (CWMP) & South Hingham Sewer District Discussion:**

Dr. Shilts discussed a draft memo he prepared to the Board of Selectmen regarding the Hingham Comprehensive Wastewater Master Plan (CWMP) & South Hingham Sewer District. He would like the Commission to ask the Selectmen to have the four (4) parcels of town-owned land located in the Recreation Road area just north of Route 3 assessed to see what soil conditions and options these properties could provide for wastewater disposal. He would like the Selectmen to help determine where, if anywhere, the Town could locate a wastewater discharge facility in So. Hingham. Dr. Shilts believes this request moves the CWMP forward. Mr. Higgins suggested inviting Town Engineer Fernandes to the next meeting and hear his knowledge about these properties. Dr. Shilts suggested forwarding the memo to Mr. Fernandes to give him the information the Commission is looking for in advance.

### **Bayberry Ejector Station Bid Award**

Mr. Sylvester explained that the Commission's engineer bid out the Bayberry Ejector Station reconstruction project last year but that the replies ended up over-budget. He said additional capital money was procured and it was re-bid this fall. The bids were opened on Thursday, September 29, 2016 and Robert B. Our & Co. was the low qualified bidder at \$116,088.15. The engineers noted this company has done a lot of work on the Cape and in Plymouth and recommended the Commission award the bid to Robert B. Our, Inc.

**Mr. Harold made a Motion to accept the Robert B. Our Co., Inc. bid of \$116,088.15 for the Bayberry Ejector Station Improvements; the Motion was seconded by Dr. Shilts and passed by unanimous vote.**

### **Grinder Pump Service Program Discussion:**

The Commission renewed its discussion of this matter. Mr. Dempsey explained that during the Weir River Sewer District (WRSD) Phase I project there was state funding, and the Town ended up purchasing and owning 74

## Town of Hingham



residential grinder pumps. In the beginning, the Sewer Department maintained them. If a pump was found to be beyond an employee's ability to repair, the Commission had Rosano Davis, Inc. under contract to do warranty work. The contract lasted 10-years and then ownership was transferred to the residents. The residents were given an extra two-years of service. In 2012, the Commission sent out letters explaining to residents that they now owned the pumps and responsible for their upkeep and repair. Unfortunately, the Commission didn't abide by their own written policy and kept extending the Sewer Dept's no-cost servicing of resident-owned pumps. Mr. Dempsey said this is why he and Mr. Sylvester came to the Commission with a suggestion to begin charging residents the actual cost for Town employees to continue servicing these privately-owned grinder pumps.

Dr. Shilts said the Town shouldn't be in this business. He said the Sewer Dept. needs to shift this work to independent contractors or establish a fee for continuing to do customer troubleshooting, with the clear understanding that the Sewer Department can't actually repair these pumps. Mr. Sylvester said he informally spoke with Town Counsel and their thought was to provide residents with the complete list of Hingham drainlayers for grinder pump repair problems - but not recommend anyone in particular. Mr. Sylvester also said Town Counsel didn't like the risk to the Town for providing residents with FAQ's about how to self-diagnose and repair their own grinder pump systems. Dr. Shilts would like to send out a questionnaire to the Town's licensed drainlayers to see if they would like to be flagged as a provider of grinder pump repair services in Hingham.

**Dr. Shilts made a Motion to send a draft questionnaire dated October 4, 2016, after removal of the last sentence, second paragraph, to all Hingham licensed drainlayers; the Motion was seconded by Mr. Harold and passed by unanimous vote.**

### **Supervisor's Report:**

Mr. Dempsey said the Commission's engineers are currently preparing a Hingham Sewer District Capacity Report, which will determine the existing amount of additional capacity the sewer system can process efficiently. The report should be complete by the November meeting.

Mr. Dempsey reported on the Hingham Historical Archives Project underway in an effort to preserve our Town's important government records. Mr. Dempsey read the email he received from Archivist Jennifer Williams regarding this project. He said that he would like to help with this project as time allows.

### **Sewer Bill Abatement Approvals:**

The Commission reviewed a bill abatement request for 16 Fottler Road.

**Dr. Shilts made a Motion to approve the submitted bill abatement for 16 Fottler Road; the Motion was seconded by Mr. Higgins and passed by unanimous vote.**

The meeting adjourned at 8:36pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Liz Welch  
Office Administrator