

**GROVELAND WATER & SEWER BOARD  
MEETING MINUTES  
June 17th, 2024**

A Regular Meeting of the Groveland Water & Sewer Board was held on Monday, June 17, 2024 at 5:00 p.m. The meeting was held in the Main Meeting Room at the Groveland Town Hall, 183 Main Street, Groveland.

**Board Members Present**

Sarah Sheehan-McGrath, Chairperson  
Bill Dunn  
Terry Grim

**Staff Members Present**

Colin Stokes, W/S Superintendent  
Kimberly Bourque, Office Manager

**OPENING**

**Commissioner Grim made a motion to open the meeting at 5:02 p.m. Seconded by Commissioner Sheehan-McGrath. All in favor.**

**RATE HEARING**

**Commissioner Sheehan-McGrath made a motion to open the rate hearing at 5:03 p.m. Seconded by Commissioner Grim. All in favor.**

Superintendent Stokes discusses the new rates and the newly implemented Capital Fee. He states that the last time water rates went up was in April of 2021 and sewer rates went up in June of 2022. He informs the board that our rates are the lowest in our area. Commissioner Grim asks if it is possible for a spreadsheet breakdown comparing the rates in the area, in which Superintendent Stokes stated is possible, but there are many factors that make it difficult to compare (e.g. gallons to cubic feet, tiered rates, minimums, etc.). This would be a reasonable raise, as it is about 5-6%. Superintendent Stokes explains that the Capital Fee will be used to build an account to help fix and/or replace infrastructure work for water and that it would be approximately \$200,000 collected per year. **Commissioner Grim made a motion to approve the new rates and Capital Fee. Seconded by Commissioner Sheehan-McGrath. All in favor.**

**Commissioner Sheehan-McGrath made a motion to close the rate hearing at 5:08 p.m. Seconded by Commissioner Grim. All in favor.**

**CUSTOMER COMMENTS**

None

**BUSINESS ITEMS**

**1. Discussion with the Planning Board about Water Supply**

It is noted that nobody from the Planning Board was present for this discussion.

**2. New Water Source Update**

Superintendent Stokes opens the discussion stating that the engineers have been working together on this, but that the work could not begin until July 1. The money is appropriated for the Pilot Study and for a new production well. It is stated that Haverhill has been responsive and receptive during this time of planning. Superintendent Stokes talks about the work that will need to be done to the infrastructure connecting Groveland to Haverhill's water supply

and that we are waiting on the results of those discussions. Commissioner Dunn voices his concern about Haverhill “pulling the plug” on the agreement if we went the route of purchasing water from Haverhill. Superintendent Stokes assures him that we have already had “other” deals with Haverhill and that they have been great about it. He also states that there will be long term agreements made in twenty-year chunks. It is also discussed that Haverhill’s water rates have gone up about 17%, and they’re looking at this deal with Groveland to offset some of the cost to their own treatment plant.

Commissioner Grim states that he has been attending National PFAS Conferences and is keeping himself involved to be able to share the information. He also talks about having someone from those conferences possibly coming to do a presentation about the changing regulations of PFAS and new ways to mediate them.

### **3. Priority List of Water Projects**

Commissioner Sheehan-McGrath starts a discussion about water projects and Superintendent Stokes explains the list of pipes in town and their ratings. He stated the higher the rating, the worse off the pipe is and that the highlighted ones on the handout are already completed. It is discussed that there are other factors to consider about priority as well, for example: road conditions. Balch Avenue is of priority and applicable to the money the town is receiving from the government to complete these projects. Superintendent Stokes informs the board that he can email the complete list. The question of cost is brought up by Commissioner Grim and Superintendent Stokes states that the information that we could compare the cost to is from 2015 and that cost have risen since then. He talks about in 2015 another similar scale project (Chestnut) cost about \$420,000 (if it goes out to bid) and that it could be possibly done for about \$360,000 if done “in house”. These types of projects that are discussed would also be able to use the funds for the Capital Fee monies collected.

### **4. Sewer Project Update**

Superintendent Stokes informs the board that the check was received and that there have been a few calls about tying into sewer.

### **5. Recent Social Media Posts**

Commissioner Sheehan-McGrath states her concern of the posts that have been on social media. She discusses inquiring about the complaints and where they are located so that it can be determined if it is a “problem area” or a “one off” issue. Commissioner Dunn asks about an informational piece being placed in with the bills July 1<sup>st</sup> informing the residents that the Water/Sewer Department and Board are being proactive “we hear you”, and the work is being done to fix the “issues”. Commissioner Sheehan-McGrath states that we need to be careful with what information is sent out and Superintendent Stokes explains that on the bills themselves, there is a spot we can put this “informational piece”.

### **6. Administrative Assistant Hiring**

Superintendent Stoke informs the board that we have received a handful of applicants and that he is hoping the applicants will be contacted next week to schedule interviews.

### **7. Current Open Projects Update**

Superintendent Stokes informs the board that the King Street water services will be starting in July. There will be a hydrant replaced on Gardner Street “tomorrow” (6/18/24), clean up from the winter months, backflow testing, and July 1<sup>st</sup> billing. The SCADA Project is in full swing and currently being “set up” by AD Instruments. The building permits for School Street are “really close” and they will hopefully be approved by July 1<sup>st</sup>. Superintendent Stokes also states that we are waiting on the Federal monies to be able to start work.

## **8. Potential Grant Opportunity**

Superintendent Stokes states that our engineer Ryan and himself have been working on potentially getting the Emergent Contaminant Grant. The guidelines include how close towns are to start projects that fit these guidelines. For us this would include many things we are working, such as the production well, the pilot study with Haverhill, and the Scada project. He states we have about \$800,000 worth of plans ready to move forward with. The deadline for submission is 7/8/24. The submission has been sent in, but there have been system issues and it needs to be confirmed that they have received it or not.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Ms. Bourque presented the minutes from the May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Water & Sewer Board meeting. **Commissioner Grim made a motion to approve the minutes from May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2024, as submitted. Commissioner Dunn seconded. No further discussion. All were in favor.**

### **OLD OR UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None

### **NEXT MEETING**

Monday, July 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2024, at 5:00 p.m. in the Main Meeting Room at Groveland Town Hall, 183 Main Street, Groveland.

### **CLOSING**

**Commissioner Grim made a motion to close the meeting at 5:41 p.m. Seconded by Commissioner Dunn. No further discussion. All were in favor.**

Respectfully submitted,

Kimberly Bourque

Water & Sewer Office Manager