

**GROVELAND WATER & SEWER BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
September 11, 2023**

A Regular Meeting of the Groveland Water & Sewer Board was held on Monday, September 11, 2023 at 5:00 p.m. The meeting was held in the Back Meeting Room at the Groveland Town Hall, 183 Main Street, Groveland.

Board Members Present

Bill Dunn, Chairperson
Terry Grim
Sarah Sheehan-McGrath

Staff Members Present

Colin Stokes, W/S Superintendent
Danielle Albright, W/S Office Manager

OPENING

Commissioner Grim made a motion to open the meeting at 5:03 p.m. Seconded by Commissioner Dunn. All in favor.

CUSTOMER COMMENTS

Mr. John Diorio, 302 Alyssa Dr. appeared before the Board to address concerns regarding the abatement policy of the department. After a brief discussion, the Board agreed that the policies of the Water & Sewer Department need to be updated and directed staff to begin that process, starting with the billing policies that appear on the back of the bills. A full audit of the Department Rules & Regulations will occur over the next several months.

BUSINESS ITEMS

1. Haverhill Bond Payment Request

Superintendent Stokes explained that as part of the Water/Sewer Budget, we pay Haverhill 4% of the cost for Capital Improvement Projects that impact Groveland and the sewerage that we send them. When budget planning for FY24, Superintendent Stokes reached out to Haverhill for the numbers but was given FY23 budget information, therefore the submitted budget amount for FY24 was about 5% lower than it should have been. We received a bill from Haverhill for \$80,762.82 which is higher than the approved budgeted amount of \$76,238.68. Superintendent Stokes requested the Board vote to use Emergency Sewer Funds to cover the difference in the amount of \$4524.14. **Commissioner Grim moved to use emergency sewer funds to pay for the unexpected excess in capital budget for payment to Haverhill; seconded by Commissioner Sheehan-McGrath. No further discussion. A voice vote was held, all were in favor.**

2. SCADA Project Update

At its previous meeting, the Board signed the Environmental Partners contract for SCADA system updates. Superintendent Stokes has yet to submit the signed contract to Environmental Partners. Based on conversations with the company who performs SCADA maintenance for the Department, AD Instruments, and with the Town's IT company, Boston Systems Solutions, Superintendent Stokes is recommending that they not use Environmental Partners to perform the updates. Environmental Partners was proposing a complete overhaul of the SCADA system. ADI and BSS believe they can update only the parts of the system that need to be updated at a significantly lower price. Superintendent Stokes recommended to the Board that they go with the targeted updates in the short term and save money for a larger system update when a new treatment plant is built in the future. The Board agreed.

3. Well Drilling Update

Test drilling at 150 Center Street (Strawberry Fields) to start tomorrow, September 12, 2023. There are three locations within the site they'll be drilling. A brief discussion followed regarding the process.

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4. Infrastructure Improvements and Funding Ideas

Superintendent Stokes introduced this topic of discussion in order for the Board to consider future funding options for things such as system maintenance, Capital Improvement Projects, and a future Water Treatment Facility. Superintendent Stokes proposed the Water Department implement a similar model used by the Groveland Light Department who sets their rates to account for a certain percentage of system maintenance and future development. This conversation will be part of a much bigger discussion regarding rates. The Board agreed, especially as it relates to a future Treatment Facility. A brief discussion regarding the structure of a fee versus percentage occurred. Superintendent Stokes stated he would come up with a couple of different scenarios and to go over at a future meeting.

SIGN DEPARTMENTAL PAPERWORK

Ms. Albright stated that Rebecca Oldham, Town Administrator, is now authorized to sign Superintendent Stokes timesheets as his supervisor. His timesheets were signed and submitted for payroll.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Grim made a motion to approve the minutes from the August 7, 2023 meeting as submitted. Seconded by Commissioner Dunn. No further discussion. A voice vote was held, all were in favor.

OLD OR UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Superintendent Stokes offered the Board an update on a few old business items:

1. The South Groveland Sewer Extension is nearing completion. The Highway Department will manage final paving. There've been a few calls to tie in.
2. Department staff are conducting interviews to fill the Administrative Assistant position in the Water & Sewer Department
3. Ground water levels are above average.
4. The source of the recurring leak at the intersection of School St. and Center St. was identified as being a drainage pipe. The Highway Department has repaired this.

COMMISSIONERS TIME

Commissioner Grim reminded Superintendent Stokes on behalf of Lori Bentsen, resident at 5 Murray Ave., about the regulations for water pressure as it will relate to the future Quarry Apartment project by Bill Daley. There is some concern regarding pressure for surrounding homes.

ITEMS NOT REASONABLY ANTICIPATED AT TIME OF POSTING

None.

NEXT MEETING

Monday, October 16, 2023 at 5:00 p.m. in the Back Meeting Room at Groveland Town Hall, 183 Main Street, Groveland.

CLOSING

Commissioner Grim made a motion to close the meeting at 5:55 p.m. Seconded by Commissioner Sheehan-McGrath. All were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Danielle Albright
Water & Sewer Office Manager

APPROVED: October 16, 2023