

**TOWN OF EDGARTOWN
BOARD OF WASTE WATER COMMISSIONERS
MINUTES OF THE
REGULAR MEETING OF FEBRUARY 20, 2020**

WASTE WATER COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

Mr. Glen S. Searle, Chairman
Mr. Scott Ellis, Commissioner
Mr. Sean E. Murphy, Commissioner

EWWD STAFF PRESENT:

Mr. William Burke, Facilities Manager
Mr. Joseph Rock, Plant Operator
Mrs. Pia Webster, Administrative Assistant

OTHERS PRESENT:

Mr. Jeffrey Agnoli, 56 Martha's Road
Mr. Jay Guest, 13 Hye Road
Mr. Philippe Jordi, Executive Director, Island Housing Trust
Ms. Carol Ramsay, 64 Martha's Road

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER:

The Board of Waste Water Commissioners of the Town of Edgartown held their Regular Meeting on Thursday, February 20, 2020, at 3:00 p.m. in a special location, the second floor Board Room of the Edgartown Public Library, 26 West Tisbury Road, Edgartown, Mass. At 3:00 p.m. Chairman Glen S. Searle called the meeting to order.

In the process of reading the Notice of Regular Meeting, it came to the Chairman's attention that the date of the meeting printed on the notice was incorrect. It was determined that the online notice was correctly sited under February 20. A call was placed to Town Clerk Karen Medeiros by Plant Operator Joseph Rock. Ms. Medeiros suggested the meeting could proceed, after asking Mr. Rock a number of questions.

Also present from the Board were Waste Water Commissioners Scott Ellis and Sean E. Murphy.

WELCOME TO NEW FACILITIES MANAGER.

Chairman Searle welcomed recently hired Facilities Manager William G. Burke, who had begun working at the Plant two days earlier. Commissioners Ellis and Murphy also offered their good wishes.

OLD BUSINESS:

UPDATE: NEXT STEPS FOR SLUDGE CAKE TRANSPORT CONTRACT BID.

Mr. Rock reported that Thomas Henry of Waste Management had spoken to his firm's legal team, who had agreed to go along with the original indemnification language in the RFP. So Waste Management's proposed Indemnification Addendum had been successfully declined, and all wordings had been taken care of.

OTHER BUSINESS:

FACILITIES MANAGER'S REPORTS.

Mr. Rock delivered the January 2020 Chief Operator's Report, relating that he had met with Damon Burchill of Robert B. Our Co., Inc. to review the scum pump installation procedure, which was to have begun on January 6. This was delayed, though, because the pipes to run from the scum pit to the pump had not been ordered. On January 2 the lower belt on Belt Filter Press No. 1 had unraveled and caught in the sludge hopper; a new belt was purchased and installed. The crew members had been scheduled to receive their annual vaccinations. And the Chase Road Station's Pump No. 2 had returned from Williamson New England, been reinstalled and was back in service.

FINANCIAL REPORTS.

Referring to the Septage Revenue and Septage Volume Reports, Administrative Assistant Pia Webster said that as of February 19, Revenue was up 17.0 percent when compared to this point in FY19 while volume was up 17.1 percent.

Turning to a report titled FY20 Salaries & Wages Expenditures as of February 26, 2020, Mrs. Webster went over how the report laid out just what would be spent if all possible staff promotions were to go into effect by fiscal year's end. She had also allowed for an additional \$10,786.40 for the Overtime budget, which was already in overspent territory. Under these terms, about \$73,700 would be available for a Chapter 77 Transfer in mid-May. Of that, \$17,700 was encumbered: \$10,000 for load banking and \$7,700 for the deficit in the Equipment Hire and Solid Waste Removal Contract accounts. That left \$56,000 to fatten the other Expenditures accounts.

The Admin Assistant also pointed to the January Septage Billed Commitment of \$31,728.07, a record for that winter month.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES.

Turning to the **Minutes of the Regular Meeting of December 18, 2019**, Commissioner Murphy made a motion to approve as written, seconded by Commissioner Ellis. The motion carried unanimously by voice vote. Also considered were the **Minutes of the Regular Meeting of January 16, 2020**. Commissioner Ellis made a motion to approve as written, seconded by Commissioner Murphy. The motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

NEW BUSINESS.

EXPLORING SEWERING POSSIBILITIES WITH ISLAND HOUSING TRUST.

Philippe Jordi, Executive Director of the Island Housing Trust, related that he and Mr. Rock about spoken in December about two Edgartown properties being considered by his organization for possible Chapter 40B development, one a landlocked parcel between Stop & Shop and the Edgar Hotel and the other, 87 West Tisbury Road, directly across from Marchant's Path. The Housing Trust, he said, had not done much work in Edgartown; moreover, they were looking to take a more aggressive approach for year-round housing by creating so-called pocket neighborhoods where housing could be located near public transportation or other resources. Understandably, he said, they were attracted to areas that had the capacity to tie in to the sewer system.

Mr. Jordi said he had gone before the Edgartown Affordable Housing Committee, which had produced a letter of support for the pursuit of the two parcels. He emphasized that if the development were done at less than a certain density, it would not be worth pursuing. The parcel with greater potential was the one on West Tisbury Road (Map 20C Parcel 110), currently owned by Christopher Celeste, who had gotten approval for subdivision into three lots.

Mr. Jordi passed out a Plan of Land in Edgartown, Mass. Prepared For Facingwestventures, LLC, which laid out Mr. Celeste's subdivision plan. Applicants qualifying for the units, said Mr. Jordi, could have an annual income of \$66,000 to \$120,000. Mr. Jordi passed out a photograph of a duplex at Island Trust's Lake Street, Tisbury development to show the type of structure they intended to build. The lot had been approved for 12 bedrooms, he said.

Chairman Searle wanted to know if the West Tisbury Road sewer main was going to be able to handle the Housing Trust's project, in addition to the expansions of the Boys' & Girls' Club and the Edgartown School Recreation Area. Mr. Rock replied that potentially it could, although he had not seen all the flow calculations.

At this point Commissioner Murphy stated that he had represented Mr. Celeste on other matters and so was recusing himself from this matter. The Admin Assistant pointed out that in fact the lot in question had not been approved for 12 bedrooms; Mr. Celeste had not applied for any sewer permits for this property, and the initial maximum bedroom limit was in the hands of the Waste Water Department.

Chairman Searle said that he had no problem with the project. Asked by Mr. Jordi if the Board was offering a preliminary approval, Commissioner Ellis answered that the Board recommended

that the Island Trust continue on in the direction that they were going in. Mr. Jordi thanked the Board members for their time.

DISCUSS/VOTE: FY2020 SEWER USER CHARGES ANNUAL BILLING.

Admin Assistant Webster explained how three votes related to the FY20 Sewer User Charges Annual Billing were necessary. She pointed to the corresponding forms the Commissioners would sign, should they choose to vote in the affirmative: the Warrant to Town Collector; Commitment No. 1 Sewer User Charges FY 2020; and Abatement No. 1 Sewer User Charges FY 2020.

Commissioner Murphy made a motion to accept the FY2020 Waste Water Department Annual Sewer User Charges Warrant to Town Collector in the amount of One Million Five Hundred Four Thousand One Hundred Sixty-Eight Dollars and Twenty-Five Cents (\$1,504,168.25). Commissioner Ellis provided a second, and the motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

Commissioner Murphy made a motion to accept Commitment No. 1 to the Town Accountant for FY2020 Sewer User Charges in the amount of One Million Five Hundred Four Thousand One Hundred Sixty-Eight Dollars and Twenty-Five Cents (\$1,504,168.25). Commissioner Ellis offered a second, and the motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

Commissioner Murphy made a motion to accept Abatement No. 1 to the Town Accountant for FY2020 Sewer User Charges in the amount of Four Thousand Eight Hundred Forty-One Dollars and Sixty-One Cents (\$4,841.61), with Commissioner Ellis providing a second. The motion carried unanimously by voice vote. The Commissioners signed the aforementioned forms.

DISCUSS/VOTE: PROPOSED EWWTF POLICY RE: OPERATOR LICENSING.

Mr. Rock related that he had discussed with Human Resources Director Kim Lucas the fact the Waste Water was the only Department that failed to reimburse a successful certification candidate for his/her test fee and transportation costs. Commissioner Murphy made a motion for the Waste Water Department to reimburse successful certification candidates for their tests fees and transportation costs and in the future to incorporate these costs into the Annual Operating Budget. Commissioner Ellis provided a second, and the motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

DISCUSS/VOTE: GRADE 4 COURSE TRAINING PRIOR TO ONE SERVICE YEAR.

Mr. Rock said that the Department had a couple of new employees who had worked there less than six months but who were definitely committed to becoming certified Plant Operators. In the past it had been the former Facilities Manager's policy to have a Junior Operator work at least through the probationary period before investing in training him/her. But with a Grade 4 certification course available in April, Mr. Rock had decided he would like to send the two Junior Operators for training then, even though it was somewhat earlier than usual.

At this point – 3:37 p.m. – Commissioner Murphy left the meeting, since he had a conflict with regard to the final project being discussed.

COMMENTS FROM JEFFREY AGNOLI RE: MEETING HOUSE PLACE PROJECT.

Before Jeffrey Agnoli began to speak, Admin Assistant Webster asked if in the interest of accuracy and clarification, she could read into the record the two decisions that had been made by the Board of Waste Water Commissioners with regard to the Meeting House Place Project since 2014, which she did. Mr. Agnoli said that he appreciated having that backstory and that he respected the work the Commissioners were doing.

Mr. Agnoli distributed two handouts: a letter to the Commissioners dated February 20, 2020 from Mr. Agnoli and “concerned Edgartown residents”; and an informational document from the Massachusetts Smart Growth Alliance titled “Sustainable Development Principles.” An Island Grove resident for almost 30 years, Mr. Agnoli related how the writers of the letter thought that this particular subdivision – that is, the proposed Meeting House Place development – would create a drain on the natural environment, even with the principals having reduced the project to 28 very large luxury homes; the real need in the Town, he said, was for affordable housing. In addition, the developers would be cutting down an enormous number of trees.

Mr. Agnoli respectfully asked that the Commissioners vote to rescind their decision to allow the Meeting House developers to tie into the sewer system. He stressed that issues like this had to be decided at this – the local – level and not the national level and that in fact very few people were involved in making decisions – including the destruction of 54 acres – that would affect so many.

Already-existing neighborhoods should be sewerred, not a new luxury development in the Edgartown Great Pond Watershed, a development that would not be in the interest of the environment, Mr. Agnoli continued. The sewerred of the M.V. Hospital’s proposal in Edgartown was a good use of Town sewer, as was the sewerred of the Town’s Meshacket Road affordable housing development. Mr. Agnoli then reiterated that he and his group were asking the Waste Water Commissioners to rescind their decision to allow the developers of Meeting House Place to sewer the project.

Admin Assistant Webster noted the second point in the aforementioned letter, from which Mr. Agnoli had quoted the director of the Edgartown Great Pond Foundation saying that former Facilities Manager Thompson had told her that 300 homes within the watershed could be hooked up to the sewer system. Mrs. Webster stated that the implication that something was preventing the owners of these homes from tying in was incorrect. The homes Mr. Thompson had referred to had a tie-in to the system reserved for each of them; nothing was preventing them from tying in. Mr. Agnoli said it was expensive to tie in, to which Admin Assistant responded that she referred those who qualified to Melissa Norton Vincent, who administered a grant program.

Hye Road resident Jay Guest spoke of the lack of a buffer zone around the Waste Water Treatment Plant and accused the Town of “pirating in” the upgrade of the Plant in the mid-90s, stating that environmental forms had been falsified. The Town did not build the Plant to help developers, he said; it built the Plant to help the Pond. So the Commissioners shouldn’t be making it easier for developers to build in the Great Pond Watershed. Once the Plant was filled up, the game was over.

Mr. Guest continued to speak along these lines, until he began a personal attack on Commissioner Murphy, who had earlier left the meeting. Admin Assistant Webster half-stood up and yelled whoa; then the Chairman admonished Mr. Guest and ordered him to stay on-topic. Mr. Guest was finished. Mr. Agnoli thanked the Board members for their consideration and time. Mr. Guest said he apologized.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Chairman Searle made a motion to adjourn the Regular Meeting, which Commissioner Ellis seconded. The motion carried unanimously by voice vote. The Regular Meeting adjourned at 3:59 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Pia Webster
Administrative Assistant

APPROVED:

BOARD OF WASTE WATER COMMISSIONERS
TOWN OF EDGARTOWN

Glen S. Searle, Chairman

Scott Ellis, Commissioner

Sean E. Murphy, Commissioner