

Water & Wastewater Subcommittee Meeting

1/20/2022
7:00 PM to 9:00 PM
Remote via Zoom

Meeting Minutes

Attendees: J. Engel, S. Player, B. Kubaska, K. Mackin, J. Bourque, (B. Craft joined at 7:25pm)
V. Halmen, J. Parkhurst, R. Leczynski, E. Sadoway
Observers: L. Alexson

J. Engel calls meeting to order at 7:01pm and announces J. Bourque as the new Finance Committee representative to the subcommittee (replacing M. Dougherty).

Agenda

Citizen Queries

Chair

5

Discussion: None

Conclusions:

Action items:

Person responsible:

Deadline:

Approval of Minutes

Chair

5

Discussion: S. Player moved to accept the minutes of the September 13, 2021 Water & Wastewater Subcommittee meeting. K. Mackin seconded the motion. A typographical error was noted to be corrected prior to posting the minutes.

A roll-call vote was 3-0 in favor of the motion (J. Bourque abstained, B. Craft not present at time of vote).

Conclusions:

Action items:

Person responsible:

Deadline:

Water & Wastewater FY 23 Budgets, Halmen Rates

Discussion: V. Halmen reviewed the proposed FY23 water budget. The budget includes addition of a full-time Water Resources Manager to address several strategic goals of the department such as water supply protection, reduction of customer water use and water loss, etc. The position is to be filled by a professional with a bachelor’s degree in the sciences and will be funded by the water budget, WUMP funds, sewer budget and electric budget. Funds to support additional operation and maintenance of the water treatment plant (WTP) were included as Browns Well will be treated at the WTP beginning in FY23. Operating capital expenses include funding an expedited automated metering infrastructure system replacement, a replacement pickup truck, water supply improvements and portable generators for the wells sources. Debt service was reviewed and includes a proposed borrowing for the replacement of the WTP (\$25M) and other smaller infrastructure replacement projects with authorization requests expected at 2023 annual town meeting. Five-year budget projections were presented detailing O&M, debt service, operating capital, surplus balances. Rates to support the proposal were provided are factor increasing debt service to address significant infrastructure investments. A chart was presented that displayed the portion of the rate that supports O&M as stable and the future rate increases being driven by debt service. FY23 water budget is presented with a 10% rate increase.

B. Craft moved recommend the Water Commissioners support the water budget and as presented with the proposed rate increase. J. Engel seconded. A roll call vote was unanimous in favor.

V. Halmen reviewed the proposed FY23 wastewater budget. This includes a portion of funding for the Water Resources Manager. Operating capital expenses include funding the expedited automated metering infrastructure system replacement, a new vehicle to be shared by water and wastewater staff and wastewater treatment plant upgrades. The new vehicle will likely be a hybrid or EV. It was asked if police vehicle could be repurposed to the department instead of a new purchase – this will be evaluated. Debt service was reviewed and includes a proposed borrowing for aeration upgrades (\$6M at 2022 annual town meeting), town wharf pump station replacement (\$4M at 2023 annual town meeting) and other infrastructure replacement projects in later years. Five-year budget projections were presented detailing O&M, debt service, operating capital, surplus balances. Rates to support the proposal were provided are factor increasing debt service to address significant infrastructure investments. A chart was presented that displayed the portion of the rate that supports O&M as stable and the future rate increases being driven by debt service. FY23 water budget is presented with a 5% rate increase.

K. Mackin moved recommend the Sewer Commissioners support the sewer budget and as presented with the proposed rate increase. S. Player seconded. A roll call vote was unanimous in favor.

It was noted that these departments are enterprise funds and do not receive any assistance from the town’s general fund or any annual state/federal funding. Significant funding opportunities for capital projects is becoming available. All funding opportunities are being explored to lower costs for the rate payers. Projections assume no outside funding is received and will be reassessed should funds be awarded.

Conclusions: Budget and rate hearings are scheduled with the Commissioners on February 1st and 14th.

Action items:	Person responsible:	Deadline:

Project Updates	Halmen, Parkhurst, Sadoway	15
<u>Discussion:</u> Projects updates were provided during the capital/debt budget discussion.		
<u>Conclusions:</u>		
<u>Action items:</u>	<u>Person responsible:</u>	<u>Deadline:</u>

Other Business	Chair, All	5
<u>Discussion:</u> V. Halmen mentioned the Utilities Dept. would be soliciting customer responses to a survey to guide departmental initiatives.		
<u>The Wastewater Dept. reviewed and supported an updated Shellfish Management Plan developed by the Mass Division of Marine Fisheries.</u>		
<u>Conclusions:</u>		
<u>Action items:</u>	<u>Person responsible:</u>	<u>Deadline:</u>

Additional Information
K. Mackin moved to adjourn the meeting, B. Craft seconded. Roll call vote was unanimously in favor. Meeting was adjourned at 9:52 pm.