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**WATER & SEWER COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES – MARCH 19, 2024**

5:30 PM – Conference Room B – Town Hall, 63 Main Street Northborough, MA 01532

MEMBERS PRESENT: John Meader
Bryant Firmin
David Pepe

ALSO PRESENT: Scott Charpentier, Public Works Director
Tim Davison, Water & Sewer Operations Manager
Robert Luke, Administrative Assistant

Commissioner Meader opened the meeting at 5:30 PM.

CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES FROM THE FEBRUARY 6, 2024 REGULAR MEETING

A motion was made by Commissioner Pepe to approve the meeting minutes of the February 6, 2024 regular meeting as written with a second by Commissioner Firmin. Vote was taken by roll call, Commissioner Firmin “aye,” Commissioner Pepe “aye,” Commissioner Meader “aye.” The vote was unanimous with three votes in favor.

DISCUSSION OF ALLOWANCE OF FUTURE SEWER EXTENSIONS BEYOND THE CURRENT SERVICE AREA

Commissioner Meader began by explaining that he had a previous conversation with Mr. Charpentier which has prompted the current discussion.

Mr. Charpentier noted that his updated analysis has been tailored toward a potential extension along King Street but the review of the 2007 Comprehensive Wastewater Management Plan (CWMP) could instead be applied to other Town locations as needed.

In the case of King Street, it is located in sewer study area 6 which is identified as a priority area for municipal sewer collection.

Commissioner Pepe expressed concern that a proposed multi-unit project located on a single property parcel, with such a high density for sewer use, could take away capacity from other locations in the service area, perhaps even higher priority areas.

Commissioner Meader stated that the Commission has previously referenced a map showing the defined service area. He inquired whether a King Street extension would be

located within said defined area and, if not, that a process would need to be established to consider such extensions.

Commissioner Pepe and Commissioner Meader expressed concern that the service area map is flow related and that if the Town goes beyond it with flow then another part of the area may need to be reduced to compensate.

Mr. Charpentier offered to review the CWMP and see if the existing service area is defined separately and if there is a projected flow need in the King Street area. He noted that there are some pieces in the CWMP that are not necessarily prioritized anymore, for example Milk Porridge Circle as it's near a well that is no longer in use.

CONSIDERATION OF INTEREST WAIVER FOR THE NORTHBOROUGH HOUSING AUTHORITY

Mr. Charpentier began by explaining Mass Saves and how the organization will perform an energy audit on a residence if requested. This will often lead to recommendations for energy efficient light bulbs and additional upgrades aimed at lowering utility costs.

Mr. Charpentier explained that he received an email on February 8, 2024 from Ron Bonney, Executive Director of the Northborough Housing Authority, regarding unpaid water & sewer bills dating back to May 1, 2023. The email explained that the Housing Authority engaged with Mass Saves to see if they could reduce water consumption for their properties and as such, they sent them all of their water & sewer bills for review. It was noted by Mr. Bonney that the energy audit ultimately saved them nothing as far as bill reduction and the bills went unpaid since May of 2023. Mr. Bonney requested a one-time waiver of all interest totaling \$1,701.75 through March 19, 2024.

The three Commissioners discussed the request and ultimately decided that a waiver of interest was unwarranted and unjustified.

A motion was made by Commissioner Pepe to reject the request for a waiver of interest for the Northborough Housing Authority with a second by Commissioner Firmin. Vote was taken by roll call, Commissioner Firmin "aye," Commissioner Pepe "aye," Commissioner Meader "aye." The vote was unanimous with three votes in favor of rejection.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Charpentier presented updates including the Town's ongoing Infiltration and Inflow (I&I) investigation. Tim Davison, Water & Sewer Operations Manager, reported on the areas being tested.

Mr. Charpentier also gave a brief update on the capital plan including a new water & sewer utility truck and additional infiltration and inflow elimination. Director Charpentier said he presented the Operations budget to the Appropriations Committee; a likely sewer rate increase of 4 to 5 percent is anticipated as well as an increase to water rates due to lower

consumption from a wet spring/summer 2023. These anticipated rate increases will be evaluated during the upcoming rate study.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be in-person on Tuesday, April 16, 2024 at 5:30 PM only if needed.

ADJOURN

A motion was made by Commissioner Pepe to adjourn at 6:30 p.m. with a second by Commissioner Firmin. Vote was taken by roll call, Commissioner Firmin “aye,” Commissioner Pepe “aye,” Commissioner Meader “aye.” The vote was unanimous with three votes in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert Luke
Administrative Assistant

Documents used during meeting:

1. March 19, 2024 meeting agenda
2. February 6, 2024 regular meeting minutes
3. Memorandum considering waiver of interest pertaining to Northborough Housing Authority
4. Memorandum in discussion of future sewer extensions as per CWMP – King Street