



Water/Wastewater Commission

Meeting Minutes

September 8th, 2021

Legislative Building, City Hall Campus
700 Main St, Fitchburg MA 01420

A meeting for the City of Fitchburg Water/Wastewater Commission was held on Wednesday September 8th, 2021 via Zoom and FATV.

The meeting commenced at 5:02 PM

Members present: Rick Healey, Chairman
Steven Bodurtha, Commission Member
George Seiner, Commission Member
Michael Mclaughlin, Commission Member
Nicholas Erickson, Interim Commissioner of Public Works & City Engineer

Others present: Jeff Murawski., Deputy Commissioner of Wastewater
John Deline., Deputy Commissioner of Water
Jennifer Lambert, Head Clerk Water Division
Nathan Glenny, FATV
Kasia Allen, Constituent
Mark Piermarini, Prospective Commission Member

Absentees: None

Item #1

Approval of meeting minutes: Motion to approve minutes from May 12, 2021 meeting was granted by unanimous vote.

Item #2

Public Forum: Mrs. Kasia Allen from 68 Bilotta Way spoke to the Commission about appealing the wastewater department's denial of a sewer abatement. Commission raised a motion to gather more information regarding her irrigation system. Motion passed unanimously.

Item #4

Water Division:

- 245 River St. / Meter issue – Topic postponed due to conflicting schedule with City Solicitor Vincent Pusateri. Discussion at next Commission Meeting 10/13/21
- Meter upgrade project – The project is approx... 94% complete. There are around 670 meters left to change out. Of the ones that are left to change, half of them we just have had no response from the homeowners. The others have issues with either their service line or plumbing needs. We have started sending shut-off letters to the non-responsive properties with certified as well as regular letters being sent to the homeowners. The Board of Health along with the Mayor are all notified when letters are sent. We have gotten a great response this way.
- Falulah Transmission Main Project – This is the replacement of the 16" main to a 24" main. Contract is taking a little bit longer, but the contractor has informed us that the 24" pipe is currently hard to come by. Project will most likely start early winter. We have notified DEP that we will need an extension on this item.
- SCADA upgrade project – Fall River Electrical is updating/fabricating the electrical boxes and software is being programmed.
- 2022 Projects / Oak Hill Tank Replacement & Meetinghouse Gatehouse Rehab – These are both major projects coming up. We have applied for SRF funding for both projects. This will greatly advance our infrastructure.

Item #3

Wastewater Division

- Both the towns of Westminster and Lunenburg are working on incorporation of Fitchburg's Ordinance updates into their own Town Bylaws. Westminster voted to amend Bylaw Chapter 161, Sewers, to mirror the updated changes of Fitchburg City Code, Chapter 147, Sewers. In June of 2021, we received the Lunenburg Sewer Commission's DRAFT Town Sewer Regulations update for review which is still ongoing.
- Council Petition No. 134-21 – Discussion about the possibility of transporting sludge, in-house rather than outsourcing this task. Primary and secondary sludge gets dewatered and then transported to the West Plant. This material is hazardous to a sense that there are still pathogens in it. We are in year two of a three year contract with W.L. French who is our current vendor for this service. Unfortunately, because there was no competitive bidding and we only received this vendor's bid. If wastewater were to haul sludge ourselves, we would need a new hauling truck (we currently do not have one) which would cost between \$150,000 to \$240,000 and purchase bins, and hire new staff. This type of service is something that has to be done, holidays included which would mean overtime costs at time and a half and sometimes double overtime. Concerns would also be the landfill we currently use could be at full capacity and could close within the next 3yrs according to Health Director Steve Curry. Regulatory requirements are also a big concern. Further discussion and cost report at our next Water/Wastewater Commission Meeting to be held on Wednesday October 13, 2021.
- Construction Projects – CSS Project work started beginning of July. This part of the project proved to be challenging and also disruptive with just over 300 ft. of work being done on Water St. between First St. & Walnut St. It was decided that Water St. would be closed to vehicular traffic and a detour was set up to go around the closure.
- "On Call Construction Contract" - Contractor Blue Diamond Equipment, and subcontractor completed the trenchless rehabilitation work in mid-May on the Highview Street Sewer Replacement and Rehab project. The project is substantially complete, and Blue Diamond Equipment is working on punch list items.

- Miscellaneous – Wastewater staffing (plant and sewer system crew) - attended a joint webinar on June 22nd on Innovative Approaches as to where our new operators will come from? A grant proposal application was sent to provide internship opportunities to women who complete the “NEIWPCCC online Women’s Water Workforce” wastewater training. A new senior operator was hired at the plant and started in June. We also hired a general foreman, working foreman and a sewer collection operator. This is a six person crew and is staffed at 5 crewman. We will seek to fill the sixth spot in the fall of 2021. We have partnered with “X-Cel Conservation Corps. A spring time graduate may join wastewater as a “Wastewater Operations Intern”. Program participants take the Massachusetts Grade 3 operator licensure examination. Continuing networking connections with Technical Vocational Trade Schools for “maintenance workers” staffing. Our 4th year rain barrel program sold 155 rain barrels. To date the total number of rain barrels sold are 500. Our semi-annual report for the Consent Decree on Remedial Measures was sent electronically on August 27th, and by USPS on August 30th.

Item #4

Other Business:

- The Water/Wastewater Commission will next meet at 5:00 pm. on October 13, 2021 at the Legislative Building, City Hall Campus 700 Main St. Fitchburg MA, 01420.

Meeting adjourned at 6:28 pm