



Water/Wastewater Commission

Meeting Minutes

October 13th, 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 October 13th, 2021 at the Legislative Building, City Hall Campus, 700 Main St. Fitchburg, MA 01420

The meeting commenced at 5:19 PM

Members present: Rick Healey, Chairman
George Seiner, Commission Member
Michael Mclaughlin, Commission Member
Mark Piermarini, Commission Member

Others present: Jeff Murawski., Deputy Commissioner of Wastewater
John Deline., Deputy Commissioner of Water
Jennifer Lambert, Head Clerk Water Division
Nathan Glenny, FATV
Anthony Maressa, Sewer Collection Manager

Absent: Stephen Bodurtha, Commission Member
Nicholas Erickson, Interim Commissioner of Public Works & City Engineer

Item #1

Approval of meeting minutes: Motion to approve minutes from September 8, 2021 meeting was granted by unanimous vote. Motion to approve minutes from our special meeting held on September 20, 2021 was granted as modified unanimously. Remove Jeff Murawski from the attendance portion of the minutes, as he was not in attendance.

Item #2

Public Forum: In depth discussion amongst Commission Members regarding the appeal of a sewer abatement denial for the property at 68 Bilotta Way, Fitchburg MA. Owner of said property appealed to the Commission at our September 8, 2021 Commission Meeting. After further discussing and looking at the water usage data, it was concluded that there was nothing odd about the usage. Irrigation system

seemed to run between the hours of 7am – 10am and maybe an hour at night on some days. This is typical usage with an irrigation system. We were hoping to see usage maybe in the middle of the night or anything out of the ordinary but there just isn't anything. There was also zero usage on Memorial Day which was a rainy weekend. This makes me think they went away and the system was shut manually or there is a rain sensor on the irrigation system. Motion was raised in the affirmative to accept the appeal for denial of sewer abatement, motion carries. Motion raised to deny the sewer abatement granted unanimously.

Item #3

Water Division:

- Weston & Sampson, Water GIS Presentation – Primary goal is to develop an Electronic Water Distribution Map. This is a grant funded project through SRF funding and the Massachusetts Clean Water Trust. The current existing records include detailed paper records, sheets that need to be updated by hand. They are currently fragile and not mobile. We have since developed a Geo-index for all existing documents. We also located and oriented all 953 sheets along with digitizing core features such as mains, valves and hydrants. This created water GIS. Now we have all of our water core infrastructure is electronic format. This will allow links to water service locations if wanted. We can incorporate additional details from the paper records. This will also give us remote access and functionality.
- 245 River St. Meter issues – John let the Commission Members know that this topic will be discussed at our next Commission Meeting in October when Nick Erickson is present.
- Falulah Water Treatment Plant Operational issues – Heavy rain and warmer temperatures this past summer have caused some issues. Our Regional Water Treatment plant in Westminster, is a 12 MGD (million gallons a day) and our Falulah Treatment Plant here in Fitchburg is 6 MGD. We had our Falulah plant shut down for the last month or so because of high color and high turbidity in the water. Falulah was running about 1.2 MGD and Regional was running around 4.5 MGD being a 12 MGD it can supply the whole city with water. Because the city does not use a lot of water, we were not getting enough turnover in our storage tanks. This causes the water to sit and get old which also causes the chlorine residuals to drop. By running solely off our Regional plant we are getting better turnover. We did have to increase our chlorine this year to 1.7 parts per million which is still far below the legal limit which is 4 parts per million. Other water systems are dealing with the same issues. With all the heavy rain and warm temperatures this year it creates a lot of organics in the reservoirs. We have communicated this with DEP and they understand.
- Odor/taste complaints – We had been getting a lot of calls and complaints on social media about the taste and odor in the water. We have looked into this and thought it might be algae blooms. We did not find this was the case. We believe with the higher chlorine and the higher total organic carbon in the water this was the cause. This doesn't mean the water was unsafe. DEP was out to look at the reservoirs and everything checked out fine. We are hoping with the cooler weather and the water cooling down, we can decrease our chlorine levels and organic carbons will go down. We have been flushing in certain areas and this has helped. Calls seem to have tapered down.

Item #4

Wastewater Division

- Sewer Ordinance, (City Code Chapter 147) – We received the Lunenburg Sewer Commission's DRAFT Town Sewer Regulations update in the month of June. We provided feedback to them via email on September 28, 2021.

- Council Petition No. 134-21 – Memorandum for the Commission from Deputy Commissioner Jeff Murawski recommending that the City continues with the contracted services for bio-solids transportation needs of the East Plant, and that wastewater collaborates with the Purchasing department to help solicit competing bid proposals for more favorable service pricing. Motion was raised to recommend to the City Council that we continue to contract out our bio-solid transportation needs. Motion granted unanimously.
- Construction Projects – CSS Project Water St. separation/rehabilitation work between First St. and Walnut St. began in early July, a length of just over 300 feet. This was very challenging and disruptive to the public. Water St. was shut down during this period. September 21st, the Water St. work zone closure was ended, and through traffic was restored. See attached “look ahead” Construction schedule as of September 30th. CSS Project Main St. area, geoprobes and borings work has been underway. On September 23, 2021 Wastewater issued a ‘Press Release’ regarding the upcoming smoke testing work which is an SSES technique used to determine the scope of the work within the project area. Smoke testing work began on Wednesday September 29th and is scheduled to continue until Friday October 22nd, weather pending.
- Miscellaneous – Deputy Commissioner Jeff Murawski tendered resignation of his position effective end of business day on Friday October 22nd, 2021. You will be missed, and the Commission wishes you the best of luck.

Item #5

Other Business:

- The Water/Wastewater Commission will next meet at 5:00 pm. on November 10, 2021 at the Legislative Building, City Hall Campus 700 Main St. Fitchburg MA, 01420.

Meeting adjourned at 6:28 pm