

MINUTES
HARWICH WATER DEPARTMENT
JOINT MEETING WITH THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN AND
BOARD OF WATER/WASTEWATER COMMISSIONERS

Monday, March 20, 2023

5:45pm

BOARD OF SELECTMEN PRESENT: Chair Michael MacAskill, Vice Chair Mary Anderson, Clerk Donald Howell, Selectman Larry Ballantine

WATER COMMISSIONER'S PRESENT: Chair Gary Carreiro, Vice Chair Allin Thompson, Clerk Noreen Donahue, Commissioner John Gough

OTHERS PRESENT: Superintendent Dan Pelletier, Town Administrator Joe Powers

Select Chair MacAskill called the Board of Selectman's meeting to order at 5:45pm. Select Chair MacAskill entertained a motion to go into Executive session and return to open session no later than 6:00pm. Select Clerk Howell moved to vote to go into Executive Session for Collective Bargaining. Select Vice Chair seconded the motion. A role call vote was taken with all in favor; 4-0-0.

Select Chair MacAskill called the Board of Selectmen's meeting for March 20, 2023 back to order at 6:00pm. Collective bargaining was discussed. A decision was made but it's on-going negotiations so it will not be announced tonight.

VI. Joint Meeting with the Board of Selectmen and Board of Water/Wastewater Commissioners

A. Fiscal Year 2024 Water/Wastewater Department Operating Budgets

Board of Water & Wastewater Commissioners Vice Chair Thompson called the Board of Water and Wastewater Commissioners joint meeting to order for discussion of the upcoming annual budgets.

Select Chair MacAskill commented that we are starting with the fiscal year 2024 Water and Wastewater Department operating budgets were the topic of discussion. The Board of Selectmen have seen the budgets so highlights will be reviewed.

Water Budget

Superintendent Pelletier highlighted the changes from the March 4, 2023 budget presentation with respect to the Water budget.

The only change really was the reduction in the enhancement of services that we were carrying previously.

Beyond that, there was one reduction in the administrative fees with respect to long-term debt. That number was reduced from somewhere around \$24,000 down to \$1,963 that is in the packet.

Overall budget numbers do match up with what was in the packet for the Selectmen this evening.

Water for FY24 we have an anticipated salary & wage line item for \$1.39 million, that's an increase of 7.06% over FY23.

For the expense line item we total \$2,343,359 which is a 5.76% increase over last year.

Details regarding the Interfund Transfer which cover OFUS or Other Funding Uses and Sources is a bulk category that includes the Health Benefits for the 15 employees within the Water Department as well as chargebacks from the General Fund for things like processing payments with the Treasurer/Collector, Town Administrator's time, things like that, so that is what comprised the \$818,913 figure.

Wastewater Budget

Moving onto the Wastewater Budget. This one has been talked about a lot more since the March 4, 2023 hearing. What is included in the packet for tonight is the final number. There are additions to the OFUS or in-directs line item. When we first presented this, it was in the \$31,000-\$32,000 range that has been increased to the \$62,148 in the packet tonight which reflects the additional fringe benefits that would be carried for the Assistant Wastewater Superintendent position that we will be discussing.

Beyond that there have been some pretty significant changes also talked about with respect to the debt for wastewater so those figures have been updated. The total for our expense category including debt is now \$1.756 million down from \$2.24 million last year or 21.73% reduction. The salary & wage line item is jumping back up. Last year we had a budget of \$82,203 and this year is \$175,178 reflecting the additional Assistant Wastewater Superintendent position.

Select Clerk Howell commented that it was predictable enough because sewer it starting to come on-line it needs to be managed.

Select Chair MacAskill entertained a motion for someone on the Board to support the Water and the Wastewater budgets. Select Clerk Howell moved to support the wastewater and water budgets as presented. Select Vice Chair Anderson seconded, all in favor; 4-0-0.

Select Chair MacAskill commented that the Finance Committee has recommended that we have a table, an article for new hires. Because this is in your article #4, we are going to do a chart showing new positions instead of separate articles. You may want to consider putting your new position in the description so as your motion gets read it is in there. So that takes care of A. and C. of the staff.

Board of Water and Wastewater Commissioner Clerk Donahue commented that this will be the first full-time Wastewater employee in the town.

Select Vice Chair Anderson can't imagine that we could go forward with a Wastewater project like this and not have a full-time.

B. 2023 Annual Town Meeting Articles

FY24 Exploration New Source Exploration-Phase 2

One of the first on the list is FY24 Exploration New Source Exploration-Phase 2. \$300,000 will be funded out of retained earnings and a reappropriation of 2022 annual town meeting article 21 in the amount of \$300,000 for a total cost of \$600,000.

Town Administrator Powers commented that we do have a standalone article for water retained earnings so we would have to add counsel's language to that article to establish the transfer.

Board of Water and Wastewater Commissioner Clerk Donahue commented that the total funding is coming from retained earnings, it's just that some of it is from this years retained earnings and some of it is from last years retained earnings so the language shouldn't have to be changed.

Town Administrator Joe Power commented that it might be a change in the language for the motion then.

Selectman Ballantine moved to approve the Water article for New Source Exploration-Phase 2 with final language sent by legal counsel. Seconded by Select Clerk Howell; 4-0-0.

FY24 Pavement Management Plan

Next is FY24 Pavement Management Plan proposing to repave access roads to Depot St wellfield. Select Chair MacAskill entertained a motion to support. Select Clerk Howell moved to support the FY24 Pavement Management Plan subject to final language. Seconded by Select Vice Chair Anderson; 4-0-0.

FY24 Route 28 Water Main Replacement

Superintendent Pelletier commented that the current recommended appropriation amount is \$17.5 million. We are still looking to connect with MA DOT and evaluate our project costs. There are items that may be reduced or eliminated from partnering with DOT. Also, hoping to obtain 2024 Community Project Funding and requested up to \$5 million dollars for this project.

Town Administrator Powers commented that he thinks counsel would have shared it with Dan. In anticipation of potential funding from the federal government the motion will make reference to that as well. So that's our motion and it might be reduced.

Select Chair MacAskill entertained a motion to support. Select Clerk Howell moved to support the FY24 Route 28 Water Main Replacement. Seconded by Select Vice Chair Anderson; 4-0-0.

FY24 Route 28 Water Main Replacement

Superintendent Pelletier relayed that were hoping we could use MA DOT's easement next to Herring River that they were using for drainage improvements but they said to get our own.

Superintendent Pelletier requested to include an article for an easement at 129 Route 28. Superintendent Pelletier recommended carrying \$10,000 to be funded from retained earnings. This figure is based off of what we have been paying for sewer easements.

Town Administrator Powers commented that the article is not yet in the draft warrant presently. It could be placed based on the title. We will have specific language because the article does not yet exist. Recommended to vote to "Place the article known as.."

Select Clerk Howell moved to place on the warrant an article currently known as 129 Route 28 Utility Easement. Seconded by Select Vice Chair Anderson; 4-0-0.

Select Clerk Howell moved to support the ultimate article currently known as 129 Route 28 Utility Easement. Seconded by Select Vice Chair Anderson; 4-0-0.

Town Administrator Powers recommended to change the words to be consistent to "motion to adopt the article currently known as 129 Route 28 Utility Easement." All in favor; 4-0-0.

Proposed amendment to the Water Bylaw

Relative to increasing the fines associated with the violation of water use restrictions. Change from \$50 for first violation and \$100 for each subsequent to \$100 for first violation and \$300 for each subsequent.

Town Administrator Powers commented that this is not yet in your warrant. It is pretty straight forward amending by deleting and replacing certain sections. The title "Amend Chapter 300 of the General Bylaws relative to Water Restriction Violation penalties"

Select Clerk Don Howell moved to Amend Chapter 300 of the General Bylaws relative to Water Restriction Violation penalties" and place it on the warrant. Seconded by Select Vice Chair Mary Anderson; 4-0-0.

Select Chair MacAskill recommended having a public hearing.

In the next article, Select Chair MacAskill commented that we are light years away from restricting private well use and private property rights.

Board of Water and Wastewater Commissioner Chair Carreiro commented that this topic has been placed back on the Board of Water and Wastewater agenda for reconsideration. The Board would like to try and do more educating about watering.

Select Chair MacAskill commented that the proposed amendment to the bylaw to regulate private wells will not be placed on the warrant as of now.

East Harwich Wastewater Collection System Expansion

Wastewater Phase 3 East Harwich collection system expansion. The recommended funding amount is \$50 million to be funded through debt exclusion. Ultimately anticipating varying degrees of principal forgiveness.

Board of Water and Wastewater Commissioner Clerk Donahue recommended that we remove the word Expansion so that it reads East Harwich Wastewater Collection System.

Selectman Ballantine moved to support Phase 3 East Harwich Collection System for \$50 million dollars funded by debt exclusion. Seconded by Select Vice Chair Anderson; 4-0-0.

West Harwich Route 28 Sewer Main Installation

The currently recommended funding amount is \$6.5 million dollars to cover the area from the Dennis Town line to the Herring River bridge to be completed with the MA DOT road reconstruction project.

Select Clerk Howell moved to support the article currently known as Route 28 Sewer Main Installation project at \$6.5 million dollars. Seconded by Select Vice Chair Anderson; 4-0-0.

Board of Water and Wastewater Commissioner Vice Chair Thompson entertained a motion to adjourn at 6:41pm. Board of Water and Wastewater Commissioner Clerk Donahue seconded the motion, all in favor; 4-0-0.

C. Water/Wastewater Department adds to staff


Water/Wastewater Department adds to staff was discussed along with item A. Fiscal Year 2024 Water/Wastewater Department Operating Budgets.

ADJOURNMENT

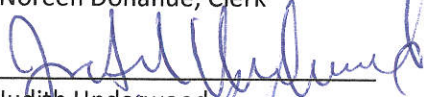


Gary Carreiro, Chairman

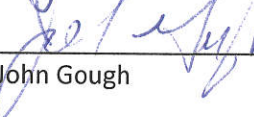
Allin P. Thompson, Vice Chair



Noreen Donahue, Clerk

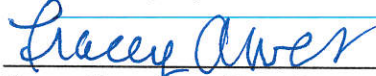


Judith Underwood



John Gough

Dan Pelletier, Superintendent



Tracey Alves, Board Secretary