



TOWN OF KINGSTON
Office of the Sewer Commission/Wastewater Department
26 Evergreen Street
Kingston, MA 02364

781-585-4058
781-831-6783 FAX

Elaine A. Fiore - Chair
William Watson – Vice Chair
Brian M. Donahoe

Minutes 11.05.24

The meeting discussed a tenant at a property on Sunset Road who left, causing a high sewer bill due to a running toilet. The water department corrected the issue, and an abatement was granted. The board debated whether to abate one or multiple quarters, ultimately deciding on one quarter. They also reviewed water billing changes, including rate effective dates and service charges. The leaching fields project faced challenges with groundwater levels and pump station issues. The board plans to extend the project funding to January and discussed the need for betterment fees and sewer connections. They also reviewed the town's new online newsletter and AI-generated news service.

Action Items

- [] Generate a letter to residents on Country Club Way about sewer connections.
- [] Audit the actual sewer connections versus what is shown on plans for Country Club Way.
- [] Reach out to the Board of Health about requiring sewer connections for a property on Evergreen Street.
- [] Follow up with CDM on getting a brochure created to share information about the sewer system upgrades.
- [] Update the GIS system to accurately reflect the sewer infrastructure.
- [] Schedule a meeting in the next 2 weeks to discuss adding betterment fees to the tax billing system.

Outline

Water Billing and Sewer Department Issues

- Cortland Harlow explains a tenant at a property left, and a high sewer bill was discovered due to a running toilet.
- The water department instructed to correct the issue before filing an abatement, which was granted.
- Despite the correction, a second high bill was received, leading to confusion about the abatement process.
- Cortland Harlow and Jeanne Dunn discussed the highest bill and the overlap of billing quarters.
- David Walsh and Brian Donahoe clarify the timing of the problem and the billing cycle, highlighting the residual issue from the previous quarter.

Water Bill Changes and Sewer Department Billing Questions



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- Elaine Fiore passes out a water bill and highlights necessary changes, including rate effective dates and service charges.
- David Walsh suggests bolding sewer-related information and using asterisks to connect sewer billing questions.
- Jeanne Dunn agrees on making billing questions more prominent and connecting them with sewer questions.
- Elaine Fiore and David Walsh discussed the possibility of changing colors for clarity and the impact of return receipts on billing information.
- Cortland Harlow mentions the return receipt issue and its impact on billing accuracy.

Sewer Connections and Betterment Fees

- Jeanne Dunn discusses a property on Evergreen Street needing to connect to the sewer system for a seven-bedroom system.
- David Walsh recalls past decisions on sewer connections and betterment fees, noting some properties paid while others did not.
- Jeanne Dunn explains the current situation and the need for the property to connect to the sewer system.
- Cortland Harlow and David Walsh discuss the historical context and the board's previous decisions on sewer connections and betterment fees.
- Elaine Fiore suggests generating a letter to the property owner to enforce the sewer connection.

Leaching Fields and Upgrade Project

- Dave Walsh provides an update on the leaching fields, mentioning the completion of paving and the need to drill a well.
- David Walsh explains the changes in hydrogeological modeling due to increased annual rainfall, affecting groundwater levels.
- Dave Walsh discusses the challenges of modeling and the need for new well locations.
- David Walsh and Brian Donahoe agree on the importance of accurate modeling and the need for wells to be placed accordingly.
- Elaine Fiore mentions the extension of funding for the leaching fields project, providing more time for completion.

Pump Station Issues and Cybersecurity

- Jeanne Dunn reports an issue with a pump station's breaker tripping, causing a generator to fail and affecting the station's operation.



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- David Walsh inquiries about the cybersecurity measures in place for the SCADA system.
- Dave Walsh explains the multiple password layers and email notifications for unauthorized access attempts.
- Cortland Harlow suggests additional measures to ensure the system's reliability in case of power loss.
- Jeanne Dunn mentions the need for a high-float system to trigger alerts in case of power failure.

Insurance and Permit Renewal

- Jeanne Dunn discusses the insurance requirements for the leaching fields and the need to provide a completion date.
- David Walsh suggests consulting CDM and CC to determine the completion date for insurance purposes.
- Jeanne Dunn mentions the upcoming expiration of the discharge permit and the need to renew it.
- David Walsh and Jeanne Dunn discussed the process and timeline for renewing the permit, emphasizing the importance of early preparation.
- Jeanne Dunn plans to involve CDM in the permit renewal process to ensure a smooth transition.

GIS Upgrade and Brochure Development

- David Walsh mentions the need to upgrade the GIS system for the town, including manholes and pump stations.
- Jeanne Dunn agrees on the importance of accurate GIS data and plans to coordinate with CDM for the upgrade.
- David Walsh discusses the development of a brochure to explain the new sewer system upgrades and features.
- Jeanne Dunn suggests including technical details and QR codes in the brochure to make it accessible to a wider audience.
- David Walsh plans to involve high school students in the project to create the brochure and update the GIS system.

Betterment Allocation and Capacity Planning

- David Walsh and Elaine Fiore discussed the allocation of betterment fees and the impact on sewer capacity.



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- Elaine Fiore explains the allocation of betterment fees for the mall and apartments project, including the use of funds for engineering and grants.
- David Walsh emphasizes the need to understand the real capacity of the sewer system and the impact of unutilized capacity.
- Elaine Fiore mentions the spreadsheet of allocated capacities and the need to fine-tune the numbers for accurate planning.
- David Walsh plans to present the capacity analysis to the selectmen and town meeting to ensure clear communication.

Meeting Schedule and Future Plans

- Elaine Fiore suggests scheduling a meeting in early December to discuss the leaching fields project and other updates.
- David Walsh mentions the need to meet with the selectmen and the town meeting to discuss the sewer system's capacity and future plans.
- David Walsh emphasizes the importance of clear communication and accurate data for future planning and decision-making.
- Elaine Fiore and David Walsh agree on the need for regular updates and meetings to keep everyone informed and aligned.
- Bill Watson makes a motion to adjourn all in favor.