

**CHERRY VALLEY SEWER DISTRICT
BOARD OF SEWER COMMISSIONERS' MEETING**

MEETING MINUTES

April 11, 2019

7:00 P.M.

- I. CALL TO ORDER Chairman Manseau called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM with the following present:

Donald G. Manseau, Chairman	Victor M. Taylor, Commissioner
Michael L. DellaCava, Commissioner	Benjamin J. Morris, Superintendent
Cheryl Balkus, Recording Secretary	
Jennifer Wood, Treasurer	9 Rate payers
	1 Non rate payer

- II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. **March 14, 2019** - Commissioner DellaCava motioned to approve the minutes of March 14, 2019. Seconded by Commissioner Taylor. All in favor. Approved.

- III. FINANCE

A. **Approve Warrants of March 21, 2019** - Commissioner Taylor motioned to approve the warrants of March 21, 2019. Seconded by Commissioner DellaCava. All in favor. Approved

B. **Approve Warrants of April 11, 2019** - Commissioner Taylor motioned to approve the warrants of April 11, 2019. Seconded by Commissioner DellaCava. All in favor. Approved

C. **March Bank Transfer** – Commissioner Taylor motioned to approve March transfer of \$63.40. Seconded by Commissioner DellaCava. All in Favor. Approved.

D. **Treasurer Report** – Per Treasurer Wood as of March 2019 Billed Revenue Received \$38,884.85, Betterment/Lien Revenue Received \$1,073.03, Other Reimbursements \$26.00, Total Revenue \$39,983.88, Expenditures \$104,589.14. The loss is \$64,605.26. FY19 Total Revenue \$423,694.31 Expenditures \$608,273.97, FY19 Total Losses \$184,579.66.

Commissioner Taylor comments that we know we are going into bankruptcy in a matter of time and it will happen in approximately in a year in a half. Treasure Wood announces that with the completed rate study a notice is to be sent out to the sewer subscribers that there is going to be a rate increase. The draft notice is handed to the Commissioners for their review and if necessary, to make any changes to the notice. Treasurer Wood added comment that the draft notice has a spelling error that will be corrected prior to the notice being sent out to the subscribers. Chairman Manseau has read the notice aloud to the Board and to the attending audience. Commissioner Taylor comments the rates should have been going up 10 years ago and by doing the increases now the Sewer District will avoid the bankruptcy. If we do not do this and the state steps in to take over, they will raise the rates immediately and if not double could be triple the proceeds to update the audience with history from 1959 to current and when approved for the sewage. There was the check of areas in the Valley and the findings were of raw sewage that would go into the brooks. Ground water pipes would fill with rainwater and fill basements with raw sewage. The Sewer District totally rebuilt the Webster Square area, then the City of Worcester wanted to extend it to Cambridge Street. Before connecting to Worcester, we wanted to put it the Kettle Brook and it could not be done because not enough water, then told we can't go to Leicester because of the different basins and mandated to go to Worcester. Cherry Valley gets told can only

go to Worcester. He was listening to Jim Polito on the radio who was interviewing Worcester City Manager Augustus who mentioned that with towns added to their system is a total windfall! The latest increase is 35% from Worcester. Other towns were much less, and however they run the numbers the Valley does not look good and we are charged more. We are meeting with Augustus. We have a lot of surface water going into the pipes. In a rainstorm it doubles, broken pipes, manholes, sump pumps being pumped in the system and in long run everyone is paying for it. We are trying very diligently with all parties to see what our options are. It's not like we do not care, we are trying. Commissioner Taylor also explains that the water that is owned by the city does not pay taxes that is in our town. Everyone is looking at this problem including the federal government. Other officials do not say anything they just listen. The Commissioners understand and feels the same pain. The rate study are three scenarios. Money out of the CD account, the new structure is only taking out \$200,000 this year, then the following year takes out less and then by end three should break even. Commissioner Taylor comments we had to do this. Greg Buteau added comment to clarify each scenario and at the 2nd year we will reassess to make sure on track or may have to change to a different scenario. A customer added that when the sewer district met with a bankruptcy lawyer that bankruptcy is not an option and advised that the solution is to raise the rates. Commissioner Taylor says that the largest fees are the transmission fees going thru Worcester and is what is hurting the sewer district budget. He then mentions that the Town of Holden began a lawsuit in 2013 against the City of Worcester. The lawsuit was started by a gentleman who previously sat on the City of Worcester Board for sewer and water. He had moved to Holden and became a Selectman. When viewing their bills realized that the Town of Holden rates were not accurate and filed suit against the city. A customer asked if there are any grants. Chairman Manseau said you need to have a purpose and as for grants we need project specific, and a bailout is not project specific. If it's infrastructure work, we would be eligible. Conversations have been with Congressman McGovern's office and with the USDA to see if we could get some forgiveness or relief. We are working with another agency to see about funding to do repairs of manholes. Customer suggests that perhaps they as subscribers should get together as a whole and write these officials and maybe they will do something. Commissioner Taylor added we made the motion to have the city own up, then also have the Valley be taken over by the town and then maybe we would then be eligible for more funding. The Upper Blackstone rate structure is figured by the Upper Blackstone and passed down to who is connected. This is all being investigated by the lawsuit by Holden. Customer asked how many is needed to attach to the system? Per Commissioner Taylor 500 to 600. The Town Administrator is trying to get everyone all together, but they all have debt and until everyone can clear up their debts it would take a long time before they are all brought together. There is an ongoing discussion that the money that has been received from Cultivate is to use it towards Economic Development. Commissioner Taylor motioned to approve the Treasurer Report. Seconded by Commissioner DellaCava. All in favor. Approved.

- E. **Draft Budget** – Superintendent Morris Legal, Allowance & Upper Blackstone has some increases. Commissioner DellaCava motioned to approve the Draft Budget. Seconded by Commissioner Taylor. All in favor. Approved.
- F. **Draft Annual Warrant Article** – Superintendent Morris there is nothing new on it. It is what was used in the past. Pending our next two Worcester invoices the Sewer District can skip over Article 4. Commissioner DellaCava motioned to approve the Draft Annual Warrant Article. Seconded by Commissioner Taylor. All in favor. Approved.

IV. ADMINISTRATION

V. OPERATIONS

A. Superintendent's Report

- a. **System Update** – Per Superintendent Morris we are actively working the I/I (Inflow/Infiltration) issue's and found a protectant to water tighten the manholes without full a rehab. We have used from the 2015 I/I (Inflow/Infiltration) report and found some target areas. If there is water coming up around the pipe, the product will be injected. There is also a lining material that has been ordered that will be used to see how it works and monitor. The Superintendent has also been in discussion with the other districts to try to help each other out to address I/I (Inflow/Infiltration) areas to save costs. At the last meeting there was discussion about the meter and potential issues. Representatives from the Upper Blackstone came out with an engineer, and an insurance component special, they wanted to see where meters are. Their tech ran tests and verified the meter is working well and another company Diamond Tech came in and did a full fledged inspection. Inspections will be done yearly. There was discussion about trending meters. In order to do this to our current system it would cost approximately \$3,000.00. This will give hour by hour data. And for approximately \$1,200.00 in addition can also have a rain gauge to be added. The Superintendent wanted to leave the decision to the Board of Commissioners regarding the purchase of just the monitoring device at \$2,950.00 and adding the rain monitor. Commissioner Taylor does not feel the rain monitor would be advantageous to have. Greg Buteau asking where these would be placed? Superintendent Morris clarifies that this is a cellular device connected to the meter to show hourly data. Commissioner Taylor motions to have the device without the rain gauge. Commissioner Taylor withdraws his motion and would like to get the device with the rain gauge. Seconded by Commissioner DellaCava. All in favor. Approved.

VI. COMMUNICATIONS

A. Town of Leicester Water/Sewer Meeting – use notes from above?

Per Superintendent Morris the meeting was with MADEP, Senator Moore, Representative LeBoeuf, City of Worcester and questioned what happens if we don't pay. They did not have a definitive answer and said they can't shut the sewer off. Meeting are ongoing and unsure with the next upcoming meetings of budget being done etc... Senator Moore thinks with all groups coming together a funding can be obtained to have a feasibility study to be done. All the Districts are in agreement. A couple of meetings ago Representative LeBoeuf brought information pamphlet of an EPA funded that is a consulting group for small wastewater water utilities, they review the operations to be able to help us without a cost. They will sit down with us to do a complete overview to see where we may be able to save. The Superintendent asks the Board of Commissioners if we may forward with this. Commissioner Taylor motions to go ahead, Seconded by DellaCava. All in favor. Approved.

- B. **UBWPAD Update** – Chairman Manseau reports that UBWPAD are in construction mode to finish up the phosphates out of the system. It is going to cost approx \$150 million over and above the \$250 million.

VII. PERSONNEL -

VIII. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

A. **Approval of Next Meeting Date** - Commissioner Taylor motioned to hold the next meeting on May 9, 2019 at 7:00 P.M. Seconded by Commissioner DellaCava. All in favor. Approved.

IX. ADJOURNMENT - Commissioner Taylor motioned to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Commissioner DellaCava. All in favor. Approved. Meeting adjourned at 8:49 PM.

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