

Board: Select Board / Water Commissioner's Meeting
Date: Thursday, June 24, 2021
Location: Online Video/Audio Conference Pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws

Select Board Present: Jacob Smith, William Bembury
Also, Present: Bryan Smith, Glenn McCrory, Peter Sanders, Linda Downs-Bembury
Press: None

At 6:34 PM **Chairman Smith** called the meeting to order.

Chairman Smith explained that the meeting is being recorded and provided an overview of the functions of the video/audio conferencing platform.

Discussion Regarding Town Response to COVID-19
No updates currently.

Discussion Regarding Repair / Replace of Flagg Hill Road Sewer

Peter Sanders, Wastewater & Water Superintendent, and Glenn McCrory, Highway Superintendent, joined the Select Board to discuss the status of the sewer collection system on Flagg Hill Road. Peter explained that on Tuesday, June 22, 2021, a resident notified the Department about sewage backing up at a structure on Flagg Hill Road. Peter confirmed that collection system was clogged and starting to back up. Peter explained that the Montague Department of Public Works (DPW) assisted with the use of the jet truck. Peter explained that Montague DPW was able to clear about 45 feet of pipe and removed towels and wipes. Peter explained that the system was monitored on Wednesday while additional services could be contracted. On Thursday, June 24, 2021, a sanitary service was used to remove the accumulated waste so that a line clearing service could be used to cut out any obstructions like tree roots. The service removed some tree roots and more wipes and was able to clear the line all the way to the line on North Street. Peter added that this section of the collection system is made of clay pipe and is laid in 3-foot sections. Peter explained that the work completed over the last 48 hours has addressed the immediate issue and provided the Town time to develop a permanent solution. Peter expressed concern about residents continuing to flush material into the system like fabric. Peter discussed a proposal to install a new sewer line constructed of 6" diameter plastic pipe that would follow the Flagg Hill Road layout. For context, Peter explained that this is the 3rd blockage of the Flagg Hill Road collection system in a years' timeframe and noted that the Fire Department has flushed the system with 1,000 gallons on a few occasions to help clear the system to prevent blockages.

Chairman Smith asked for guidance from Town Counsel on how to address this matter with the homeowners that convey waste to this collection system. Bryan Smith, Town Administrator, will work with Town Counsel to obtain guidance. **Chairman Smith** discussed the need to discuss the issue with residents about what is and is not acceptable to be put into the collection system. **Chairman Smith** asked if the Department could explore an option to implement the use of a screening device by the house connections that would protect the Town's system. **Selectman Bembury** expressed concern about what has been flushed into the collection system by the residents and asked Peter to provide a cost estimate for the last three (3) responses to date. Peter will provide a cost summary.

Glenn estimated that the replacement of the Flagg Hill Road collection system would include the purchase and installation of three (3) concrete sewer structures at an approximate cost of \$1,200 each and an estimated 350 feet of plastic pipe. Glenn estimated that the Town could repair the system with in-house

labor and approximately \$10,000 to \$15,000 in materials and equipment costs. In comparison, Glenn estimated a procurement that is engineered and put out to bid could cost the Town as much as \$100,000. Bryan expressed agreement. Peter explained that he has spoken with a representative at the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) and has confirmed that this system does not require engineering. **Selectman Bembury** asked if the pipe diameter needed to be increased. Glenn explained that the root infiltration in between the clay pipe connections is likely the reason that the towels and wipes are clogging and suggested that a 6" plastic pipe should solve the problem. Peter expressed agreement and added that the size of the towels that were removed were large enough to cause a blockage in a shallow area of the system. Bryan discussed the need to clean the old line if it is to be abandoned.

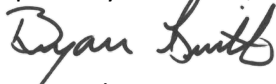
Bryan explained that if the Select Board wanted to engineer and outsource the construction of a new collection system, then a Special Town Meeting would have to be called. Bryan explained that the quickest timeline to call a Special Town Meeting and begin a procurement if the voters approved the funding would be a four (4) week period. **Chairman Smith** asked Peter and Glenn if it is realistic for the departments to conduct the work with in-house labor regarding the existing workload. Glenn discussed current Highway Department workload and expressed his support for conducting the work with in-house labor. Glenn discussed willingness to move the anticipated Mountain Road & Cemetery repair project to schedule the Flagg Hill Road project first. Glenn noted a concern about ledge in Flagg Hill Road that could increase cost estimates. Glenn asked if the Select Board would want to add a structure to allow for future expansion. **Selectman Bembury** asked for an explanation of the Mountain Road & Cemetery repair project. Glenn explained the planned project. **Selectman Bembury** discussed the importance of the Mountain Road & Cemetery repair project occurring as originally scheduled. **Selectman Bembury** expressed support for conducting the Flagg Hill Road work with in-house labor and would like to conduct the work after the Highway Department's other projects are complete. **Selectman Bembury** expressed concern about the Town spending funds to correct an issue that property owners have caused. **Chairman Smith** expressed agreement not to reschedule the Mountain Road & Cemetery repair project. **Chairman Smith** would like the planning work for the Flagg Hill Road project to begin with an anticipated installation of fall 2021 or spring 2022.

Peter will begin the planning work and begin ordering materials to prepare for a fall 2021 or spring 2022 installation. **Chairman Smith** discussed support for a solution that uses internal resources and appreciates the team developing a more cost-effective option for the Town. **Chairman Smith** expressed concern about adding more projects to the existing workload and the impact on staff. Additionally, **Chairman Smith** and **Selectman Bembury** agreed that the Town will replace the system to meet existing capacity and that any future development in the area can address the associated costs. Peter will also work with the Fire Department to flush the system a few times a year. **Selectman Bembury** explained that he wants a letter sent to the homeowners including costs of repairs and the proposed solution. Bryan will prepare.

Adjournment

At 7:26 PM **Chairman Smith** made a motion to adjourn. **Selectman Bembury** seconded. **Vote:** Unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,



Bryan Smith
Town Administrator