

Freetown Board of Selectmen
Meeting Minutes

Monday, April 27, 2021 – 3:00pm

Police Station Community Room 15 Memorial Drive East Freetown

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Cheryl A. Matthews

3:00pm Call to Order

Selectmen Matthews called the meeting to order at 3:01pm. Selectmen Jared Zager, Selectmen Grunwald, Water and Sewer Commission members Paul Sadeck and Robert Parker, Steven Chandler, Senior Clerk Water Dept, Keven Desmarais Water Dept, Peter Jankowski Town Administrator and Executive Assistant Lu-Ann Souza were also present. Robert Parker called the water and sewer commission meeting to attendance at 3:00pm.

Board of Selectmen

Discussion/possible action on the following topics:

1. Water and Sewer line down South Main Street

Mark Rosofsky asked to address the chair. Selectmen Matthews said it was fine for him to address the Board. Mr. Rosofsky is asking if the way the meeting was posted not mentioning it is a joint meeting with Water and Sewer commission and that may be a meeting violation, He noted that he had a call into the Attorney General office. Town Administrator Peter Jankowski noted that we have an email out to Town Counsel. Selectmen Matthews noted that he was aware of the situation.

Selectmen Matthews asked what the status is on bringing sewer down S. Main Street and d feels it is important to the Town. Paul Sadeck and Robert Parker– original cost to bring it down was \$22 million and now it is probably \$32 million or more. Selectmen Matthews said there is a culvert through Town that we could use to help with this. Churchill and Banks own a sleeve down S. Main Street that the Town may be able to use to run a sewer line down it. Paul Sadeck said they have no record of a line being there they have searched the office and the only plays they have they brought with them but noting that documents, no as-builts on file. Peter Jankowski asked is there a water line not a sewer line is that what we are talking about. Ms. Desmarais said we do have a water line down S. Main Street and could obtain ownership of that. Robert Parker asked

is that the water line that has to do with the dam. Keven Desmarais believes that is the fact and noted there is an existing on demand water line, Algonquin is a gas facility and they needed to increase their water flow and a private water line that goes to a pond on Churchill and Banks property, during this process they agreed to also put in green hydrants (they do not have water in them). If they are fighting a fire, they could have access to it before the Town had a water line. Since there is Town water now, they are fine and no longer need the green hydrants. Mr. Desmarais said it would be good to verify if there is indeed a 12" line there and bring a sewer force main and pull it through there. At minimum we need to do some investigative work, has it collapsed, how many curves, rely on a forced main or a gravity main system. He would highly recommend reading the report from 2019 that was provided and then reach out to the Water Dept. with any questions. Paul Sadeck noted that the study does not discuss this 12" water pipe. Ms. Desmarais said at least he would suggest sending a camera through to see the current state of the line. Paul Sadeck asked the last time that line was energized. Ms. Desmarais said at least 6-8 years ago. He noted there is a dam on Churchill and Banks property that someone took some pieces out of which drained the entire fire pond. Paul Sadeck suggests first step is to charge the line and see if the water makes it to that pond. Selectmen Matthews said if it does work where would we put the sewer to. Paul Sadeck said there is a sewer at Stop 'n Shop that we could hook into and we have a contract with Fall River which is content driven so that may fluctuate pricing. Mr. Desmarais noted that once we completed this project will you get enough buy in from residents to cover costs and would you get enough flowing to keep it flowing and charged. Can the volume needed be accommodated by a 4" line? Paul Sadeck noted you would have to keep it always pressurized. Mr. Desmarais noted he is a water not sewer operator but from his experience you can have a singular pump forced main with injection pumps at businesses and homes that would overcome the pressure in that main or do a gravity main, bring it down to lowest point and force it up from there, but that would need to be two lines. Selectmen Matthews noted we have a lack of businesses and restaurants in Town but you cannot put a septic in that can support these businesses. Paul Sadeck said this is a lot of money and the Town's people would need to pay for it and it would be cost prohibitive. Selectmen Matthews is just kicking the tires on this idea to bring business to Town. Robert Parker noted that the residents from the other side of Town would not be keen on paying for this project. Paul Sadeck noted that there is a long history of incidents which have forced town residents onto town water that were results of third party causes such as Storms in Bay Shore,

underground fuel leak, road salt contamination. In other cases, private residents, or agencies such as VFW have privately paid for town water access.

For betterment projects the homeowner will push out number of years to the maximum numbers to reduce the costs. Paul Sadeck said the Water Commission should have financed previously better and that was a mistake. Keven noted they would need to raise rates or fees for consumers as the costs to city of New Bedford and Fall River go up and area passed along to the consumer. Mr. Desmarais noted there was a point of time that rates did not go up for seven years. Mr. Sadeck noted that as costs go up and we are in issue with DEP regarding quality of water and Fall River The rates will be raised again as of July 1, 2021. Paul Sadeck noted that costs for various water projects gets shifted to the consumers in the past. He continued that those making decisions and how they impact to the consumers. Selectmen Matthews this is great that information and he appreciates these types of opportunities to learn. Mr. Sadeck noted that he has heard that the dam and the water line can be purchased for \$1. Selectmen Zager said does it make sense to do a study with the owner's permission to see if it makes sense for the Town to purchase? Mr. Desmarais noted that the Forge Pond Dam had issues the first issue the Town took care of it, but over time it deteriorated, and the State had to come in to fix again. He continued even if the dam is in perfect condition now it will eventually need repair. Robert Parker also said we only have one person in the water dept so if we continue to add stuff, we may need to add additional staff. If we take this line on for a dollar then how does the maintenance get paid for in the future as there is not current income from it. Paul Sadeck mentioned they are an Enterprise Fund, and the Town charges them \$93,000 as a fee and it is being put onto their 630 customers. He continued that 99% of these customers were forced onto Town water due to issues that were not their fault and were caused by a third party. Mr. Desmarais noted if we have 5,000 customers this would work better but we have less than 700 customers so this add up. The Enterprise Fund works when it is at scale it works best. Mr. Desmarais noted that at the end of the day costs will go up as New Bedford and Fall River will increase fees. Paul Sadeck noted that Airgas came into Town as a business and did not have right pressure due to required filters by the EPA this required them to purchase a bypass valve at a cost of \$75,000 which was passed along to consumers. Peter Jankowski asked do we have a forced main on this line? Mr. Desmarais said it is a forced line and then gravity feeds to Fall River. Mr. Sadeck noted there is a new 55+ development will also be tying into the water line which brings more questions such is the main large

enough and tie it to the main sewer and they want to fit the bill to do this then they are for it. It is a 8" forced main and you can only add so many onto to it. Peter Jankowski noted that we can require an 8" line to hook into our line. There will be 72 units and would need to hook into our system which can be done. Mr. Sadeck noted he likes to have business come in but does not want to see that put a burden on people of the Town. Mr. Desmarais noted the loss of Boston Beer Company coming to Town and they were going to pay for the entire infrastructure needed but we lost that. As Americann expands they will be using more water. Mr. Sadeck said thankfully we have ISP and Stop 'n Shop. Selectmen Zager said he loves the small-Town feel, but we do need business to come to town. Keven Desmarais noted that there are lots of people in East Freetown who do not tie into Town Water as many have private wells. Mr. Sadeck noted someone off Narrows Road paid \$40,000 to have an 8" main come down his road 300' and put in a hydrant to tap into Town water.

Selectmen Zager noted this was great to have the professionals come into the meeting to share their knowledge and how much that is appreciated.

Mr. Desmarais said the water department welcomes the Selectmen to contact them directly with any questions.

- Motion: Selectmen Zager made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 3:55pm seconded by Selectmen Grunwald.
- Vote: approved in a unanimous roll call vote

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "LuAnn Souza".

Lu-Ann Souza
Executive Assistant