



WATER & SEWER COMMISSION

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Minutes of the Water & Sewer Commission meeting 4/27/2021



Meeting held at Freetown Police Station, East Freetown, MA

3:00PM

Meeting called to order by Bob Parker

Members present:

Bob Parker; Paul Sadeck; Lee Baumgartner

Staff present:

Steven Chandler; Keven Desmarais

Meeting being audio recorded by Paul Sadeck and Chandler

Meeting being video/audio recorded by Mark Rosofsky

Discussion of Sewer and Water Lines along South Main Street

- Selectman Matthews thinks it is important to bring a sewer line [further down South Main Street] and asks where we stand with sewer line, what needs to be done.
 - Bob Parker gives the history of the Assonet Sewer Extension Study, the cost of the project, and it was sent to the Selectmen in 2019.
 - Selectman Matthews heard at a Board of Selectmen (BOS) meeting that there is a old water line already in existence to feed sewer line through it.
 - Keven Desmarais speaks to the private water line that runs to a pond on the property of Churchill & Banks before Assonet had water lines. Keven suggests that BOS do research on existing infrastructure and its ability to house a sewer line.
 - Keven gives history of how Assonet got water lines; there was never a master plan, most were added in reaction to major events. One resident paid for one line and a business paid for a line. No betterments implemented until the Water Street line was put in. Similar for East Freetown. There has never been a master plan by the town for [water and sewer line] development.
 - Discussion of the logistics and feasibility of extending the sewer line from Stop & Shop area into Assonet Village.
- Commissioners state the Town should be responsible for any further growth.
 - At \$22+ million, the cost of extending the sewer line cannot be the responsibility of the 670 water and 3 sewer customers.
 - Paul Sadeck states the Freetown Water & Sewer Commission should never have been made into an Enterprise Fund.
 - It was a town department until the town was forced by the State into adding a pump station in East Freetown and the BOS at the time did not want to pay for it after the town was sued and lost. The BOS shifted the

responsibility to the 600 customers at the time. The FW&SC decided to reduce everyone's bills by \$10.00 per quarter for 5 years which ended in December 2020 and reinstated beginning January 2021.

- 671 customers cannot continue to sustain a budget for the Enterprise Fund without raising rates each year.
 - Even MassDEP could not understand why we are an Enterprise Fund.
 - Paul Sadeck states the Town charges \$93,000 [this year] for indirect costs to the Enterprise Fund which is paid for the water and sewer customers. We are the only town entity that must pay these costs. This cost grows each year. 99% of the water customers were forced into connecting to town water because of outside party or the aftereffects of a major storm.
 - Keven speaks about enterprise funds and how it works by the State. Our costs will continue to go up and we are fortunate that our water system is young (50 years old) but, if we have a major main break the FW&SC cannot pay for it with water/sewer customer funds.
 - Discussion of how the FW&SC Enterprise Fund brings in funds to operate and it all rests on the 671 accounts.
- Trevor Matthews suggests having a study done on the feasibility of using the line on Churchill & Banks property. That infrastructure and part of the property could be purchased for \$1.00 if the study shows it is viable.
 - Keven Desmarais and the Commissioners invite the BOS to reach out with any questions.

Paul Sadeck motion to adjourn at 3:55PM. Bob Parker 2nd. All in favor. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,



Steven Chandler
Senior Clerk
Freetown Water & Sewer Commission