

**GROVELAND WATER & SEWER BOARD  
MEETING MINUTES  
November 18<sup>th</sup>, 2024**

A Regular Meeting of the Groveland Water & Sewer Board was held on Monday, November 18<sup>th</sup>, 2024 at 5:00 p.m. The meeting was held at The Town Hall, 183 Main Street, Groveland.

**Board Members Present**

Sarah Sheehan-McGrath, Chairperson  
Bill Dunn  
Terry Grim

**Staff Members Present**

Colin Stokes, W/S Superintendent  
Kimberly Bourque, W/S Office Manager

TOWN OF GROVELAND  
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**OPENING**

Chairperson Sheehan-McGrath made a motion to open the meeting at 5:00 p.m. Seconded by Commissioner Grim. All in favor.

**LEAD SERVICE LINE PROGRAM LETTER DISCUSSION**

Superintendent Stokes explains that the department sent out letters last week for the Lead Service Line Program. It is a nationwide program in which every water department has to identify what every service line is made out of, in the first phase. Stokes states that we went through files to find any data and that we had some information. We are working with Environmental Partners on this and they compiled all the information and had us send out a letter to all the residents that we did not have any information on. Commissioner Grimm asks how many residents were receiving letters and Stokes states about 1,100. Stokes explains that on one of the letters there is a QR code for residents to scan, answer a couple questions, and take a picture of their service line. That information goes to Merrimack Valley Planning in Haverhill and they will compile all the data they receive. We will then combine that information with what we already have and keep compiling the information until we receive all the data. Stokes states that in the eleven years he has worked with the department, he has never seen an active lead service line. He was told by Dick Firek who used to work for the department, that they got rid of all of the lead service lines in the 1980's and 1990's. If residents are unfamiliar on what they are looking for, they are calling and we are setting up appointments for the guys to go out and get the information we need. Stokes explains that it is either copper, plastic, or black iron/steel.

Superintendent Stokes explains that this is phase one. Phase two will be in a couple years where we have to go out and spot check. The government will tell us what percentage of our service lines need to be check, where we will have to go out and dig holes to confirm what our data says. Phase three will be us replacing any service lines that "they do not like." Commissioner Grim inquires about a timeline and Stoke explains that there is no finish date currently. Stokes explains that the approximate 1,100 service lines that need to be confirmed are technically are categorized as "unknown" since there is no paper trail for them.

Stokes explains that the letters from the DEP had to be sent out by November 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024, which we did. We sent out their letter, along with our own letter to explain it better. He states that this is strictly a data collecting exercise. These letters will need to be sent out yearly until we get all the information we need.

**DEPARTMENTAL PAPERWORK**

Superintendent Stokes presents paperwork for signatures from the Commissioners, stating that 18 Broad Street has paid off their sewer lien.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Ms. Bourque presented the minutes from the October 21<sup>st</sup>, 2024, Water & Sewer Board meeting. **Chairperson Sheehan-McGrath made a motion to approve the minutes from October 21<sup>st</sup>, 2024, as submitted. Commissioner Dunn seconded. No further discussion. All in favor. One abstained.**

### **COMMISSIONERS TIME**

Commissioner Dunn asks how things are going with Haverhill. Superintendent Stokes explains that agreement that we would pay them for the engineering got signed here and Lisa Mead, Town Council for Haverhill, is going to bring it to Haverhill to have them sign it. Ryan, our engineer, has reached out to Haverhill's engineers. Once Stokes hears that everyone has signed it, we can move forward. They will bill us on a monthly basis.

Commissioner Dunn states that he would like to talk with West Newbury in the future about supplying them with water.

Chairperson Sheehan-McGrath inquires about the date they would need to have a decision by to appropriate the money at Town Meeting for the initial engineering to either build our own plant or to interconnect to Haverhill. Stokes has the date.

Commissioner Grim inquires about the fire situation in Groveland and Stokes states that we have had a small one in the Salem Street area the previous day.

Commissioner Dunn inquires about the parking spots that are supposed to be going in near the walking trail. Stokes explains that the Selectboard have approved it and the design has not been completed yet, since the plans were essentially incomplete, but they are in the works.

Commissioner Dunn inquires about doing any projects next year. Stokes states because of the things we will be taking on, he does not think we should. Chairperson Sheehan-McGrath asks about anything that *should* or *needs* to get done. Stokes explains that as soon as we get that approximate \$1,000,000.00, those projects approved with that money will begin. He states that we need to be assigned a state liaison to start moving on those specific projects.

Chairperson Sheehan-McGrath also inquires about how things are going with Arthur from the highway department. Paving did not happen because there was an issue with the contractors, but Arthur rewrote everything and is putting it out to bid to hire **ONE** contractor. Arthur is putting together a five-year plan and once it is complete, he will loop us in to see how it lines up with our plans.

Chairperson Sheehan-McGrath inquires about the budget process and if there are any concerns or things that need to be changed. Stokes states he thinks it starts this week and that he already has started to work on it. There are certain numbers he has not received yet, which holds him back from being to work on certain parts of the budget. Stokes states that he is working with our town accountant, treasurer, and bond council with the loan payments. He said two years ago we borrowed \$600,000.00 to drill a new well, but now we are not drilling a new well anymore. He states that they are working on the wording for the warrant at Town Meeting to repurpose that money.

Commissioner Dunn inquires about paying the town for the work they do for us, in lieu of rent for the office building, since it is town owned. Superintendent Stokes explains that he has been working with our Town Administrator on this. He explains that it is an indirect cost and that Rebecca has gone through all the processes that Town Hall does for us, with an assigned hour and dollar value to that. They are now going to bill us for their work they do for us. It is all broken down and comes out to approximately \$18,000.00 per year. It was also discussed that the water department could charge the town for the fire hydrants, that we do not currently bill for, unless they are privately owned.

### **ITEMS NOT REASONABLY ANTICIPATED AT THE TIME OF POSTING**

Superintendent Stokes states that we did a sewer repair last week at 427 Main Street. The house got connected to sewer and the stub pipe got damaged about five years ago when the water main was replaced, and we were unaware.

Stokes explains to the commissioners that we are changing how we read meters. It is now cloud based. Pete from Ti Sales was in today and tomorrow for the training.

Superintendent Stokes states that we have verbal approval for the Pilot Study “mini plant” with MASS DEP, since a permit needs to be submitted in order to do it. It is anticipated that we will have the actual permit before Christmas and possibly mid-January to start it.

Superintendent Stokes states that our water table is ok and our water usage is trending down. The state elevated the drought level even more. As of today, the state stated that they were moving to a level 3 across that state, except for Nantucket.

### **NEXT MEETING**

Tuesday January 21<sup>st</sup>, 2025, at 5:00 p.m., Town Hall, 183 Main Street, Groveland.

### **CLOSING**

**Commissioner Grim made a motion to close the meeting at 5:54 p.m. Seconded by Commissioner Dunn. No further discussion. All were in favor.**

Respectfully submitted,

Kimberly Bourque  
Water & Sewer Office Manager