Minutes of Meeting

OLS WPCA May 25, 2020

On-line Zoom Meeting

Members Participating: Joe Halloran, Chair, Tom Annulli, Pat Burns, John Cunningham, Bob Palazzo, Jack Reynolds, and Ex Officio, Matt Merritt

Joe Halloran called the meeting to order at 9:05 AM

Motion to approve the Minutes of December 14, 2019 meeting and Public Hearing; Jack Reynolds. Second: Tom Annulli. Voted: Unanimous.

A Treasurer’s Report was presented by Tom Annulli. (See attached).

Motion to accept the Treasurer’s Report: Jack Reynolds

Second: John Cunningham

Voted: Unanimous

Motion by Joe Halloran to hire the accounting firm Nicola and Yester to serve as accounting and billing for the WPCA.

Second: Jack Reynolds

Discussion: As the project advances, the financial management has gotten much more complex and demanding. Tom Annulli, WPCA’s treasurer, will work with the BOG and needs accounting and other financial management assistance from a professional accounting firm. Nicola and Yester will charge a fee to provide the service.

Approval voted: Unanimous

Joe Halloran moved: that all OLS residences will share equally in costs for sewer system installation, operation, maintenance and flow.

Second: Jack Reynolds

Discussion: Homes with wells could not be charged sewer costs by water usage. In general, it is felt that the fairest way to charge for sewer use is by equalizing costs. Point O Woods has done this for several years and believes it is the best, fairest way to do it. It was estimated that this cost will be approximately $318 per house at OLS and it is believed that the variation by year-round use vs seasonal use is minimal.

Voted: Unanimous

There was a discussion concerning two different design loans from the Clear Water Funds(CWF) from DEEP. One is for the pump station and force main for $510,000 which is shared with Miami Beach, Old Colony and soon to be Sound View/Old Lyme. The other is for OLS infrastructure for $560,000. Expenses which are ineligible for the Clear Water Fund require local financing, and Tom is working to line up such loans.

Motion by Joe Halloran: To authorize Tom Annulli to work with the BOG and with Norm Yester to secure appropriate loan funding.

Second: John Cunningham.

Voted: Unanimous.

There was a discussion concerning the pump station and the force main. Plans are about 95% completed. Plans must then go to the DEEP for review and approval before going out to bid. Several Town and local easements are also required. Governor Lamont has ordered that the town’s selectmen can, due to Covid 19, approve plans rather than town meetings or hearings. The town can take private easements by eminent domain. This has made approvals easier and easements are expected to be completed in June, and bid requests issued this Fall.

Use of the “OLS ballfield” for a shed to contain chemical treatment of sewage is included in the plans. A legal review indicated that this is approvable, and an attractive structure is planned. The BOG has approved the President to develop an easement for the Bioxide/ chemical station.

There was a discussion concerning the drainage project which Joe, Pat and Bob are monitoring. May 29 at 1:00, there will be a conference call for final review. The new system will include expanding the drainage pipe within “crabbing Rocks” to bring rain water farther out into The Sound and reduce blockage from storms.

There was a discussion to update progress on sewers. Plans are 95% complete. Fuss & O’Neill provided a May 6, 2020 updated estimate of the costs of the project - $39,000 per resident or $2,561 per year. Issues concerning road width increases are being addressed to equalize expansions on both sides of affected roads. Roads above the highway are especially affected to assure that plows and garbage trucks can make turns. Several minor road easements are needed on resident’s property. Matt Merritt and Bryan Even will review the easements with the affected residents once the engineering surveys are completed. Atty Bill McCoy will prepare easement documents and file them in Town Hall. These should not include any monetary agreements

Joe Halloran moved to approve amendments #4 and #5 to the F & O engineering agreement. #4 adds $11,500 and #5 adds $39,500 to their contract. These are needed because of additional work needed due to road width increases, drinking water installation, work with the town, Rt 156 work, Amtrak and State approvals.

Motion to approve: Joe Halloran.

Second: Tom Annulli

Voted: Unanimous.

Joe reported that the Connecticut Water Company has subcontracted with VMS contractors to install the water system in OLS to their 134 existing customers. Covid 19 slowed progress since the work was ordered stopped, but was now restarting. This project is projected to be completed by the end of the year. The CWC contact person is Shannon Miles. We are working with CWC to determine a process for resident requested changes to their existing service.

There was a discussion concerning 76 houses which have wells. Fuss & O’Neill prepared a report listing the water service for each home highlighting wells within 75’ and 25’ of sewer lines. The Public Health Code (Section 19-13-51d) requires separation by 75’ and by 25’ of a well from sewer mains and laterals. We have requested permission to utilize a heavier duty sewer pipe to comply with the 75’ separation and we are awaiting DPH direction – we believe that DPH will require the 33 homes with wells within the 25’ radius to be abandoned. We have requested a Dept of Health grant to assist those who have to abandon existing wells and connect to CWC. The Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) grant provides a 25% subsidy and 75% loan. The DPH grant would require that work couldn’t be started until after CWC completes their work and the grant work is subject to CT State bidding requirements.

It was reported that, as road renovation is planned, the BOG is investigating the possibility of installing shower and water faucets each street, and to install a ramp at the foot of Billow, where boats are kept. These would be CWF ineligible costs and be part of the local funding. It was also reported that the BOG may cease to transfer, annually, $45,000 as part of the OLS budget and utilize loans for the ineligible expenses.

Discussion also addressed the costs of the drainage system, and whether taxes or a loan will provide these expenses. The possibility of a shortage in taxes due to the economic crisis was discussed.

Questions from residents were addressed and the impact on the use of our roads this summer was discussed.

A motion to adjourn at 10:55 was made by Tom Annulli. Seconded by Jack Reynolds, and approved by all.

Draft submitted by Jack Reynolds for WPCA approval.