

MEETING OF THE SPRAGUE WATER AND SEWER AUTHORITY

Date: March 20, 2013
Time: 4:00 PM
Place: Sprague Town Hall
Present: Tom Hannon, Dennison Allen, Todd Hastings, David Trainor, Christine Kurtz and Tony Vanna from Wright Pierce, Manny Meneses, Catherine Osten, First Selectman, Todd Lapointe, Richard Douville, Ward Eccles
Absent: none

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m. by Dennison Allen, Chairman.

Minutes and Disbursements:

Tom Hannon made a motion to approve the minutes of the regular meeting held on February 20, 2013 and the disbursements for February in the amount of \$15,539.56. This motion was seconded by Manny Meneses. A vote was called and the motion passed by all members voting in favor.

Dennison Allen took a moment to welcome Todd LaPointe as its newest member to the board.

Review and discuss letter from Concerned Citizen:

Kathleen read the following letters to all in attendance.

March 19, 2013

Sprague Water and Sewer Authority (SWSA)
1 Main St.
Baltic, Ct

Dear Sirs,

I am writing to you today to voice my concerns over issues related to the Replacement of the Pump Station 1 Project.

I have been aware both by observation and by talking to SWSA personnel that the ground beneath the pump station enclosure was somewhat unstable causing the enclosure to settle and tilt when it was lowered into the sump hole.

The condition that allowed the settling to occur may or may not be stable and may result in further settling. Additional settling of the pump enclosure could be expensive to repair 10, 20, or 30 years down the road.

You can't ask the users of the system to fund those kinds of repairs after spending so much on the development and construction of this facility.

The pump station is being built on a fluvial flood plain. As such the ground is subject to ground water variances from rising and falling river levels. The engineers on the project must be made to give you certification that the ground beneath the pump house is now stable. Or they must do whatever is necessary to establish stability, including removal of the pump enclosure.

Please don't miss this window of opportunity to ensure that good money spent on an expensive project doesn't result in more money being spent later on.

Concerned Citizen and former SWSA Board Member

Richard Douville

To Whom it May Concern:

I would like to comment on the progress of the construction of the Pump Station; I understand the base shifted some eight or nine inches? Not to point fingers, but where was the engineering studies that should have showed the found unstable! Where is the money going to come from if we lose grant money, could the engineers possible not due diligence on this. Where was our "Clerk of the Works"? Such questions should be addressed before any more money would be spent on the project.

Walter Treat
Past member of SWSA

Tony Vanna from Wright Pierce addressed those in attendance and spoke to the concerns stated in these letters and also gave the board an overall review of what the problems were down at Pump Station #1 and why they believe they happened. Tony explained that in the last month and a half there has not been any more settling and believes that the structure is stable and informed the board members that the contractor is going to fix this problem at no cost to the town as long as they do not have to pull the wet well out and start again.

Ward Eccles, former chairman of the Sprague Water & Sewer Authority expressed his dissatisfaction with the whole job and asked how this is going to affect the next phase of work since the platform is not level and what guarantees they can give the Town of Sprague that there will not be problems in the years ahead due do this settling and the uneven elevations. Mr. Eccles was adamant that the townspeople should not be burdened in the future due to an improperly installed wet well. Discussion followed.

Richard Douville, also a former member of the SWSA asked what USDA thought of this problem since they are in part providing funding for this project. Tony gave the board members a letter from USDA basically saying that they are concerned and would like to have the Town review these circumstances and advise them how they wish to proceed. They also believe that with the changes in design due to the settling of the structure raises legal issues and would like to have the opinion of the Town's legal counsel that matters of contractual liability have been considered and determinations made that establish the Town's position on the project changes. Discussion followed.

After much discussion Cathy Osten said that she needed to talk to some people as well as the Town attorney and also meet with Chairman, Dennison Allen and have a discussion as to how to proceed and that could take a few days. It was decided that we would have a Special Meeting on Monday, March 25, 2013 at 4:00 p.m. to make our decision.

Wright Pierce:

Tony Vanna informed the board that we are waiting for better weather to have the problems with the dam at the reservoir repaired by New England Infrastructure. These repairs are under warranty.

Christine told the board that the DOT bridge project design is 90% complete. Discussion followed. Todd asked that we get a clearer view as to what it is going to cost the SWSA to complete this DOT project. Christine has sent an email to the contact person at the DOT but has not heard back from her.\

Christine said that they the shop drawings for the I & I project are coming in and they expect to start as scheduled in the next month.

A discussion was held on the Hanover Pump Station rehab project.

Discuss and possibly act on Clerk of the Works for I & I project as well as schedule and duties:

Dennison Allen explained to the board that the Authority does not have funds going forward to pay a Clerk of the Works on the Pump Station #1 project. Todd Hastings said that he told Mr. Noon this and that we could only afford him for only an hour a day and he declined that schedule and has been off the job. Discussion followed on the need of a Clerk of the Works for the I & I project. After much discussion it was decided that with our seasonal worker coming on the books April 1, 2013 that should free up Todd to be able to spend more time at this project and we would not be hiring a clerk of the works.

First Selectman's Report:

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Cathy Osten told the board that she has received comments from the auditor that the audit looks good and we should continue doing as we have been by reviewing the past due accounts and checks paid at each meeting as this will lessen our material weaknesses. We must continue to watch our dollars.

Status Report from Todd Hastings:

Todd informed the board members that DEEP was at the sewer plant for inspection. He explained that they do this each year and they offered a few suggestions which they will follow up with a letter but overall everything looks good.

Todd told the board that at Pump Station #1 we currently have a 1996 diesel generator

and at the reservoir we have a 1972 generator. He would like to move the 1996 generator up to the reservoir once the project is complete, however, this generator is not weather tight and would need a building to house it. He had David Trainor price out a 10x10 stick built shed to house this and the cost was \$4,880.29 with vinyl siding and \$4,104.06 with T-11 siding. We would need a new concrete pad where they would put this shed but where he wants to locate it is an area near the stairs at the blue water tank that the state has been wanting us to somehow block off access to public for safety reasons and this would accomplish this. Discussion followed. Cathy Osten said that we would have to go through the building inspector if we go forward with this project she also said that if we were to build this she would like to have it look like all the other Town buildings. Todd has also gotten a price from Jim Benjamin to move the fence and move the generator as well as dig for the foundation of the concrete slab for the shed of \$9,500.00. Kathleen told Todd due to the price for this project that Todd would need to get more bids. Todd will do this and report back.

Discuss budget items:

Kathleen told the board that she is working on the next fiscal year budget but she needed to know what the intent of the board was regarding raises for the employees as well as employee percentage of health insurance costs. She explained that we had originally had a seven percent, nine percent and eleven percent schedule for the next three years. It was decided last year that since the employees did not get a salary increase we did not increase their insurance premium to the nine percent. Discussion followed. Cathy Osten told the board that the Town of Sprague was suggesting a thirteen percent employee portion and that she thinks that all employees should pay the same. Discussion followed. Dennison told Kathleen to figure the budget using a three percent increase with a thirteen percent employee portion health insurance and we will review it at a future meeting.

Review bills for payment:

A list of all bills paid since the last meeting was handed out and reviewed. The board asked questions and they were answered.

Review past due accounts:

A report was handed out to all board members and Cathy Osten, First Selectman. The amount of accounts past due over 30 days was \$26,675.14. \$4,186.09 of that amount is with our Attorney, \$8,088.55 of that amount currently has payment plans in place and \$2,553.14 of that amount the water has been shut off. Tom Hannon applauded Kathleen for her continued efforts to reduce delinquent accounts.

Any other business to come before said meeting:

A discussion was held on the water supply situation to 1 Maple Street. This property was at one time combined with another and owned by one family. They divided it at some point but never corrected the way the water is supplied to 1 Maple Street. More

discussion. Cathy Osten said that she will see if she can get the amount to correct this problem covered in a grant and she will let us know.

Tom Hannon made a motion to adjourn the meeting. This motion was seconded by Manny Meneses. The meeting was adjourned at 6:15 p.m.