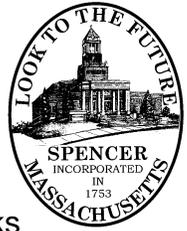


Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Selectmen

Date: July 16, 2021
Time: 11:00 A.M.
Place: Remote Meeting via Zoom, no physical location
Remote: Chairman Woodbury, Vice-Chair Howard, Clerk Grigg, Members Hicks and Pepe, Interim Administrator Ross, Congressman Jim McGovern, Jon Niedzielski, John Swords, Kelly Brissett, Alex Pinkowski, and Hank Pinkowski



Call the Meeting to Order

At 11:03AM Chairman Woodbury called the remote meeting to order. The remote dial-in number and access code is listed at the top of the meeting agenda for the public to listen in.

Announcement Any members that are participating remotely in accordance with Regulation 940, CMR 29.10 of the Open Meeting Law

Chairman Woodbury announced all members are remote in accordance with Regulation 940, CMR 29.10 of the Open Meeting Law, and as such all votes will be by roll call.

Discussion on Potential Federal Assistance for the Spencer Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrades

General discussion:

Gary Woodbury: Approximately 38-Million-dollar project/upgrade to clean up nitrogen discharge. Water infiltration into the pipes is increasing the clean water into the plant still needs to be processed and treated despite it being clean water. No more sewerage will go into the plant. Burden onto the rate usage despite the upgrade into the project and pipes.

Ralph Hicks: Looking for help with a class of plant that is going to put a burden on the rate users. We have a lot of problems with the pipes, some still wooden, and infiltration is still a large problem. The rainwater floods the sewer plant, it cannot keep up and causes overflow. This goes downstream into South Pond and other local areas, with complaints from citizens. It becomes a clean water issue as well.

James LaPlante: Sewer Superintendent: Last week's rainfall influence/spikes: Went from treating 800,000 gallons to 5.6 million during initial storm. Dropped back down. The next day's rainfall and following storm jumped it back up to 3.8 million gallons. We are still meeting permit, but we are coming close to losing the process when this happens. We could use all the help we can get with this issue.

Frank White: Spencer population is around 12,000 give or take a few hundred. Wastewater user population is only 1,605 plus or minus ten customers. These are the ones that stands

the brunt of this project. If we shut the water off the day of the rain, we would still see 5.8 million gallons of water. We are in dire need for help with the plant and pipes.

Congressman McGovern: Have you had conversations with DEP or EPA yet?

Frank White: Conversations with DEP and EPA has been going on since about 5 years ago. Need to fix infrastructure first and not increase the plant by any number of gallons.

James LaPlante: From conversations they were told to double rates, we can afford it.

Congressman McGovern: Did they give guidance on how to offset the cost of a plant? Alternative places to look for money?

James LaPlante: Certain grants. We do not go into USDA because of population. Do not fall into the funding for a water district. Minimal amount of assistance. Fall into an Infrastructure Bill or Mass Clean Water Trust Money. Mr. Olsen has all of the information on this.

Congressman McGovern: The Water Resources Bill just passed. Can any of that money be directed towards this?

John Swords: Yes, in the big picture. If the President and the House finish this, then yes.

Congressman McGovern: In addition to the American Rescue Project, the state received a big chunk of money as well. State and counties should divide this money into local towns as well. Could this money be used to help in any way to upgrade the system or help repair the pipes. Can we have a conversation with the state about some of this money coming to Spencer?

Bob Ross: It would take 300,000 to complete the infiltration studies to know the exact location of inflow and infiltrations. We would be able to identify the locations to start working on. Estimate of 20 million dollars to upgrade the collection system. Total of 58 and 60 million dollars on the shoulders of 1,6000 and some odd customers. Move ahead to use 300,000 from the American Rescue Project toward the study first.

Congressman McGovern: 5 million dollars came to Massachusetts from the federal government. Seems that some of this may be eligible. The 300,000 dollars that Spencer got plus the money the state has should allow for some significant available funds. We want to make sure Spencer is on the list of bills are passed for infrastructure projects. Together we may be able to jointly make a request to the governor to make sure this project does not fall through the cracks. There is an Infrastructure Bill that will become law within the year that we can also see if we can get funding from.

Next step from Congressman McGovern is to jointly make a request to the Governor to let them know that Spencer is in high need of assistance and funding from the 5 million dollars in funding that came to Massachusetts to help cities and towns.

Congressman McGovern: the federal funding will go away if not used within two years. We need to layout the whole project from beginning to end and see how much we can get help with. Can stay in contact with John during this process. Request should be completed within the next week or two to get the project moving.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 11:37 A.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Jared Grigg
Clerk, Board of Selectmen