

Town of Hillsborough Water & Sewer Commission
February 11, 2016 Meeting Minutes

Meeting called to order 6 pm. Present were Commissioners Peter Mellen and Chris Sieg; Paul Dutton, WWTF Operator and Penny Griffin, Administrator. Also in attendance: Dave Lewis.

Mr. Lewis introduced himself to the Commissioners and stated that he is a resident of Hillsborough and also an engineer by profession. He asked if the waste water pump stations and infrastructure have been evaluated yet to see if they can handle the discharge from the proposed Weatherstone development. Commissioner Mellen stated that it has not yet been done as that is typically completed as part of a permit application review and to date a permit application with a complete set of plans has not been submitted by the developer. Mr. Lewis stressed that in his experience that is a vitally important evaluation to be done.

The Commissioners discussed the existing amount of available capacity and the progress over the last 5 years. Paul Dutton stated that he is concerned about a more restrictive permit if Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) grants the capacity increase to 600,000. Paul agreed with Mr. Lewis that an evaluation of the system should be completed but does feel that the West Main pump station will be able to handle the increased flow.

Commissioner Mellen advised the other Commissioners that Penny Griffin had contacted the property owner of 14 Hoyt Lane regarding attending a meeting to discuss possibly rerouting the sewer service line to his property. Mr. Dessaint advised Penny that he wasn't interested in discussing different alternatives as he recently had the whole line repaired. A discussion was held regarding the condition of line maintained by the Commission. All agreed to replace one remaining section that is old clay prior to the paving being completed.

Paul Dutton advised the Commissioners that he has spoken with Bill Goss again regarding Henniker Street paving. Mr. Goss told Paul that he will not know if any paving will be done this year or not until he sees how the pavement held up from last year. Commissioner Mellen asked Paul if Ted Berry's planned work on Henniker Street this year has any impact? Paul stated that it won't as they are doing everything underground.

Paul asked the Commissioners about the status of the West Main pump station grinder. Commissioner Sieg asked Paul when he would like to get started. Paul said spring would be best. He stated that they need to obtain quotes from electricians. Commissioner Sieg told Paul to go ahead and schedule the roof work to be completed. Paul Dutton advised the Commissioners that in the future a small addition will need to be made on the pump station to house the oil tank which is currently buried.

Paul advised the Commissioners that he will be on vacation February 18 – March 7. Eric Edwards will be operating the plant and WSO Plus is the backup operator.

Upcoming hydrant flushing was briefly discussed. All agreed it must be completed this year. Paul Dutton suggested possibly hiring Mike Billings as a consultant to teach Eric the procedure. The Commissioners agreed to continue the flushing discussion at a later meeting.

6:55 pm Selectmen Alan Urquhart and Jim Bailey; Laura Buono and Robyn Payson entered the meeting. Paul Dutton left the meeting.

Commissioner Mellen noted that the Selectmen were in attendance to discuss the Weatherstone accessibility fee issue. He provided packets of information he had prepared to each in attendance and proceeded to review the information which provided the history of the accessibility fees, a copy of the planning boards Development Agreement, the permit that the waste water treatment plant operates under, copies of quotes for upcoming inflow and infiltration work, and a draft report of the accessibility fee evaluation.

Laura Buono stated that the dollar figure in the evaluation report is exorbitant. Robyn Payson stated that no one will ever come to Hillsborough if the Commissioners institute those fees. The Commissioners acknowledged their concerns and noted that this report is a first draft but it includes very important information regarding the limited available capacity. Commissioner Mellen referred to page 7 of the NPDES permit No. NH0100111 number 6 which states "When the effluent discharged for a period of three (3) consecutive months exceeds 80 percent of the .475 MGD design flow (.38 MGD), the Permittee shall submit to the permitting authorities a projection of loadings up to the time when the design capacity of the treatment facility will be reached and a program for maintaining satisfactory treatment levels consistent with approved water quality management plans. Before the design flow will be reached, or whenever treatment necessary to achieve permit limits cannot be assured, the Permittee may be required to submit plans for facility improvements." Commissioner Mellen stated that right now 38,000 gallons per day (GPD) appear to be available. The proposed use of the Weatherstone project Phase 1 will require 22,370 GPD per the NH Env-Wq 1008-1 Unit Design Flow Figures. Commissioner Mellen also explained that if the new permit increases capacity from 475,000 GPD to 600,000 GPD there would be 138,000 GPD available capacity before the 80% is reached. He also cautioned that there are a lot of empty buildings and homes in town that already have allotted discharge that needs to be accounted for as if they were currently discharging to the system as well.

Commissioner Mellen stated that the accessibility fees go to a capital reserve fund allocated for projects that reduce inflow and infiltration which will continue to increase available capacity. He explained that the funds used for those projects over the last 5 years have come from User fees. Commissioner Mellen advised the Selectmen that at no time was Mr. Black told by the Water and Sewer Commission that he would be able to hook up his entire proposed development for \$10,000. Commissioner Sieg asked if the Selectmen thought it was fair that the 1,000± users have paid to make this capacity available and a developer gets to come in and take it all up and not put anything towards the fund to allow future capacity to be available? Selectmen Urquhart stated that if a project is for the betterment of the whole town sometimes some departments/etc. have to sacrifice some things. Laura Buono asked the Commission if they have considered taking fewer cents on the dollar approach. Commissioner Mellen stated that they could set a rate with a "50% off" for commercial but that still does not help in the situation of providing more available capacity for future development.

Robyn Payson asked the Commissioners the status of the WWTF permit. The Commissioners explained that it is still at the EPA level for review. Robyn stated that that was unacceptable and asked if calls have been made. The Commissioners stated that phone calls have been made and Hillsborough's permit is not a high pressure area like the seacoast is so the larger plants with ongoing issue get priority. Robyn stated that she feels

someone would be contacting EPA daily to get answers on the permit. The Commissioners encouraged Robyn to do so.

Selectman Urquhart said that he feels blindsided as he did not know sewer capacity was an issue and this is the first he has heard of it. Robyn and Laura echoed his statement. He also stated that he did not like hearing the community say that they do not trust the Commissioners. Selectman Urquhart declared that he feels we, the Town, need to deal with this Weatherstone development now and the rest later so they don't go away or sue the Town. Commissioner Mellen advised the Selectmen that Laura Buono has obtained a legal opinion regarding the Development Agreement the planning board entered with the Weatherstone project and the document does not bind the Water and Sewer Commission therefore, making the Town not liable. The Commissioners reiterated they are trying to make the system for accessing fee equal by accurately reflecting the proposed use's demand on the system and to continue to have capacity available for future growth.

Selectmen Urquhart stated that the Commissioners need to come to some sort resolution or something drastic will have to be done. Commissioner Mellen asked what he meant by "something drastic"...like dissolve the Commission. Selectman Urquhart stated that the Selectmen are looking into that at this time.

Commissioner Mellen asked Selectman Bailey for his input. Selectman Bailey stated that all Selectmen have agreed to look into the dissolution of the Commission. He agreed however, that limited capacity is a real issue. He stated that as a Selectman, he has to look at what is right for the community and what direction does the town want to go. He said he hates to hear people say they want to leave Hillsborough because the taxes are too high and a project such as Weatherstone would be beneficial to the community.

Laura Buono stated that she does not feel that the Commissioners are being "team" players. The Commissioners encouraged them to look at other town's accessibility fees. They stated that when they looked at restructuring the accessibility fees they researched other towns and the \$5 per gallon per day they accessed is lower than any they had reviewed. Selectman Urquhart stated that the Commissioners should be communicating with the economic development committee whenever they are thinking about doing anything with fees or rates or projects. Commissioner Mellen stated that at the last meeting a member of the economic development committee was here and voiced his opinion that if funds are needed the Commissioners should just raise the rates. The Commissioners reiterated again that they do not think that it is fair that the 1000± users should be the ones to fund future development. Selectman Bailey stated that he does believe that the water and sewer should be under the Selectmen and not separate.

Commissioner Mellen asked again what the Selectmen are requesting the Commissioners do. Both Selectmen stated they do not have an answer. Commissioner Mellen asked if they thought the Commissioners should allow the Weatherstone project to connect to the system for the \$10,000 that Mr. Black is saying he thought the cost was. Selectman Urquhart stated that they are not prepared to tell them what to do but suggested that they see what Mr. Black will agree to and make it happen.

Mr. Lewis asked if upgrades are need to the system to handle this new flow, who pays for that? Commissioner Mellen stated from what he understands from this meeting tonight, it would be the users.

Laura Buono stated that the Commissioners could make agreements with Mr. Black and not set precedent for future developments as the project has been in the works in Hillsborough for several years.

A discussion was held regarding OSRAM and their request to increase their remediation water discharge by another 20,000 gallons per day. Commissioner Mellen gave a brief history of that discharge to the Selectmen.

9:05 pm Selectmen Alan Urquhart and Jim Bailey; Laura Buono and Robyn Payson left the meeting.

A discussion was held regarding system evaluations that need to be done.

9:25 pm Dave Lewis left the meeting.

A discussion was held regarding a letter from Stantec regarding the OSRAM industrial pretreatment permit. Commissioner Mellen asked Penny to email him the information and he will contact Rene.

The Commissioners reviewed and authorized past meeting minutes, AP vouchers, 2016 1st issue billing warrants, and time cards.

Commissioner Sieg motioned to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Mellen seconded the motion. All voted in favor. Meeting adjourned 10:00 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Penny Griffin, Administrator

Water and Sewer Commissioners Meeting Minutes
Approved by: Date:

Peter Mellen, Chairman

Chris Sieg
Water and Sewer Commissioners
Town of Hillsborough