

Finance Committee Meeting

September 27, 2021

7:00 PM

Meeting held via Remote Participation

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Meeting called to order at 7:00pm

Attendance: Aimee Sawyer, Bonnie Yezukevich, Paula Daniels, Kevin Snyder, Michael Fiore, Joe Parker, Stephen Evans, Yelena Gordon, Zach Tsilis, William Rotondi,

Absent: None

Guests: Frank Fournier, James Jardin, Paul DiGiuseppe, Christopher Keyes, Michael Yunits

Water/Sewer Department (Frank Fournier)

- Article to change the amount of time that town residents must tie into the new sewer line from 5 years to 10 years
- Concern about allowing this is that it will change the economics of our sewer system expansion going forward
- In last week's meeting William Francis had joined as the petitioner advocating for the change to go from 5 years to 10 years, he is back on this meeting and is discussing his and his neighbors' concerns (cost, fairness, etc.)
- Both Water and Sewer are enterprise accounts, which means it is solely funded by the rate payers
- Mr. Francis would like to change the connection timeframe from the current 5 years, which originally was 2 years but changed by the select board years ago, to 10 years
- Per Mr. Fournier, if tie in timeframes were pushed to 10 years it would affect the two projects that are currently finished right now, the Plain Street Project and the West Main Street Project. Those projects were done with the idea in mind that the revenue would be coming in from those costumers that do connect to the new sewer line, or when they pay the betterment cost
- All the money that was received from the connections are used to pay down the loans
- Unsure if the sewer department could sustain 10 years without having anticipated revenue come in to offset the cost of operation
- Would have to change something to withstand that amount of time without that revenue, whether it was people cut tie in, which was the original agreement, within a specific time frame so there are some anticipated revenues coming in. Possibly current costumers would have to deal with substantial rate increases to make up for the loss.
- Raising rates would affect NPS, as one of the biggest customers of the sewer system
- Multiple possible negative outcomes if amount of time is changed to 10 years

- There is a projected route for the sewer plan in Norton
- Phase one was the center station was built at Wheaton with the connection that was originally going to go down East Main Street to the MFN interceptor line, it was rerouted to go take care of the LGN.
- Phase two was West Main Street
- Sewer growth and connections are going to base how we move forward in coming years
- 3-4 years from now would like to extend further down West Main Street, possibly up to Old Colony Road
- If the change to this article goes through there is the potential to stall some of these other projects
- Discussion on getting a map with a general time frame for sewer connections up for residents to see, the cost of the connection to sewer line for residents depending on the location of the house and whether or not the property is residential or commercial, how people were informed of all of these plans during multiple town meetings
- There are low interest loans available to town residents to help pay for the sewer line connection or a betterment
- Discussion on the wording of the article, concerns regarding cost, also the options that people have
- Recommended that the petitioner, William Francis, reach out directly to Frank Fournier to discuss concerns and options

Voting on Article Mandatory Connection to Common Sewer

Aimee Sawyer- I would entertain a motion on article number 14

William – I move we recommend article 14

Seconded

No further discussion

Call for vote: 1 Yes – 9 No, Motion Fails.

Norton Master Plan 2021 (Paul DiGiuseppe)

- The Planning Board has overseen the development of the Master Plan, in coordination with consultants from SERPEDD. At their meeting on 9/14 they voted to approve the final draft and send it to Town Meeting for approval on 10/25.
- Master plan is the blueprint for how a town develops, focused on all different aspects of development - how land is used, housing issues, promoting housing, economic development, recreation, resources, etc.
- Master Plan should be updated every ten years. Our last master plan was completed in 1998
- Completed master plan with our regional planning agency, Southeastern Regional Planning and Economic Development District(SERPEDD)
- Total cost of \$100,000 - Received \$70,000 in grants, and \$30,000 was provided through Town Meeting about 2 years ago

- Discussion on how the plan protects natural resources, and recommendations on how to acquire new open space
- Little to no change is Norton's residential area
- Discussion on how to balance more accommodating homes for the elderly that are still in Norton without using too much of the rural area that residents enjoy about Norton
- Targeted areas that would be looked at for growth/development
- Looking for a way to promote small businesses in the town (Bog Iron Brewery used as example)
- Discussion on how these changes would be implemented
- There were in person and virtual meetings regarding Master Plan, information also on website for people to look at
- Notifications of meetings posted, emailed, texted etc. to notify people so they could have the chance to be involved in the Master Plan if they wanted to

Bonnie Yezukevich- I move that we vote to accept article 11 2021 Master Plan for the Town of Norton as approved by the planning board

Seconded

Vote: Yes – 10 No – 0 Motion Passes unanimously.

Street acceptance on Leonard Street

- Planning board recommended article 8 for street acceptance on Leonard Street
- New portion of the road needs to be widened to accommodate the Blue Star Business Park

Voting on Article 8 The Layout of Leonard Street

Bonnie Yezukevich – I move that we move article 8 to see if the town will accept the altered widening layout of Leonard Street as recommended by the Planning Board

Seconded

Call for Vote: Yes – 10 No – 0 Motion Passes unanimously.

Motion to adjourn by Bonnie Yezukevich Second – Bill Rotondi.

Call for Vote: Yes – 10 No – 0 Motion Passes unanimously.

Meeting adjourned @ 8:23pm

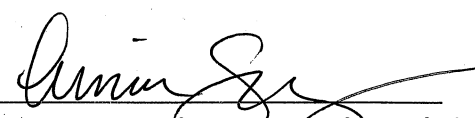
Respectfully submitted by

Rachel Medas, FinCom Secretary

Minutes Approved by Committee on:

6/6/2022

Signature:


Aimee Sawyer, Finance Committee Chair