



Town of Ayer
Board of Selectmen
Ayer Town Hall – 1st Floor Meeting Room
Ayer, MA 01432



Broadcast and Recorded by APAC

Tuesday April 2, 2019
Open Session Meeting Minutes

BOS Present: Jannice L. Livingston, Chair; Christopher R. Hillman, Vice – Chair; Scott A. Houde, Clerk

Also Present: Robert A. Pontbriand, Town Manager
Carly M. Antonellis, Assistant Town Manager

Call to Order: J. Livingston called the meeting to order at 7:01 PM.

Pledge of Allegiance: BOS members and meeting attendees stood and recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Agenda: S. Houde asked to amend the agenda by adding a Vicksburg Square update under “New Business”.

Motion: A motion was by S. Houde and seconded by J. Livingston to approve the agenda, as amended.

Motion passed 3-0.

Announcements: None

Moment of Silence in Remembrance of Ernie Blasetti: The BOS observed a moment of silence in memory of Mr. Ernie Blasetti, the Town of Ayer’s Boston Post Cane recipient who recently passed away.

Public Input: None

Supt. Mark Wetzel, Dept. of Public Works: M. Wetzel updated the BOS that new guard rail has been installed on Westford Road by Catania Spagna. He also informed the BOS that Castle Rock will be filming portions of their 2nd season at the DPW Brush Dump.

National Grid License and Assent Agreements/MacPherson Road – M. Wetzel presented an Assent Agreement and License Agreement between the Town of Ayer and National Grid. These agreements are relative to the installation of distribution equipment for electrical service upgrades for the wastewater treatment plan. M. Wetzel is also preparing a permanent easement warrant article for the upcoming Annual Town Meeting.

Motion: A motion was made by J. Livingston and seconded by S. Houde to approve the Assent Agreement as presented. **Motion passed 3-0.**

Motion: A motion was made by J. Livingston and seconded by S. Houde to approve the License Agreement as presented. **Motion passed 3-0.**

Public Hearing – FY ’20 Water and Sewer Rates: S. Houde opened the public hearing at 7:11 PM by reading the Public Hearing notice as advertised in the Nashoba Valley Voice on March 22 and March 29, 2019. M. Wetzel gave a presentation on the water and sewer rate setting procedure, stating that the Rate Review Committee is recommending a 2% increase for the FY ’20 water rate and a 3% increase for the FY ’20 sewer rate. The Rate Review Committee is also recommending that the BOS adopt a Water Conservation Rate and increase the water connection fees. As part of the presentation, M. Wetzel stated that the average water and sewer user will see an approximately \$11.20 increase over last year’s bill. Also as compared to other Massachusetts towns, Ayer water users pay significantly below the state median and sewer users pay slightly higher than the state median.

The proposed Water Conservation Rate is for outdoor use of water and allows for a second meter which bills for only water and not sewer. This is for users that water their lawns in the summer months. M. Wetzel stated that in order to encourage water conservation, the Rate Review Committee recommends that water only meters be billed at the top tier of \$3.84 per hundred cubic feet.

The proposed increase in the water connection fees has been recommended by the Rate Review Committee, as it has not been updated since 2010. M. Wetzel presented a slide with the proposed fee increases:

	Current	Proposed
Connection Fee - 1" Service	\$3,000	\$3,600 per ERU
Connection Fee - 1 - 1.2" Service	\$4,500	\$3,600 per ERU
Connection Fee - 2" Service	\$6,750	\$3,600 per ERU
Connection Fee - 3" Service	\$10,000	\$10,000
Connection Fee - 4" Service	\$15,500	\$15,500
Connection Fee - 6" Service	\$23,500	\$23,500
Connection Fee - 8" Service	\$35,000	\$35,000
Connection Fee - 10" Service	\$35,000	\$35,000
Connection Fee - 12" Service	\$35,000	\$35,000
Connection Fee - Outside Use Meter	\$0	\$ 1,080

J. Livingston asked for any Public Input. Ruth Maxant-Schulz, 17 Taft Street asked questions about the impact of the Town of Groton connecting to Ayer's system. M. Wetzel explained that the Town of Groton is being treated as a normal customer, but were given a two year grace period for connection fees, to allow time for further development. Ms. Maxant-Schulz also asked why the Conservation Rate was billed at the top tier and is wondering if there could be a reduction for farming use. J. Livingston stated that providing for a reduced rate for farmers would be difficult to implement and police.

Motion: A motion was by C. Hillman and seconded by J. Livingston to approve the 2% increase for the FY '20 water rates. **Motion passed 3-0.**

Motion: A motion was by S. Houde and seconded by J. Livingston to approve the 3% increase for the FY'20 sewer rates. **Motion passed 3-0.**

Motion: A motion was by C. Hillman and seconded by S. Houde to adopt a Water Conservation Rate at \$3.84 per hundred cubic feet. **Motion passed 3-0.**

Motion: A motion was by J. Livingston and seconded by S. Houde to approve an increase in the water connection fees as presented. **Motion passed 3-0.**

Motion: A motion was made by J. Livingston and seconded by S. Houde to close the Public Hearing at 7:40 PM. **Motion passed 3-0.**

Mr. Alan Manoian, Dir. Community and Economic Development: A. Manoian presented an outline of a proposed Roadway Litter Removal Program. He would like to begin a pilot program the first year on Westford Road. He'd like to do a sponsorship approach with the businesses in the industrial parks off of Westford Road. Per the Town's Public Safety officials, a police detail will be necessary. A. Manoian has been in contact with Adopt-A-Highway Litter Removal Service of America, Inc., who specialize in these types of programs.

Welcome to Ayer Sign Update – A. Manoian presented different sign options for the Welcome to Ayer sign being proposed for East Main Street as a part of the Host Community Agreement with Gage Cannabis. The BOS preferred an engraved rock-style sign.

Town Manager's Report: *Administrative Update/Review of Warrant(s)* – R. Pontbriand referenced the Town Warrants in the meeting packet that he reviewed, approved and signed since the BOS last met on March

19, 2019. He gave a brief Administrative Update to the BOS regarding the various activities, initiatives, and projects including the appointment of fulltime Police Officer Tim Ialeggio; the commencement of the Town Hall wiring project and the Site Plan approval of the solar array on the capped landfill. R. Pontbriand also announced that School Committee Member Dan Gleason has resigned and thanked Mr. Gleason for his years of service. There will be a joint appointment made by the BOS and the remaining members of the Ayer members of the Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee at the April 16, 2019 BOS meeting.

FY '20 Budget Update – R. Pontbriand informed the BOS that the Administration continues to focus on the budget and is anticipating a 5% increase. The BOS and the Finance Committee will meet in a joint session on April 16, 2019 to approve the budget and warrant for the Annual Town Meeting.

Acceptance of Historic Gifts – R. Pontbriand informed the BOS that he received correspondence from Ms. Anne Sroka who has offered a donation of St. Andrew's materials on behalf of the Lois Underwood Revocable Trust. The donation includes various photographs, art and books. The total donation amount is \$4,200.

Motion: A motion was by S. Houde and seconded by J. Livingston to accept the donation of historic gifts and place them under the custodianship of the Historic Commission. **Motion passed 3-0.**

New Business/Selectmen's Questions: *Vicksburg Square Update (S. Houde)* - S. Houde informed the BOS that MassDevelopment was starting to have more meetings relative to the Vicksburg Square proposal and gave the upcoming meeting dates. S. Houde would like input from department heads relative to the proposed zoning change.

Approval of Meeting Minutes:

Motion: A motion was made by C. Hillman and seconded by S. Houde to approve the meeting minutes from March 19, 2019. **Motion passed 3-0.**

Adjournment:

Motion: A motion was made by S. Houde and seconded by C. Hillman to adjourn at 8:33 PM. **Motion passed 3-0.**

Minutes Recorded and Submitted by Carly M. Antonellis, Assistant Town Manager

Date Minutes Approved by BOS: April 16 2019

Signature Indicating Approval: Scott A. Houde