



Town of Ayer
Rate Review Committee

Meeting Minutes from December 20, 2022

Attendance: Jannice Livingston (Chair); Andrew Sealey (Fin Com); Rick Skoczylas; Pam Martin (DPW Business Manager); Dan Van Schalkwyk (DPW Director); Barbara Tierney (Finance Manager); Robert Pontbriand (Town Manager); Kimberly Abraham (Water/Sewer Superintendent)

Also in Attendance: Sara Withee (Resident)

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 4pm in the First Floor Meeting Room of the Ayer Town Hall by J. Livingston.

Review and Approval of the November 1, 2022 Meeting Minutes:

R. Pontbriand requested that the November 1, 2022 meeting minutes approval be moved to the next meeting. The Committee concurred. J. Livingston welcomed Andrew Sealey from the Finance Committee who will be the Fin Com Representative on the Rate Review Committee.

Preliminary Discussion on the Development of the FY 2023 Water and Sewer Rates:

Overview of the Proposed FY 2024 Water and Sewer Capital Project:

K. Abraham provided an overview of the proposed FY 2024 Water and Sewer Capital projects which are currently before the Capital Planning Committee for consideration.

The Water Capital Projects are:

\$300,000 for Annual Water Main Replacement

\$450,000 for Painting the Washington Street Water Tank

\$250,000 for the Spec Pond Well #3 Pumping Station and Transmission Main

\$30,000 for the Grove Pond Greensand Valve Replacement

For a total for FY 2024 Water Capital Projects: \$1,030,000

The Sewer Capital Projects are:

\$1,250,000 for Inflow/Infiltration Repairs

\$33,000 for Pump Impeller at Main and Central Streets

\$85,000 to Replace Two WWTP Boilers

For a total for FY 2024 Sewer Capital Projects: \$1,368,000

R. Pontbriand stated the all the Capital projects that are approved need to be entered into the rate model and have an impact on the water and sewer rates.

Update on the Rate Model:

K. Abraham stated that the Water and Sewer Rate Model was last updated in 2015 and that she has contacted both the firms of Raftelis and Stantec regarding proposals to review and update the rate model. She will have more to report at a future meeting.

J. Livingston stated that we need to take a deep look at the rate model and both the water enterprise and sewer enterprise to come up with the most accurate rate recommendations which are also reasonable to the consumer.

Sara Withee asked was the impacts of private development are on the water and sewer rates.

D. Van Schalkwyk stated that private developers pay connection fees and are also rate payer at a higher commercial rate. Additionally, water and sewer mains for private developments need to be reviewed and approved by the DPW and Planning Board and the portions on private property are paid for by the developers.

J. Livingston stated that we should also review the connection fees and see if we need a new recommendation in that area.

J. Livingston brought up an issue at the Transfer Station in which a vehicle with a New Jersey plate entered the Transfer Station and unloaded trash.

D. Van Schalkwyk stated he was aware of the issue and that the individual was an Ayer resident of military background and had a valid sticker but, on a New Jersey, plated car.

J. Livingston stated that we need to get some Senior Tax Work-off workers up there as monitors and enforcers of the permits and bags.

D. Van Schalkwyk stated that he would look into that.

Scheduling of Next Meeting:

The Committee scheduled its next meeting for January 24, 2023 at 4pm at Town Hall.

Adjournment:

Motion: A motion was made by R. Skoczylas and seconded by A. Sealey to adjourn the meeting at 4:37pm. Motion Passed 7-0.

The meeting adjourned at 4:37pm.

Minutes recorded and submitted by R. Pontbriand, Town Manager.

Minutes reviewed and approved by the Rate Review Committee on February 7, 2023.

Signed:  Robert A. Pontbriand, Town Manager