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**Town of Ayer**

**Rate Review Committee**

**Meeting Minutes from February 7, 2023**

**Attendance:** Jannice Livingston (Chair); Andrew Sealey (Fin Com); Rick Skoczylas; Dan Van Schalkwyk (DPW Director); Kimberly Abraham (Water/Sewer Superintendent)

**Also in Attendance:** No persons

**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.

**Motion:** A motion was made by J. Livingston and seconded by D. Van Schalkwyk to amend the agenda to add review and approval of the December 20, 2022 meeting minutes. **Motion Passed (5-0).**

**Review and Approval of the November 1, 2022 and December 20, 2022 Meeting Minutes:**

A. Sealey indicated his name is spelled incorrect in the December 20, 2022 Meeting Minutes in the Attendance section.

J. Livingston indicated a change for correction in the December 20, 2022 Meeting Minutes. "... New Jersey, plated care" should read "car" and that it was a military person.

**Motion:** A motion was made by R. Skoczylas and seconded by K. Abraham to approve the November 1, 2022 Meeting Minutes. **Motion Passed (5-0).**

**Motion:** A motion was made by J. Livingston and seconded by K. Abraham to amend the December 20, 2022 Meeting Minutes as noted above and approve. **Motion Passed (5-0).**

**Update/Discussion on the Development of the Proposed FY2024 Water and Sewer Rate Recommendations:**

J. Livingston indicated that the public meeting for the recommendation of the proposed water and sewer rates for FY2024 must be scheduled by the Rate Review Committee and must occur at or by the last Select Board meeting before Town Meeting.

K. Abraham provided a status update on the Development of the Water and Sewer Rate Model with Raftelis. Currently, Raftelis has completed the model with a 5-to-10-year outlook. The model includes various assumptions made by Raftelis. The next steps include:

- The Town Finance Manager, DPW Director, Water and Sewer Superintendent, and Town Accountant will meet with Raftelis to vet the assumptions that were made and make corrections during the meeting. This is anticipated to occur by February 15, 2023.
- Raftelis will deliver a draft report to the Committee. This is anticipated to occur by February 21, 2023.
- Raftelis will present the model and proposed water and sewer rates at the next Rate Review Committee meeting.

- Raftelis will submit a final report and turn over the model to the Town with training.

A. Sealey asked what assumptions are provided for the model. K. Abraham explained it's based on operations and budgets.

A. Sealey asked if the model is only 5 and 10 year or each year. K. Abraham responded it is each year.

J. Livingston asked what future high expense items are known. K. Abraham responded by naming the Capital projects proposed for Water and Sewer in FY2024.

J. Livingston asked if the proposed Washington Street Water Storage Tank Painting was not complete then what would happen. K. Abraham responded that the Tank would continue to deteriorate and corrode. The Tank was installed in 1995 and has not been coated since and coatings typically last 15 to 25 years.

J. Livingston asked about the future high expense items for Wastewater. D. Van Schalkwyk responded and discussion began on the proposed \$1.25M Infiltration/Inflow repairs funding. D. Van Schalkwyk explained the funding is proposed to rehabilitate the sewer infrastructure on Sandy Pond Road, from Westford Road toward Central Ave Pump Station, and that this is immediately downstream of the recently completed sewer replacement on Westford Road. That replacement was completed because the infrastructure was so badly deteriorated it could not be rehabilitated and instead had to be replaced. Discussion of where the Town of Groton sewer connection is located commenced. D. Van Schalkwyk responded the sewer connection for Groton is near Nemco Way, outside the limits and of no impact to the recent Westford Road project and proposed Sandy Pond Road rehab.

R. Skoczylas discussed meeting a person at the Transfer Station who appeared to be out of Town but was using a vehicle with a Transfer Station Sticker.

Discussion commenced about the solar field at the Transfer Station and where revenue was directed. D. Van Schalkwyk explained revenue is directed to the Solid Waste Enterprise fund and is approximately \$20,000 to \$25,000 per year.

#### **Scheduling of Next Meeting:**

The Committee scheduled its next meeting for February 28, 2023 at 4pm at Town Hall.

A. Sealey asked about single stream recycling and the process at the Transfer Station. D. Van Schalkwyk responded.

J. Livingston asked for the status of the Senior Property Tax Work-off person for the Transfer Station. D. Van Schalkwyk explained that he has submitted the Department Head application to the Benefits and Payroll Manager.

#### **Adjournment:**

Motion: A motion was made by K. Abraham and seconded by R. Skoczylas to adjourn the meeting at 4:28pm. Motion Passed 5-0.

The meeting adjourned at 4:28pm.

Minutes recorded and submitted by D. Van Schalkwyk, DPW Director.

Minutes reviewed and approved by the Rate Review Committee on February 28, 2023.

Signed:   
Robert A. Pontbriand, Town Manager