

FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, September 7, 2023

3:00 PM - 5:00 PM

Present: Jeff Carr, Don Porter, Ken Albert, Lee Suskin, Joan Lenas, Matt Lawless (portion of meeting), Aaron DeNamur, Chris Robinson (portion of meeting), planning consultants (portion of meeting); Stephen Baietti (public – portion of meeting).

The meeting was called to order at 3:35 P.M. The consent agenda was approved unanimously. There was no public comment on items not on the agenda.

The primary purpose of this meeting was to receive an update on the status of the Wastewater Consolidation Project presented by Chris Robison, Water Quality Superintendent, and learn more about impact fees from the Town's planning consultants. Key takeaways from these presentations are the following:

Wastewater Consolidation Project

- The Town's two existing treatment facilities are 22-50 years old and at the end of useful life;
- Projected 2045 design-year flow is 940,000 gpd, including 20% reserve capacity for 8% population growth;
- Most effective project configuration is expanding Crown Road treatment plant capacity to 1,000,000 gpd and converting Harbor Road facility to a pumping station with preliminary treatment capability. A 14" forcemain totaling 12,400 feet will connect the two plants;
- Construction is expected to begin in June 2025 and be completed by July 2027;
- Current estimated cost is approximately \$37.5 million, excluding probable significant funding grants;
- Wastewater rates will need to be increased over the next few years to pay for the Wastewater Consolidation Project.

The Finance Committee will assist in funding analyses and execution.

Impact Fees

- 24 VSA 4302(c)(12) provides statutory authority for impact fees to plan for, finance and provide an efficient system of public facilities and services to meet future needs;
- 24 VSA 4430 defines Capital Budget and Program -- Capital Budget is for the coming fiscal year and Program is for the following five years. Capital projects must be clearly defined including estimated cost & proposed financing. Capital project is a physical improvement and does not include operation or maintenance, staffing or associated programs;
- 24 VSA 5203 authorizes the levy of impact fees to offset the cost of new or expanded facilities needed to serve new development. Impact fees must be supported by a confirmed planning process & current town plan, an adopted capital budget & program, and implemented through a duly adopted ordinance;
- Process for determining (and justifying if challenged legally) impact fees is very complex and requires the development of a reasonable and supportable formula to allocate eligible expenses to new development based on stated and accepted levels of service.

In view of the detailed technical requirements for appropriately structuring and monitoring impact fees, the Finance Committee consensus was that if the Town wanted to consider expanding its current level of impact fees, it would be prudent to retain experienced professionals to assist in the process. Jeff Carr will contact St. Albans to understand how this community designed its impact fee schedule. Aaron DeNamur will serve as point person in this area.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:10 P.M.

Respectfully submitted by Don Porter