

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS  
171 Worcester Rd  
Sterling, MA

Minutes of March 23, 2021

Present: Deane Day, Paul Lyons, L DeCiero, G DeCiero, Geoff Donohue, Paul Gerardi, Susan Genereux, Blaine Bershad, Gregg Aubin, Jack Chandler, David Favreau

Via Zoom: Arden Sonnenberg, Richard Maki, Kellie Hebert, Laura Ricci, Steven Jones, anonymous

Meeting called to order at 7:05 pm

Deane Day, Blaine Bershad, Gregg Aubin present

Minutes of March 9, 2021 were read. Deane Day made a motion to accept the minutes as read. Blaine Bershad seconded the motion. All in favor 3-0.

Public Session: Arden Sonnenberg asked if the water funding was resolved on procurement of selecting water meters. Paul Lyons indicated that there is a bid opening April 8th on said topic. Arden Sonnenberg commented that the Town Administrator is the Personnel Director for the town and the process goes through the Town Administrator. Arden Sonnenberg stated there is a memo being sent out to remind all of such. Jack Chandler asked if the Town Administrator would consider holding a department meeting with employees of the DPW in an attempt to let them feel comfortable about what is going on and have a question and answer portion to said meeting. Town Administrator agreed to the request, meeting scheduled for Friday March 26th at 12:30pm at the DPW. Town Administrator Kellie Hebert stated she is working to rectify in order to increase salaries within the Personnel by Law by use of some other mechanisms. Town Administrator went on to state she is having a company make a recommendation to her for the DPW based on the information that was given to her and that within the next two meetings she will give information to us on said topic. The Town Administrator stated she is looking for an avenue of past practices which need to go through her office, she continued stating that she tried every which way to rectify the situation but it is out of her control to this point. Kellie Hebert, Town Administrator, stated we haven't forgotten about this and is working towards a solution but it has to be according to the by law. Laura Ricci requested yellow trash bags and speed limit signs for residents wanting to do roadside clean up. Dick Maki indicated that in the past the inmates from the Sheriff's department were able to assist as a community service fulfillment. Gregg Aubin asked the Town Administrator when was the town hall going to be open to the public, when the pandemic is over? The Town Administrator replied people can make an appointment to do what they need to do at the town hall to get the job done.

#### Superintendent Report Water

- Meters are going along; 92 Mueller registers have quit as of last week; just changing out the radio is not an option. We will have to go back into some homes to fix the quit registers. Approximately 450 Mueller meters are not working ; SMLD moved collectors in an attempt to get the meters to communicate for readings; this situation has occurred in other towns where a large amount of Mueller meters are quitting; will have to calculate average usage for upcoming billing; tough time this reading. We are at a standstill to purchase more meters.
- We received results from the lab on the next round of PFA testing that was performed; all clean, none detected. One and a half wells are up and running; will have to watch every month yielding an unforeseen extra cost of \$1500 that is not in the budget.
- Will provide information to Meetinghouse News, town website and SLCT access channel regarding the possibility of future restrictions on outdoor water usage.
- Day tank in West Sterling is being replaced per DEP mandate; A/D Instruments recommended the company to do the replacement.

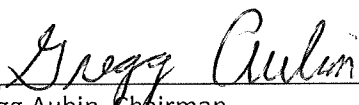
- The town of Lancaster has contacted the department in regards to extending the water line down on Runaway Brook residents no longer want wells; we would have to agree to it, Lancaster would have to pay us for the water; we touch nothing, we would be in the capacity as the inspector ;no loop to flush but there is a bottom area to flush from

#### Superintendent Report DPW

- The MVP Action Grant was filed in order to help with the downtown drainage but the agency didn't like the idea as the grant is more a community whole team involvement. They agency suggested more natural greenways to deal with the downtown problem.
- Employees have obtained licenses for cross training. Recently three employees have obtained their water licenses; two are temporary for the time being to fill in. Paul Lyons stated that he wished he could do something for them for their efforts and investment of their time in obtaining the licenses for the department.
- Jason Parker, mechanic, has given notice of his resignation stating that the town is not in the ball park in their pay rate for said positions.
- Search Committee member Travis Thibault Paxton DPW Superintendent, stated through a drafted letter that a wage study is the next step to be taken for the soon to be vacant DPW Superintendent position in Sterling. The Search Committee is moving forward with the proposed consulting work. David Favreau, Search Committee member stated don't reinvent the wheel as studies have been done in the past and they are a lengthy process. Deane Day stated there are a lot of smart guys on the Search Committee. Town Administrator Kellie Hebert stated attention is needed in order to recruit experienced, qualified candidates and the grid limits the pool and she feels the consulting firm, Paradigm, fits the need for this. She went on to state there is a need for a mechanism to allow the DPW Board to enter into a contract agreement with the DPW Superintendent and that a warrant article for Town Meeting is needed in order to allow the town to have a contract to negotiate vacation, sick time, etc. Blaine Bershad made a motion that the DPW Board consider and accept the idea of paying the consulting firm, Paradigm to do the work/study. Deane Day seconded the motion. A vote was taken Blaine Bershad and Deane Day in favor. Gregg Aubin opposed. Vote passed 2-1.

Next posted meeting date TBD

Motion to adjourn at 8:20pm

  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Gregg Aubin, Chairman  
 Department of Public Works Board