

**Town of Londonderry, Vermont
Village Wastewater Committee
Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, February 20, 2024 – 6:00 PM**

**Neighborhood Connections, 5700 VT Rte. 100
Londonderry, VT**

Village Wastewater Committee (VWC) Members Present: Sharon Crossman, Larry Gubb, Tom Metcalfe

Others in Attendance:

Online:

Chrissy Haskins (Dufresne Group – Project Engineers), Susan Westa (Windham Regional Commission)

1. Call meeting to order

The meeting was called to order at 6:13 PM.

2. Additions or Deletions to the Agenda:

No additions or deletions

3. Approve Minutes of 02/02/23 meeting

VWC agreed to defer approval of 02/02/23 minutes until the next meeting

**4. Discuss and Debrief - 90% Report: Public Information Meeting - February 19
Presentation @ Selectboard Meeting**

Key comments and remarks from attendees: What questions/issues do we need to address?

Chrissy said there were no significant updates to the 90% report from the last meeting. She said costs were updated in the report to reflect what was presented to the Selectboard (SB) for the upcoming bond vote. She said information was added to Section 4 based on comments from Tom and Emily and Section 5 was updated accordingly. Tom commented that he was satisfied with what he saw in the 90% report including all the attachments. Chrissy added that Emily has the 90% report and will be reviewing and providing written comments. Larry commented that it appeared the Selectboard had approved to accept the 90% report at their last meeting, last evening. Chrissy verified this.

Tom asked if the next step would be the informational meeting about the 90% report and the informational meeting (February 29th) regarding the bond vote.

Sharon said that “key comments” should come following the informational meeting. Chrissy asked if we wanted to discuss a question Kelly Pajala had regarding how the project would be paid for which she thought would be important for residents to know before they cast their vote. Would the entire Grand List pay for the local match to cover 10% of the capital costs, leaving operation and maintenance (O+M) costs to users only or would only the users pay for both the local match of 10% for the capital cost of construction, plus the ongoing O+M? Sharon mentioned she thought that would be very important for anyone voting on the bond, to know. The Selectboard has not discussed this decision at all to date. Tom asked if the SB was looking for a recommendation from the VWC. The VWC discussed and felt that was important to decide on a recommendation to present to the Selectboard. A further question was whether the SB could make the decision if it was not on their next meeting’s agenda. It was not known if it could be added to the agenda or even if the SB wished to make the decision at this point. The VWC members present felt that the capital costs of construction should be spread across the grand list.

The question then, was whether the VWC should be making the recommendation to the Selectboard. Larry brought up the notion of what the Town would be getting for just 10% of the overall cost and wondered whether that is the biggest key to the bond vote and that perhaps the Selectboard is thinking the matter of the options of how to pay for the capital costs would come later. Chrissy said that no members of the public had brought up the question, but that there is the unknown of what people may be thinking. Sharon added that while some people have mentioned this question to her. Larry mentioned the value to the Town in an economic sense beyond the cost of construction in the sense of how it may be saving them money. He mentioned examples cited by Julie Beth Hinds, that spoke of a business in Waitsfield that was having to pump their tank every week or every month and the cost to do so was making it hard for them to stay in business.

5. VWC Motion to show support for SB Motions to authorize ARPA grant agreements.

Sue asked if Sharon would like the VWC to make a motion recommending authorization of the ARPA grant agreements. Sharon said yes, but that she had not prepared a specific motion.

6. Review VWV Ordinance – Discuss Model Proposed by WRC / Julie Beth Hines (Sue & JB)

Sue recommended that the Committee review the highlighted version of the ordinance draft and pass on a recommendation to the SB, but that this should wait until after the bond vote on March 5th.

7. Critical Path

Potential Fee Structures (Chrissy & Shane)

Discuss RFP for Easement Appraisals for Purchase and/or Donation of Private Properties

No further need to talk about potential fee structures now.

Sue said that Shane has a draft RFQ (request for quotes) on easement appraisals that she sent to him. Chrissy suggested that appraisals be moved forward in consideration that if any bond vote fails, easements may still be purchased with step 2 money that is still available for design and land acquisition at 100% grant funding. Larry asked about the question of easement acquisition or settlements for each service hook-up location. Chrissy said that land purchase agreements for the treatment location needed to be completed prior to the end of September 2024. Easements for service lines would not have to be done until some point in the summer of 2025. An easement for crossing a property to reach a treatment property would have to be completed this year. Both properties that need easement purchases have been contacted and one has sent documents to their attorney for review and are eager to move forward. The property owner that would be giving access across their property has not made a final decision yet, but has expressed support for the project. There is another easement on that property, which needs to be looked into and considered.

Tom asked about easements for Rte. 100. Chrissy said an easement would need to be obtained from VTrans and that the state R.O.W. is normally about 3 rods (49.5 feet) wide, but need to be researched as to whether the roadway runs down the middle of the R.O.W. Chrissy believed there would be no or little need to go beyond the R.O.W to construct the main piping to the system.

Larry asked about service line easements and whether the Town would be responsible for the service line hook-ups or whether property owners would be responsible for them. Chrissy said she had asked Emily this question and Emily had responded that any equipment paid for by the grant funding would be the responsibility of the Town. Tom commented that this would be a great advantage to property owners, should the property owners not object to an easement on their property to their septic tank. Chrissy would like to nail down the final answer to this question as Towns generally do not own service lines, especially on a permanent basis. It would be advantageous for the Town to be able to maintain the tanks, but it is not typically something that is done on a permanent basis. Tom asked if a solution to this might be the sale of the tank and any other service line equipment to the property owner, rather than require an easement. Chrissy did not have the answer to this question, but did say that the Town paying for the service line and hook-up would be a fair incentive for people to sign up for service as soon as possible in the permitting stage as opposed to paying for the connection on their own if they sign up later. Maybe the trade-off would be property

owners allowing the easement, permanent or otherwise. Larry said tanks would presumably be relatively close to the road for the purposes of being close to the main. Chrissy agreed but said there still needs to be a pipe from each property to the collection tank and said if someone had a tank that was new or in good shape it may just be a matter of supplying the pump and other equipment, but not the tank. There would have to be a site-by-site establishment made for what each user property's needs are. The initial thought is to have the property owners pay for the electrical power for operation of the pumps. Chrissy said that the O&M estimates do include a cost for power to run the pumps which are single pumps for each tank. The power requirement per pump is deemed to be very small. Chrissy said the proprietary version of the tank at each user location would be a septic tank portioned with a chamber for the pump which is inside of a filter to protect the pump from the rest of the tank. She said there is a way to retrofit existing septic tanks with such a pod.

8. Next Steps for 90% Report (Chrissy & Emily)

Discussed earlier in the meeting.

9. Public Relations Campaign

Review strategy for addressing email Comments /Questions (Sharon)

Educate residents and business owners re: Bond Issue Vote (Sue, Sharon)

Strategy has been discussed and actions taken, but more will need to be done. Chrissy said there was one interested party inquiring about hooking into the north village system, two interested parties for the south village system and someone who had some overall questions about the project. Sharon was concerned that the number of inquiries and interest did not amount to a great deal thus far. Chrissy said the bond vote will signal which direction the project continues in, whether it is continuing to construction or going on with design only. Sharon asked if we could provide information right up to the bond vote. It was not allowed to be placed in the Town Reports according to Sharon. Chrissy thought it may have had something to do with rules about campaigning at a polling place.

Sharon said Sue has done a great job of getting news out about the project and about the bond vote and that many people have gotten this information. Tom asked if there was anything additional the VWC could do with physical postings about the bond vote and the informational meeting. Sharon said the flyers have already been placed in numerous places around town, including the post offices. Sharon said she has not gone into businesses to post flyers because they should have the choice to have the flyers posted. Sharon thought a final posting of why we are doing the project in the first place could be added to what is already posted. Postings to the Londonderry Community Forum should be made as well.

10. Other Business

**Repeat Water Testing Program: Request fresh kits for both Villages
Discuss need for Project Oversight, i.e. Manger/Point Person during phases of
construction.**

Sharon asked if this might be better after the bond vote or should continue to be pursued right away. Chrissy said that this information would not be in the report so there is no urgency, but the information would be good to have, especially as the Town has the kits to do the testing.

Sharon asked about hiring a someone to be a construction manager for the project. Tom asked what the responsibility of the person in this position would be. Can it be handled by current personnel by the Town or the project engineer? Larry said in prior discussions that it appeared as if someone would be needed in addition to services provided by Dufresne Group and what the Town could provide currently, as Shane has said he is already overwhelmed with Town administrative work. What everyone would need to know is what duties this person would have and what funding is available for such a position. Chrissy said Dufresne Group would provide contract administration between the Town and the contractor as well as providing an onsite engineer. She said most times the engineers would not handle funding reimbursement work. Sue mentioned that this is the sort of thing Shane would be looking for to aid the Town. Possibly BDCC. This is something there seems to be time to arrange.

11. Next VWC Meeting Date

Sue said it would be important to put the Selectboard informational meeting on all websites available for posting as the meeting is a Selectboard meeting. The assumption is that the SB will do the required posting. Tom thought it may be useful to have a handout for meeting attendees to know what would be discussed. Sharon will speak to Shane about information about the meeting and get together with Chrissy about any specifics that should be included. There was discussion about what may be needed at the meeting for Chrissy's presentation. All agreed it would be similar to prior informational meetings.

The next regular meetings of the VWC will be **the first Friday of every month at 10:00 Am** and **the third Tuesday of every month at 6:00 PM**

12. Adjourn

Tom made a motion to adjourn
Sharon seconded
Motion passed
Meeting was adjourned at 7:24 PM

Respectfully Submitted,
Larry Gubb
Secretary, Village Wastewater Committee

Approved _____
Village Wastewater Committee
Sharon Crossman, Interim Chair

Link to AV recording of February 20, 2024 meeting below.
Topic: Village Waste Water Study (Gail Mann- 802-856-7669)
Date: Feb 20, 2024 05:56 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

You can copy the recording information below and share with others

<https://us06web.zoom.us/rec/share/zJqlqONKbhcRdXVjAlL68VFa2wE4H5a1o3CCbJ0oHhJv5SQ4w4RcGV3l0WAlzExY.3wkr5vdt65RBtQu>

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