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**Town of Middlebury
Infrastructure Committee
Thursday, June 10, 2021
Meeting Minutes**

NOTE: Due to the need for separation to prevent the spread of COVID-19 virus, the meeting was held remotely via video conferencing with participants.

Members Present: Heather Seeley, Esther Thomas, Gary Baker, Candy McLaughlin, Judy Wiger-Grohs and Alternate Erik Remsen. Luther Tenny and Matt DeBisschop were absent, so Remsen will be voting in this meeting

Staff Present: Town Manager Kathleen Ramsay, Director of Public Works Planning Dan Werner, Director of Public Work Operations Bill Kernan, Wastewater Superintendent Bob Wells and Accounting Services Manager Jackie Sullivan,

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:02 a.m. by Chair Heather Seeley.

2. Approval of Agenda

Baker moved to approve the agenda and Wiger-Grohs seconded the motion. There was one addition to the agenda, to review and recommend the Selectboard approve the Sole Source Procurement of an Orion meter cellular endpoint upgrade, and Seeley said this item would be added following the water and wastewater budget presentation. The agenda was approved with the additions with 6 in favor, 2 absent. **MOTION PASSED.**

3. Approval of April 22, 2021 and May 13, 2021 Minutes

The approval of the April 22, 2021 minutes was postponed since there was not a quorum of Committee members present who attended that meeting.

Baker moved and McLaughlin seconded the motion to approve the minutes of May 13, 2021. Seeley asked for the wording from Werner's May 13th Agenda Notes be added for clarity regarding the Weybridge water line agreement and tap-ons. 5 in favor, 2 absent, 1 abstention (Remsen). **MOTION PASSED.**

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4. Citizen Comments

There were no citizen comments.

5. Project Updates

Court Street Water Main Project - Werner reports that they're at the point where they'll be excavating the crossing from in front of the Painter House to Court Square, and Route 7 southbound traffic is being detoured to Main Street/Cross Street while this work is being done. He said water samples have tested negative, so the contractor will begin switching on the service lines. They're putting in additional crews to get the work completed, because they have to be out of there by July 15th.

Cady Road Culvert Project - Werner said the contract documents are complete and work is set to begin on July 12th. He said we received notification we were awarded a Class II Paving Grant in the amount of \$175,000 towards the cost of the reclamation and paving of Cady Road in 2022.

Main Street Sidewalks and Curbing Project – Werner reports the work will begin on June 14th. He said Jim Gish has been very helpful in communications with the storeowners on the work to be done. Also, they have heard from the owner of 50-56 Main Street regarding issues with the strength of the steel structure that supports the walkway by their building, and the owners are willing to work with us on that. He said we won't know for sure the condition of the structure until the sidewalk is removed.

Seeley informed the Infrastructure Committee that the contractor of the Main Street Sidewalks and Curbing Project, Champlain Construction, was also the low bidder for the remaining sidewalk projects in town this year. They requested the approval process be advanced in a timely manner to insure they retained their subcontractor working with them on the Main Street project, so the Selectboard approved the Sidewalk Project bid at their last meeting and bypassed Infrastructure Committee review.

East Middlebury Flood Resiliency Project – Werner said they're all set to sign the contract on June 15th and have the pre-construction meeting, and work will begin. He said the easements are now all complete.

82 **6. Water and Wastewater FY22 Budgets**

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84 Water Budget

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86 Werner went over the major drivers of the FY22 Water Budget, and said the largest
87 driver was \$50,000 towards the purchase of the cellular endpoint water meters.

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89 He said he did not increase the Capital Improvements amount by \$110,000 as we've
90 done in the past few years, to try to reduce the impact on water rates. Ramsay pointed
91 out also that the major addition of the \$50,000 for meters would be in Capital
92 Improvements.

93
94 Werner said the Water Base Rate went from \$60.00/quarter to \$65.00/quarter, with the
95 Usage Rate going from \$3.75/1,000 gallons to \$3.87/1,000 gallons. He said for a
96 typical water user, based on an average quarterly usage of 9,300 gallons, their bill
97 would go from \$94.88/quarter to \$100.99/quarter, an increase of \$6.11 per quarter.

98
99 Wiger-Grohs asked what about the impact on lower-income households and was there
100 a way the amount they paid could be based on their income. Seeley said several years
101 ago we had an expert assist the Committee with the best way to increase rates by
102 adjusting the base rate to reduce the impact on the users who have a lower income,
103 since they typically don't use that much water. She said the State also has a program
104 that helps people with utility payments. Seeley said she'd calculated the proposed
105 increase for an average user and it would be around \$42/annually or \$3.53/month.

106
107 McLaughlin asked about the increase in the line item for electricity at Well #3. Kernan
108 responded it was based on the way the electricity bills were trending, but he wasn't sure
109 if it was from an increase in rates or an increase in electricity. [NOTE: Jackie Sullivan
110 looked this up and said it was an increase in kilowatt hours that was driving the increase
111 in cost.]

112
113 Baker moved that the Committee recommend to the Selectboard a water base rate of
114 \$65.00 per quarter for in-town users and a water base rate of \$70.00 per quarter for out-
115 of-town users and usage rate of \$3.87 per 1,000 gallons for in-town users and \$4.07 per
116 1,000 gallons for out-of-town users for FY22. Remsen seconded the motion. The
117 motion carried with 6 in favor, 2 absent.

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119 Baker further moved that the Committee recommend to the Selectboard, the proposed
120 FY22 Water Fund budget of \$1,752,860. Remsen seconded the motion. The motion
121 carried with 6 in favor, 2 absent.

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Wastewater Budget

Werner said the major driver in the Wastewater Budget is their \$50,000 share of the cost for the cellular water meters. He said he decreased the Capital Improvements budget by \$43,000 for one year to reduce the COVID effects on rates. He said since we still have another year of the \$400,000 sewer bond, he also eliminated the \$100,000 that had been proposed to begin setting aside for the future treatment plan upgrade funding.

Werner said the proposed Wastewater Base Rate increase is from \$31.00/quarter to \$34.00/quarter, and an increase in the Usage Rate from \$6.78./1,000 gals to \$6.94/1,000 gals. He said for a typical water user, based on an average quarterly usage of 9,300 gallons, their sewer bill would go from \$93.06/quarter to \$98.54/quarter, an increase of \$4.48 per quarter. He said this makes the combined total increase of \$10.59 per quarter for a typical household.

Wiger-Grohs moved that the Committee recommend to the Selectboard, the proposed FY22 Wastewater Fund budget of \$2,789,226. McLaughlin seconded the motion. The motion carried with 6 in favor, 2 absent.

Wiger-Grohs further moved that the Committee recommend to the Selectboard, a base rate of \$34.00 per quarter and a usage rate of \$6.94 per 1,000 gallons for FY22. McLaughlin seconded the motion. The motion carried with 6 in favor, 2 absent.

7. Sole Source Procurement of Digital Meter

Kernan said we began the digital endpoint meter program in 2014, and the meters had a 10-year life span. He said over the years they've made two improvements to the technology of the meters and now some may not be able to load to the Cloud. He said Badger Meters has offered a 50% discount to change these meters out earlier than their life span, so he's asking for a recommendation that the Selectboard approve a Sole Source Procurement for this upgrade.

Baker moved, and Wiger-Grohs seconded, to recommend the Selectboard approve the Sole Source Procurement of 1,662 cellular endpoint meters at a cost of \$60/per meter for a total of \$99,720. The motion carried with 6 in favor, 2 absent.

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8. Wastewater Treatment Plant Phasing Study – Tata & Howard

Werner said we have received word from the Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) office that the \$7,570 for the phasing and funding study for the proposed upgrades to the wastewater treatment plan as proposed by Tata & Howard, do qualify for CWSRF funding, so we can now move forward. He said he is requesting the Committee recommend the Selectboard approve the addition to the Tata & Howard contract of \$7,570 for this study. He said we will need to bond for some of the major costs, but some we might be able to cover with grants, so this study will help sort out the timeline of the project for funding.

Wiger-Grohs moved to recommend the Selectboard approve the addition of \$7,570 to the Tata & Howard contract for a phasing study of the Wastewater Treatment Plant upgrades. Remsen seconded the motion. The motion carried with 6 in favor, 2 absent.

9. Committee Concerns

McLaughlin was concerned about the visibility of STOP signs due to tree branches.

Baker asked about the status of the fountain in the park and the location and the of the Ashlar blocks removed during the project. Ramsay said she would ask Community Liaison for information on the fountain, and that 25 to 50 Ashlar blocks are stored at the stump dump. Baker said he hoped we had an inventory and strategy for them, because he'd hate to see them disappear, and wondered if people could purchase them. Ramsay said she'd look into it.

10. Next Meeting

The Infrastructure Committee will not be meeting in July, so the next meeting will be Thursday, August 12, 2021 at 9:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Beth Dow