

**AVON WATER POLLUTION CONTROL AUTHORITY**  
**March 13, 2014**  
**Selectmen's Chambers, 4:30 pm**  
**Town of Avon**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

The Avon Water Pollution Control Authority was called to order at 4:36 pm by Mr. Farrell.

Present: Michael Farrell  
Eric Johansen  
Tom Armstrong  
Chris Roy  
Lawrence Baril, Town Engineer

Absent: Terry Ryan

**II. MINUTES OF PRECEDING MEETING – January 9, 2014**

**MOTION:** Mr. Farrell made a motion for approval of the January 9, 2014 minutes. The motion, seconded by Mr. Roy, received unanimous approval.

**III. COMMUNICATION FROM THE AUDIENCE - None**

**IV NEW BUSINESS –**

**2014 – 3 Set the Equivalent Dwelling Unit (EDU) rate for 2014**

Members discussed the potential to increase the annual sewer use rate.

Mr. Farrell mentioned projects such as the easement clearing which is a consistent issue.

Mr. Johansen noted the I & I Study which will reveal situations which will need to be done. It will be nice to know of that ahead of time and be prepared.

Mr. Baril noted the big treatment plant upgrade coming for the Town of Farmington.

Mr. Farrell mentioned a moderate increase is appropriate given the projects coming down the pike.

Mr. Baril responded to Mr. Armstrong's question that the Town of Avon, in the past, has tended to increase the rate in chunks rather than annually.

Mr. Armstrong suggested one approach is increasing annually based on how the Town taxes increase, however, when hit by a major assessment, we would need to go up by a larger amount.

Mr. Farrell believes that following the Town is too aggressive.

Mr. Baril noted the I & I Study is just the Farmington sewer shed only and noted an interceptor replacement in the Town of Farmington that was under-sized from day one and will need to be replaced. Additional connections to the Town of Farmington sewer shed are continuing. Although the account looks okay, there are numerous projects that are in the near future, such as the easement clearing. *(Note: Mr. Farrell left the meeting to help a citizen locate the Police Department at 4:43 pm)* Mr. Armstrong noted it doesn't make sense to be in step with the Town of Avon regarding the sewer rate increase. It would be ideal to determine what the exact collection is versus what the cost is.

Mr. Johansen noted that with inflation, an increase in the sewer rate makes sense. *(Note: Mr. Farrell returned to the meeting at approximately 4:48 pm)*. Mr. Baril noted the surrounding towns do not charge a flat rate, rather they charge Town of Avon a percentage of the cost to operate and treat effluent. Mr. Johansen also stated the sewer fund also pays the salaries of some of the Engineering Staff which increases based on inflation. Mr. Armstrong commented an increase should be done on a dollar amount, rather than a percentage. Mr. Baril responded to Mr. Johansen's question that the last

increase generated approximately \$31,000 for the fund. Mr. Roy mentioned the \$400,000 I & I Study may turn up \$4 million worth of problems - that's something to look at. Mr. Baril reviewed the potential problems the study will find. Mr. Baril confirmed that the funding will come out of the sewer fund as a capital improvement program that will cover the I & I Study. Any sewer-related program will need to go through supplemental appropriation.

Mr. Johansen noted a cost-benefit analysis will need to be done after the I & I Study for issues found during the study.

Mr. Armstrong noted it's a good idea to justify the increase. Mr. Johansen noted the easement clearing cost will be an annual cost. Mr. Farrell provided the monetary difference between raising the rate at \$320 or \$325. Mr. Farrell said he would prefer increasing the amount with a dollar amount, rather than a percentage and noted a \$325 increase will yield about \$100,000 for addressing easement issues, increase costs in treatment and anything potentially coming out of the I & I Study. Mr. Johansen noted this has been something that has been neglected in the past and an increase is a good justification for a problem that is new and that is known.

**MOTION:** Mr. Farrell made a motion to bring to public hearing the proposal to raise the fee from \$306 to \$325 per EDU commencing fiscal year, 2014. Mr. Armstrong noted that it would seem the increase is warranted in light of the increased expenses, such as the I & I Study, easement clearing that will be anticipated during 2014, 2015 and beyond. Mr. Johansen noted this will be reevaluated every year, so it's a good thing to look at each year. The motion, seconded by Mr. Armstrong, received unanimous approval.

Mr. Farrell requested clarification on details for holding the public hearing such as start time and ensuring proper notification is made for the newspaper. Engineering Staff acknowledged his request and will respond accordingly.

## **V. OLD BUSINESS**

**2013 – 5 Easement Access Management Report** – Agenda item to be tabled.

**2013 – 7 Assessment Conveyance** – Mr. Armstrong provided an overview of his research which would avoid any potential assessment collection mistakes when a property is transferred. The goal of the research would entail that every conveyance would follow a due diligence to determine what money is due at time of closing. Mr. Armstrong reviewed the State's tax exemptions, which seem broad. Further research will be done to determine how the Town Clerk will know to collect money owed at time of deed recording.

Discussion included identifying the correct party responsible for paying the conveyance fee, the question of increasing the interest rate for money not collected. Mr. Baril suggested placing a lien which would ensure the onus is on the seller for settling the fee at time of transfer. Mr. Farrell noted the term 'lien' has a negative connotation. The potential lien is a lien for a legitimate reason, not because someone defaulted on a loan. It was noted that a person can have a lien even though they are current with their payments. Mr. Johansen inquired whether a lien has any bearing on credit or anything else. Mr. Armstrong said it might. Mr. Farrell said the money owed should be satisfied with the person who agreed to the obligation but hesitates using the word lien. Mr. Armstrong said the fee should run with the land. Mr. Johansen noted a property's increase in value if it has a building addition or a sewer connection. Even though there's a lien, the house is worth more.

Mr. Farrell suggested to Mr. Armstrong he invite the Collector of Revenue and Town Clerk to a future meeting. Discussion continued regarding the list of conveyance exemptions and Mr. Armstrong noted the list is broad. Mr. Farrell provided closing recommendations to Mr. Armstrong such as studying past practices and inserting caveats for the exemptions.

**2011 – 10 I & I Study** – Mr. Baril noted he will attend the Board of Finance Meeting, to be held on March 24. He stated he is meeting with Fuss & O’Neill next week to finalize the contract and will hope to have the contract signed as soon as possible.

**VI PLANNING & ZONING MATTERS** – Mr. Baril noted that the subdivision, Stratfordshire, may appear on the agenda next month in response to the developer’s request to enter into a sewer permit application. Mr. Baril is expecting to receive the final plans soon. Mr. Baril confirmed the sewer for this subdivision will go through wetlands.

**VII COMMUNICATION FROM STAFF** – None

**VIII COMMUNICATION FROM MEMBERS** – Mr. Farrell extended well wishes for Mr. Armstrong’s retirement and appointment to the Planning & Zoning Commission. Mr. Roy inquired about the Rt. 44 Pump Station. Mr. Baril replied that the project is complete although there was a high temperature alarm for both pumps. The situation was handled efficiently and the air valve will be replaced.

**IX OTHER BUSINESS** – None

**X ADJOURNMENT -**

**MOTION:** Mr. Farrell motioned to adjourn the meeting at 5:30 p.m. The motion, seconded by Mr. Ryan, received unanimous approval.

Respectfully submitted,  
Suzanne Essex, Clerk