

**AVON WATER POLLUTION CONTROL AUTHORITY**

**September 8, 2011**

**Selectmen's Chambers 5:30 pm**

**Town of Avon**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

The Avon Water Pollution Control Authority was called to order at 5:33 pm by Michael Farrell.

Present: Thomas Armstrong  
Michael Farrell  
Eric Johansen  
Terry Ryan  
Lawrence Baril, Town Engineer  
Tim Foster, Superintendent of Sanitary Sewers

Absent: Jim Miller

Audience Members Include: Jeff Sard and Tom Francoline of Weatherstone, LLC  
John Koskovich, Contractor, of Water & Waste Equipment, Inc.  
Skip Alford of Alford Associates, Inc.

**II. MINUTES OF PRECEDING MEETING – August 11, 2011**

MOTION: Mr. Farrell made a motion for approval of the August 11, 2011 minutes.  
The motion, seconded by Mr. Ryan, received unanimous approval.

**III. COMMUNICATION FROM THE AUDIENCE –**

Mr. Farrell welcomed the gentlemen in the audience who were in attendance for Agenda item 2011 – 9. Mr. Farrell acknowledged Mr. Alford's request to address the Weatherstone agenda item first due to another meeting.

**V. OLD BUSINESS**

**2011- 9 Weatherstone Subdivision Low Pressure Sewer Request**

Mr. Alford spoke on behalf of Tom Francoline and Jeff Sard of Weatherstone. Mr. Alford provided an overview regarding the request to obtain low pressure sewers for the Weatherstone subdivision. Mr. Alford presented a map noting each phase and noted the proposal where the forced main would be installed. Each home would have a grinder pump. The Town would maintain the force main in the street and the pumps would be owned and maintained by the homeowner. The force main would be approximately 700 feet long. It would likely be a 2-inch line and it would tie into the existing gravity collection system. Mr. Alford noted he spoke to two people familiar with low pressure sewers. He received positive feedback from Fred Shaw, Superintendent of Pollution Control of the South Windsor WPCA who noted he hasn't been aware of an issue regarding odor or receiving complaints from residents. He also spoke to James Rotondo, head of Public Works who controls the sewer operation in Winchester and is responsible for maintaining the pumps and mains for the Highland Lake area there. He noted there haven't been any problems with the sewer main but noted the pump maintenance is a problem. The odors are caused when there's not enough flow in the line to make sure the water gets to the other end. To counter that, Mr. Alford suggested the possibility of adding up to 500 gallons a day of water to a dedicated pump at the end of the proposed low pressure system to flush the line, until all of the homes are occupied. Mr. Foster noted it may be a concern for the Avon Water Company to

connect directly to the sanitary system. The group discussed that a gravity connection of water to the sanitary system was possible so that there would be no cross-contamination.

Mr. Alford provided a preliminary cost benefit analysis of \$150,000 (for the developer) to service the eight houses. The balance of the subdivision would be serviced by a gravity collection system. Mr. Alford mentioned that individual property owners could obtain a maintenance contract for approximately \$400 a year to maintain their pump system. The problem of loss of power was then discussed – when the power fails, these pumps would not operate. Mr. Alford indicated the possibility of installation of emergency generators that can run, among other things, the sanitary pump. Mr. Alford discussed the difference between a pump system and a leach field if the homeowners lose electricity. There is a limited amount of storage capacity within a typical individual pump system – such that in some a homeowner could flush their toilet ten times. A downside for homeowners is they need to know not everything can be disposed of in the toilet as certain materials can clog or otherwise bind the pumps. Mr. Alford noted variability of anticipated flow depending on number and age of occupants. Mr. Alford noted the proposed forced main would be in the middle of the road as one side has the water main while the other side has electric and gas. It would be a solid piece of pipe. Mr. Farrell noted he would like to visit the area and read the literature regarding low pressure systems. Mr. Farrell inquired about the timeframe and Mr. Francoline responded he had a meeting with Steve Kushner (Town Planner) on Friday, Sept. 9 and inquired about the Members' position in anticipation of this meeting. Mr. Farrell inquired about setting precedence and the cost equivalent between the conventional gravity system and the low pressure system. Mr. Armstrong inquired about the connection charge for each lot. Mr. Baril replied affirmatively that each residential lot would be charged a connection fee.

Mr. Francoline spoke in response to Mr. Farrell's question about setting precedence. Mr. Francoline mentioned that if someone came up to you and said I am 2,300 feet from a gravity sewer and the Town has asked me to build a 1,200 foot road gratis and that is the precedence that would not be a bad one. It's not a situation where the gravity sewer is at our door and we're saying no. Because of the economic realities of today, we're trying to do a balancing act. Which piece do we do first? The planning office is adamant, because of public safety reasons and other reasons, they want to see the road (extension of Northington Drive) done right away. The original approvals were based on Phase III all as one phase and the road to be turned over to the Town at the end of phase III. Because we want to build in phases, the Town will go along with the idea of phasing but they want the road sooner or later, which is understandable.

Mr. Armstrong raised a concern how the pump failures would be handled. Since the homeowners will own the pumps, problems with them and their lateral lines will be their burden. Mr. Foster noted he is on a pump system in his neighborhood, which is near a lake. He does not notice any odors. Mr. Baril noted that an odor issue occurs when sewer sits in an anaerobic environment. Mr. Foster mentioned he spoke to Mr. Rotondo and mentioned the Town of Winchester owns the pumps and the system is designed for the area for which it's located. Mr. Farrell noted it's (Weatherstone) is a rocky area and inquired about potential issues. Mr. Alford responded that one needs to blast down deep enough, install proper bedding underneath so that the force main is installed below the frost line. Mr. Alford replied to Mr. Johansen's question that the life of a pump and noted his conversation with Mr. Rotondo of the Town of Winchester. After 12 years, they are beginning to have more maintenance requirements. The piping system in the ground probably has a life expectancy of about 100 years. Mr. Johansen mentioned the focus of the Town of Avon system has been based on gravity. It's low maintenance and better for the Town.

Mr. Johansen noted the prior focus of the design of the Avon system has been based on gravity. There are places in Town where a forced main system could have been installed which may have been cheaper. It's low maintenance, better for the Town and better for the homeowner to have a gravity

system. The danger side of setting precedence is that it's tied to this road. Is building the road comparable to someone else's request?

Mr. Alford replied to Mr. Armstrong's question regarding ensuring the homeowner will maintain the pump systems. The homeowner should have a maintenance contract for the pump and know what can go in the toilet.

Mr. Farrell agrees with Mr. Johansen that there is a master plan for the gravity system. The proposal from Weatherstone is unique. He would like to hear more about it. He also inquired if there is a way to incorporate language that we recognize it as extenuating circumstances which had an unusual economic financial impact on the developer. Mr. Baril cautioned from using that language since everyone would have an economic reason. If the commission wants to reduce the concept of precedence, this could be a pilot program for the Town of Avon. This is a test case and places a timeframe on the project. He continued to say the facility plan has been the guide. There have been places noted in the guide that have been identified as logical candidates for low pressure sewers, such as Ox Bow Drive and Cider Brook Road.

Mr. Farrell noted his experience with the fire department (The Town of Avon Volunteer Fire Department) where they have language in their master water supply plan that states a developer should connect to the water main if he is within 1,000 feet of a water main. Similar language could be adopted when connecting to a gravity system.

Mr. Johansen inquired if Haynes Road could have a similar system whereby saving the developer a lot of money. Mr. Baril indicated that it could have and this was a real concern to him.

Mr. Francoline mentioned it's not a case of economics. Low pressure sewers don't necessarily save money. We're 2,300 feet from the connection. This is important if you're thinking about precedence issues. The building lots will cost more because of the mechanical device that will be installed. It's not a case of economics but one of logistics in terms with ability to do this without building the 1,700 feet of connection. I've been building homes for 35 years and I've dealt with homeowner problems and problems with the Town like sinking roads and sewer pumps. I'm not in a position to put something on your doorstep that is against my principles and against what we've been about for 35 years. The system has merits and it can be a good system. I'm not looking to give the Town something that isn't a good system. I have installed gravity sewers in the Town which I would not do again if this system were available. Coldspring Road between Stagecoach and Avonridge is 26 feet deep at one location. That sewer was in a bed of sand but it's now squashed. Gravity sewers are not the solution for everything. If you require a maintenance contract, that is not unreasonable.

Mr. Johansen noted that a pump system is more preferable compared to a septic system due to potential pollution and wetland issues. Mr. Farrell noted this will come down the pike sometime. Mr. Foster mentioned this is a unique opportunity to get involved in a small system. A concern is that since it's done in phases, the low pressure system request may surface again at the top of Weatherstone and Saddleridge.

Discussion continued among members, staff and audience to review advantages, disadvantages and potential concerns. Mr. Farrell mentioned to Mr. Baril if he could forward an email to Mr. Kushner outlining the feedback from tonight's meeting conveying there are concerns but they are not insurmountable and everyone at this point is comfortable in moving the project along. Mr. Farrell thanked the audience members for attending.

**2011 – 7      32 Mounainview Avenue Fees** – Mr. Farrell noted there wasn't anyone in the audience present for agenda item 2011 – 7 and agreed with Mr. Baril's suggestion to table the agenda item.

**2010 – 9 Haynes Road Update** – Mr. Baril provided an update. The connection to the existing sewer line was made. New information regarding utilities in the southwest corner of the Avon Health property came to light recently. A water service connection to Avon Health which is older and has leaded joints which means the joints may fail if they are disturbed. This led to other options such as directional borings which was not an ideal option for Sunlight Construction due to a cost increase on that part of the run. The sewer permit agreement was reviewed by Murtha Cullina and resulted in numerous changes. The document was signed by the Town, Sunlight Construction and Hemlock. Possible alternative routes were discussed.

**2011 – 3 FOG** – Mr. Baril noted the next step is to finalize the forms so the forms can be sent to the Class III and Class IV restaurants. Mr. Armstrong mentioned he would stop into the Engineering Office to review the forms.

#### **IV NEW BUSINESS**

**2011 – 10 I & I Study** – Mr. Baril noted he and Mr. Foster met with Fuss & O'Neill who presented additional information regarding I & I. The Town will pursue an extension of the facilities plan project in order to apply for clean water fund money, which would be 55%. The Town would fund the remaining 45%. A letter of intent will be sent to DEEP as a request for the Town to be added to the Clean Water List.

**VI PLANNING & ZONING MATTERS** – None

**VII COMMUNICATION FROM STAFF** – Mr. Foster provided an overview of the 27 inch interceptor break near 60 Eddy Street. Proper emergency personnel were contacted and the situation has been remedied. Because the incident is connected to a hurricane event, the Town will try to obtain FEMA assistance, which would be up to 75% of the cost.

**VIII COMMUNICATION FROM MEMBERS** – Mr. Armstrong requested a copy of the sewer master plan which Mr. Baril mentioned he would send. Mr. Baril explained that the Town does not have language that obligates people to connect to the sewer.

Conversation continued regarding the proposed application for a pump sewer system for Weatherstone including open space considerations, setting time constraints, level of protection to homeowners and projected costs to homeowners.

**IX OTHER BUSINESS** – None

**X ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION:** Mr. Farrell motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:55 pm. The motion, seconded by Mr. Armstrong received unanimous approval.

Respectfully submitted,  
Suzanne Essex, Clerk