

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
C/O TOWN HALL
10 MAPLE AVENUE
BEACON FALLS, CT 06403**

**SPECIAL TOWN MEETING
UPGRADES TO THE BEACON FALLS WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT
July 9, 2013
MINUTES
(Draft – Subject to Approval)**

First Selectman Gerard F. Smith called the Town Meeting held at Woodland Regional High School to order at 7:00 P.M. with the Pledge to the flag.

PRESENT: First Selectman G. Smith, Selectmen D. D’Amico, C. Bielik, Walter Opuszynski, Waste Water Treatment Plant Superintendent, representatives from Woodard & Curran and approximately 20 Town residents.

Clerk read call for this Town Meeting. **Sue Dowdell made the motion to accept the call as read, 2nd by Helen Mis. All voted aye.**

Sue Dowdell made the motion to appoint Martha Melville to serve as Clerk for the meeting, 2nd by Walter Opuszynski. No more nominations three (3) times. All voted aye. One ballot cast for Martha Melville.

Mike Krenesky made the motion to appoint Gerard Smith to serve as Moderator for this Town Meeting, 2nd by Gary Komarowsky. No more nominations three (3) times. All aye. One ballot cast for Gerard Smith.

First Selectman G. Smith noted that this mandatory upgrade was the second costliest item for Beacon Falls tax payers after the Region 16 education budget.

Dave Prickett, Vice President of Woodard and Curran and project manager for the town’s Waste Water Treatment Plant upgrade showed a presentation to inform the town residents about what the project entails. (These slides will be posted to the Beacon Falls town web site.)

Highlights of his presentation included:

- Providing a background of the project
- Recommending developing a 20-year plan
- Noted that the 55% of the project would be funded by a state of Connecticut grant and Beacon Falls would maintain eligibility for future funding
- Suggested looking at lifecycle costs over 20 years, and what would be most beneficial to the community

- Suggested to hold off on road repairs until pipes are installed
- The town now has a comprehensive sewers system map
- Project includes upgrades to three pump stations
- The \$16 million cost estimate of this project was conservative and excludes any potential grant funds
- New state regulations for phosphorus allowed in water will go into effect in May 2014
- Beacon Falls also needs to address the overflow from storm water flowing into the plant

Public Comments:

First Selectman G. Smith clarified that user fees would be a way to fund the waste water treatment facility project. Fees would be based on usage and put into a dedicated fund to pay for this service, rather than paying for it from taxes. He noted that currently, only half the town is connected to the sewer system.

Joe Pavlik, 21 Fieldstone Lane: expressed his concerns about preventing potential cost overruns on this \$16M project and if the costs would escalate. He believed Beacon Falls needs this project, but questioned how to keep a handle on the price quoted and not have overruns similar to the Depot Street Bridge project.

D. Prickett commented that this was a fair question. He stated there are no guarantees. This is the start of the planning phase. His firm used conservative cost estimates, in the high range plus 30% for contingency. He added that usually the numbers go down. His firm designs projects and puts them out to bid. The project could be at the mercy of price and availability of building materials which could potentially increase costs.

Kurt Hummel, 6 Patricia Terrace: commented that only 50% of town is on the sewer system, however all tax payers pay for the sewer system. He asked if any new connections for existing homes have been made in the last 10 years. He commented that these homes have ailing septic systems. He noted that Dolly Drive and Patricia Terrace have been waiting for sewer connections for the last 3-5 years.

First Selectman G. Smith noted that he knows of no extensions of service and that a past public vote defeated the funding to extend sewer connections to existing homes. He noted there are no sewer extensions involved in this project. He also noted that as part of USDA funding a user fee may be required.

Robert Spear, 14 Lakeview Rise: commented that \$16M was a lot of money and asked what the major items in this project are.

D. Prickett noted the big ticket items were pump station upgrades; larger clarifiers and aerators, more robust secondary clarifiers, and new pumping systems with the capacity for higher flows, essentially doubling the size of the current waste water treatment plant.

R. Spear asked if Woodard & Curran will manage the construction.

D. Prickett noted that Woodard & Curran will design and oversee the project but will not bid on it.

Gary Komarowsky, 15 Second Street: commented that he was also on a septic system. The town has a 40 year old system and asked if the new system is bigger, badder, and better than what the town really needed. He questioned if this project will meet future needs and anticipated growth as more homes are built.

D. Prickett commented that they used a conservative basis for the plan of doubling the plant capacity, based on a 20-year plan. He noted that planning beyond 20 years was not practical.

Tony SanAngelo, 308 Pines Bridge Road: noted that in the past part of Rimmon Hill was approved for sewer using a farm grant and each new house was charged a sewer hookup fee. He asked how was that money used and noted that Beacon Falls, unlike other area towns, doesn't charge a dumping fee when you pump out your septic system.

First Selectman G. Smith noted that previously wastewater fund money had been transferred to the general fund and was used to offset previous taxes; currently the balance was approximately \$300,000.

With no other business, **C. Bielik made the motion to adjourn this Town Meeting, 2nd by D. D'Amico at 7:39 PM.**

Respectfully submitted,

Martha Melville, Clerk for Special Town Meeting – Upgrades to the Beacon Falls Wastewater Treatment Plant