

**BEACON FALLS BOARD OF SELECTMEN
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 2014
(Subject to Approval)**

First Selectman Chris Bielik called the meeting to order at 7:03 PM with the Pledge of Allegiance.

MEMBERS PRESENT: First Selectman C. Bielik, Selectman P. Betkoski and Selectman D. Sorrentino

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

PUBLIC PRESENT: Charlie Edwards, Walter Opuszynski, Rich Minnick entered the meeting at 7:08 PM

1. DISCUSSION – CHARLES EDWARDS – PROPOSED SUBDIVISION – TIVERTON (off Burton Road)

C. Bielik opened the floor to C. Edwards for discussion of the proposed Tiverton subdivision. C. Edwards showed the Board of Selectmen the original approved project plans extending Haley Ridge Road and connecting it to Fairfield Place, and including 31 one-acre+ lots. C. Edwards explained a couple of factors made the project unfeasible, primarily the road costs which were in the area of \$3-4 million. Town regulations also require 10% road grade so blasting would be needed, and 30 foot road width curb to curb, which add to the difficulty and cost of the project. C. Edwards suggested that future changes to these regulations would make it easier to build and maintain roads in town. P. Betkoski asked the total amount of road and C. Edwards advised it was in the neighborhood of 3,100 feet of road. With the current town regulations requiring at least 1 acre lots, he is not able to build this project, due to too much infrastructure.

C. Edwards then revealed revised plans to the Board of Selectmen showing the same property divided into 3 parcels: Parcel A (8 acres) extends Fairfield Place to a permanent cul-de-sac; Parcel B (19.3 acres) extends Haley Ridge to a temporary cul-de-sac with a 50 foot easement access into Parcel C (23.9 acres). The revised plan shows a total of 19 larger lots for all 3 parcels.

C. Edwards intends to work on each Parcel in stages, beginning with Parcel A by extending the cul-de-sac on Fairfield Place and building one detention pond. Parcel A would have city water and sewer and consists of 6 lots total. With fewer roads, 2 detention ponds are eliminated from the project, so only 1 pond is needed for drainage. The roads would no longer connect and there is much less road cost. Parcel B would not have a permanent cul-de-sac, only a temporary one, so it allows future access into Parcel C. Haley Ridge would have well water and city sewer.

At Fairfield Place, C. Edwards he would be addressing the turnaround so that it is regulation size permanent cul-de-sac and there are 5 lots added to the cul-de-sac. Water on the street would be addressed right away with the detention pond for drainage. As is, the current turnaround may allow for 4 lots, rather than extending the road further for an extra lot. C. Edwards will go back and look at the regulations on the cul-de-sac, as a permanent cul-de-sac may require a variance. Phase 2 of the project is a temporary cul-de-sac off of Haley Ridge Road and a 50 foot extension to allow access into Parcel C.

P. Betkoski asked C. Edwards what his next move was and he replied that he wanted to get the approval of the Board of Selectmen before the project further. C. Edwards will review the regulations

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for the lots at the end of Fairfield Place and C. Bielik and D. Sorrentino asked for clarification on that issue. C. Edwards will advise the amount of road on the revised plan, which is significantly less, possibly 700 feet. Everything built will be to current code and regulations. C. Edwards will provide copies of the plans for the Selectmen and a clarification from the Engineer on the lots at the end of Fairfield Place.

C. Bielik called a recess to the meeting at 7:26 PM, in order to relocate to the Conference Room across the hall and join other board members.

The Board of Selectmen was joined by members of the Board of Finance, members of the W.P.C.A., Town Finance Manager, Town Engineer James Galligan, and Dave Prickett and Jay Sheehan of Woodard & Curran.

C. Bielik reconvened the meeting at 7:30 PM in the large Conference Room.

2. **DISCUSSION – WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT – Participants include Board of Selectmen, Board of Finance and WPCA.**

C. Bielik opened the discussion by introducing D. Prickett of Woodard & Curran and J. Sheehan, who would lead a roundtable discussion on the recommendations to the Wastewater Treatment Plant. D. Prickett distributed the attached handout as an outline.

D. Prickett began by restating the 4 primary drivers for the Wastewater Treatment Plant project:

- The age of the plant, built circa 1970, with 40 year old infrastructure
- The new phosphorus permit by the State of Connecticut, which had an April 1, 2014 compliance date. The town is on borrowed time but has been showing a good faith effort to comply.
- The town's lack of ability to attain nitrogen credit, which costs the town approximately \$50,000 per year in fees paid to the State. The program is changing and the nitrogen penalty will increase.
- And the perceived wet weather issue with the plant not designed for increased capacity when flow is high.

The goals of the discussion tonight are to recap the recommendations for the plant and talk about options for action: including no action, single phase or multiple phase action, today's funding opportunities, and work towards setting a date for a public information meeting.

J. Sheehan stressed the drivers of the project are not about expansion of the plant.

D. Prickett explained the Wastewater Treatment Plant proposal is a \$16 million project, which addresses the goals above by updating equipment, increasing capacity, while allowing people to connect to sewer when they are ready. He reviewed options which include taking no action and not moving forward with the recommendation. This course of non-action does not eliminate any of the

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issues which the town will face down the road. Eventually the town will be forced to comply with the requirements.

With regard to timing, we are in the most favorable grant conditions since the late 1970s, especially from the State. J. Rodorigo asked about the timing of the State grant and J. Sheehan explained the current grant appropriations are for 2014-2015, under the Malloy administration. The State currently is offering a 30% grant, 20 year loan at 2%. 2016-2017 funds are uncertain. D. Prickett advised that Beacon Falls is high on the list of small communities seeking grant funds for this program.

C. Bielik asked about the availability of grants and the political environment. J. Sheehan explained that political atmosphere aside, phosphorous is a federal mandate. The nitrogen program is being reauthorized this year for a 5 year cycle, so these regulations will not go away. Eventually the town would be fined and will need to comply with them.

C. Edwards asked how much money has been spent already on the study. D. Prickett stated the cost was \$600,000. C. Bielik clarified \$1,000,000 funds were authorized in 2011, and \$700,000 in 2012 and the bonding/bands used to carry these funds.

C. Edwards asked about the grant application process and D. Prickett and J. Sheehan explained that the town has a paper commitment from the State for 30% of \$16 million/20 years at 2% and a soft commitment from RDA. J. Sheehan explained the next steps; the report needs to be finalized and the town needs to approve the project, then the grants will be funded. Before RDA gives the town a formal commitment, the project must be approved.

A discussion of the grant options followed and C. Bielik asked about choosing the grant source. The town will need to choose one grant path or the other, as they are not cumulative. The State offer is 30%. The RDA percentage is up to 45% with 30-40% being realistic for Beacon Falls. Advantages of RDA are the 40 year loan term, and ability to back capture monies spent on the planning phase. The negatives to RDA are the higher interest rate and that funding occurs in waves, \$4-5 million a year. RDA does not reimburse until you reach the construction phase of the project, so the town would need short term financing to cover soft costs in the design phase.

C. Edwards noted the cost of project is \$16 million in 2014 dollars. D. Prickett explained this cost will increase 3% each year with construction escalation estimated at \$500,000 per year. The State of Connecticut grant would allow for escalation. C. Edwards stated that people should know what we stand to lose by not acting now.

J. Rodorigo did the math on the two grant options of 2% at 20 years or 4% at 40 years, the difference is insignificant and he believes regardless of who is governor, this grant money will not disappear. J. Sheehan noted that Beacon Falls could lose their place in the cue and have to wait longer for the monies. J. Rodorigo believes the better option would be the RDA grant over 40 years because of the impact on the mill rate would be lessened. The town will need to raise 10-12 million for this project, so the longer the term the better.

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There are 1,300 town households on city sewer at present, with some questions to the exact numbers. It is difficult to go back to records and confirm who is on the sewer line, as there is no mandate to hook up to the sewer. J. Rodorigo questioned how do we pay for the project, even with the ability to hook up more houses. We are one of the few communities that does not have a sewer assessment and we would have to educate the public on why a sewer assessment is needed. Half of the community is not connected to the sewer, so we need to bridge this gap. The project affects the entire community as having an outdated potentially failing treatment plant impacts the town's future.

C. Bielik asked if the town delays the project, would we lose access to the grant paths or be assessed fines for not showing good faith by moving forward. D. Prickett explained that from now until June 30, 2015 we have access to the State grant funds. Beyond that, there are questions to the amount of grant dollars available. J. Rodorigo noted that the State of Connecticut is not fining any towns for phosphorous right now and the town is temporarily in compliance with the regulations.

D. Prickett believes that someone from the State of Connecticut can be present at an informational public meeting and he will invite someone from RDA to take part. J. Rodorigo believes we need to educate the public on the project on its impact on the town, before moving forward.

The group agreed that an Informational Public Meeting is the next step. D. Prickett concurred but stated that the group needs to take a collective stance on what action which needs to be taken for the project. C. Bielik asked about the timing of the phases of the project, and the recommendation would be to have no more than 3 years between phases. Our Town Engineer stated that appropriation for the full amount comes first. J. Sheehan said it makes it more difficult to do this type of project in phases from a construction standpoint, as the plant needs to operate during the renovations. Woodard & Curran would continue to seek other funding options for the town when a decision is made, but the State and RDA are the largest sources available.

The group discussed that WPCA, Board of Finance, and Board of Selectmen need to be on the same page with this project and should meet and concur. In the room, WPCA and Board of Selectmen are present; however four members of the Board of Finance are not present. WPCA members are all behind the project.

J. Rodorigo believes this project is necessary, but believes there is a process to educate the public on the project. He agrees with the recommendations, but not the timeline and the implementation of the project. He is concerned about having one chance to pass this project to the public and how the town will pay for this. D. Prickett offered to take a reverse approach by looking at a proposed mil rate number and looking at how to pay for the project based on this number. Discussion continued about possible sewer assessments to help offset the costs and the effect the project would have on the mil rate. There are downsides to delaying, particularly with the aging function of the Wastewater Treatment Plant and potential for emergency repairs, potential changes to grant availability and construction escalation costs. Also, at some point the State can issue an order, forcing the project to move forward.

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C. Bielik proposed Wednesday, October 22 or Wednesday, October 15, 2014, as potential dates for the Informational Public Hearing as a step to educating the public. There would be a multi-tiered approach to educate the public, newspaper articles, plant tours and other deliberate outreach. J. Rodorigo noted that any vote on this issue should not take place during budget season. The group discussed the timing of the voting process. There will be no commitment on funds from RDA until a vote occurs and the State funds are only guaranteed through June 30, 2015.

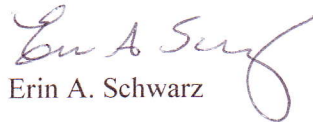
C. Edwards asked for a consensus of those in the room on moving forward with the project. The group agreed the Informational Meeting will give members a pulse on how the community feels.


The next Board of Finance meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, October 7, 2014 and D. Prickett and J. Sheehan will attend this meeting to review the project with the entire Board of Finance. J. Rodorigo asked D. Prickett to work on the mil rate scenario.

ADJOURNMENT

J. Rodorigo made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:36 PM. D. Sorrentino seconded the motion. All ayes.



Respectfully submitted,


Erin A. Schwarz



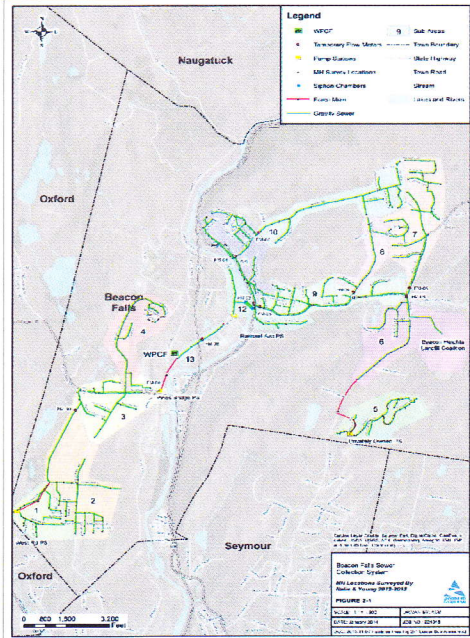

PROJECT SUMMARY, WPCF RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLEMENTATION ALTERNATIVES

WASTEWATER FACILITIES PLAN
Inter-Board Workshop
September 24, 2014
Jay Sheehan, PE
Dave Prickett, PE

Project Background

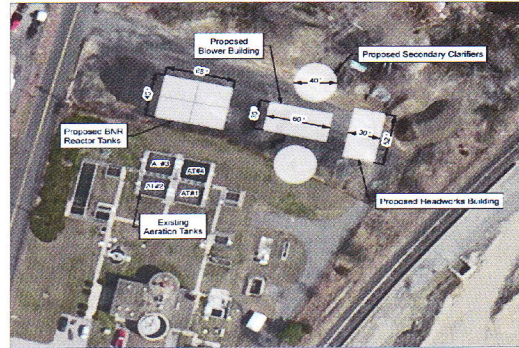
- **Project Drivers**
 - Aging & deteriorating infrastructure
 - New phosphorus requirement
 - Inability to attain nitrogen credits
 - Wet weather inundation
- **Goals for Tonight's Workshop**
 - Recap WPCF recommendations
 - Discuss implementation alternatives
 - Review funding & finance options
 - Select implementation plan path
 - Set agenda for public informational meeting

WPCF Recommendations

Key Limitations

- Unit processes not sized for permitted capacity
- Old equipment (>20 years)
- Headworks are too small
- No Aeration Tank Baffling
- Undersized Clarifiers
- Undersized UV System
- Antiquated Sludge Handling



Proposed \$16M WPCF Update

- Addresses existing needs and current plant capacity



Implementation Alternatives

Town Decision

- No Action
- Single Phase
- Multiple Phases

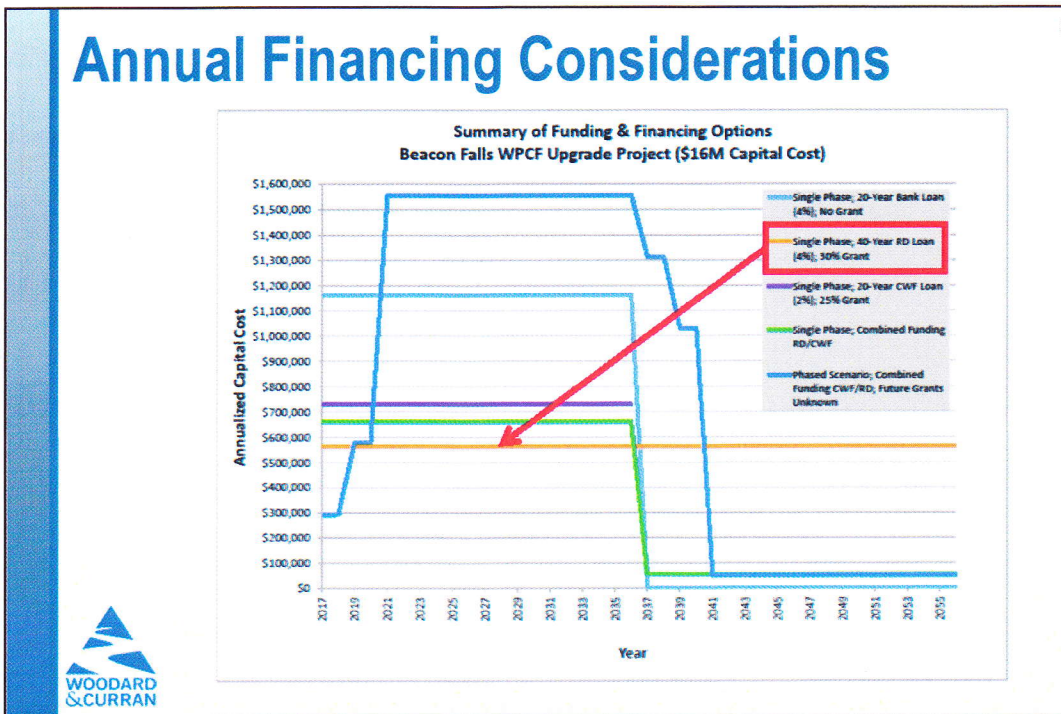
Current Grant and Loan Sources

- RD, up to 45% grant, 40 year loan at 4%
- CWF, up to 30% grant, 20 year loan at 2%

Time Element of Decision

- Regulatory considerations
- 3% escalation in costs per year





- ## Schedule for Key Milestones
- 6
- **Funding/Financing**
 - RD needs appropriation by Fall 2014
 - CWF funding commences July 1, 2014
 - **Key Milestones**
 - Interim phosphorus system installed prior to April 1, 2014 - *DONE*
 - Identify RD's level of funding for full \$16M project
 - Town to make project appropriation
 - Design to start Fall/Winter 2014
 - Contractors to bid in late 2015
 - Construction in Spring 2016 thru 2017