

Town of New Hartford
Water and Sewer Asset Evaluation Team
Tuesday, August 23, 2016

MINUTES

Committee Members Present: First Selectman Dan Jerram, Chairman; WPCA Chairman Bud Butler, WPCA member Joe Toro, Members at Large: Tom Hart, Kim Estep.

Others Present: Joe Ridge, CDM Smith Consulting Engineers, Selectman Laura Garay, WPCA member Marybeth Greenwood; Member of the Press Kathryn Boughton; Administrative Assistant Christine Hayward.

Chairman Dan Jerram called the meeting to order at 4:10 PM.

Approval of Minutes:

MOTION: by Butler to approve the minutes of the August 2, 2016 meeting as presented; seconded by Hart.

Abstain: Toro

Approved: Hart, Butler, Jerram, Estep

Motion passes, Minutes approved.

Review/discussion and possible action of RFP for potential sale of assets:

The committee reviewed the Draft "Request for Proposal for the Purchase, Operation & Maintenance of Drinking Water and/or Wastewater Assets" The original document was drafted by Mr. Butler and Mr. Ridge and was distributed to members for individual review and comment. Those comments were reviewed and put together to create the document now ready for review as a group.

The committee made edits and revisions as they looked at the document page by page.

Discussion regarding the need for a "bid bond" occurred. Mr. Ridge of CDM Smith stated that bid bonds are used to hold bidders through negotiations. It helps to secure a level of stability before the final deal is sealed. If a bidder walks away before the final transaction, the bond is retained by the owner. Mr. Ridge will check to see what the typical procurement for this type of transaction might be.

Member Hart asked if the mandatory pre-bid site visit requirement will be waived at all. The reply was that all bidders must visit the site; no exceptions.

Mr. Butler noted that the dates and timeframes listed in the document are "place holders." Timing and dates can be adjusted as deemed best by the Team.

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Discussion occurred regarding the intent to give preference to those bidders who bid on both the water and sewer systems. It was agreed that this notice of intent should remain in the document.

It was noted that following the revision of this document to include the changes discussed at this meeting, the document will be referred to the Attorney for the WPCA for a full legal review.

Mr. Hart, noting a reference to “notices to connect” in the Wastewater System summary section of the RFP, asked if those connections had occurred. Mr. Butler replied that the notices that were sent to 38 abutters of the sewer (not yet connected) were not “orders to connect.” The letters that were sent at that time were more of “a notice that you will be getting a notice.” Mr. Jerram noted that following the mailing, several property owners sent “requests for deferral” from mandatory connections. The WPCA reviewed those requests and the matter has sat idle for the time being.

Discussion also occurred regarding the terminology used to describe those who are water and/or sewer customers. It was noted that there are so many different types of connections (single family, multi family with one meter, multi family with more than one meter, etc.) that it is very difficult to use any term other than “user” if someone is connected to water and/or sewer service.

Member Toro expressed his concern that the meetings of this committee are occurring at a time of day that makes it difficult for public to be in attendance. It is his belief that there are taxpayers who would like to be present at these meetings. In reply, it was noted that the function of this group at the present time is “operational” in nature. Developing a Request for Proposal is often accomplished as an administrative item and does not need public input. First Selectman Jerram noted that once this committee accepts the document as “final,” the committee will need to recommend the approval and publication of the document to the Board of Selectmen. At that time, there will be opportunity for public input. It was agreed that there should be some form of public informational session so that residents can become informed about the possible sale of the assets.

The Committee set their next meeting date as September 6, 2016 at 4:00 PM. At that meeting, they will review the final document and hope to be able to recommend it to the Board of Selectmen for consideration and action.

MOTION: by Butler to adjourn at 6:17 PM; seconded by Hart.

Unanimous.

Respectfully Submitted,

Christine Hayward, Administrative Assistant