

Town of Lakeville
Joint Meeting of the Board of Water Commissioners/Board of Selectmen
and the Water Advisory Committee
Wednesday, October 2, 2013
7:00 PM – Lakeville Senior Center

On October 2, 2013, the Board of Water Commissioners/Board of Selectmen held a Joint Meeting with the Water Advisory Committee at 7:00 PM at the Lakeville Senior Center. Chairman Belliveau opened the Board of Water Commissioners/Board of Selectmen's Meeting at 7:00 PM. Selectmen present: Scott Belliveau, John Powderly and Aaron Burke. The Water Advisory Committee Meeting was called to order by Chairman Zienkiewicz at 7:00 PM. Members present: Sylvester Zienkiewicz, James Gouveia, Douglas Mills and Joseph Urbanski. Also present: Rita Garbitt – Town Administrator, Christine Weston - Recording Secretary and William Schwartz from Taunton Water. LakeCAM was recording the meeting.

Meet with the Residents of Surrey Drive, Carriage House Drive and Paddock Hill Drive to Discuss the Proposal for Installing Municipal Water Lines and Repaving of Streets

Chairman Belliveau stated that the Selectmen would like to get some input from the residents, since two (2) of the three (3) streets are scheduled for repaving in the next year. It will not be this fall since the new Superintendent of Streets was just hired this past Monday. Fortunately or unfortunately, the Town has a water tower that has to be paid for, and there are three (3) types of plans to pay for it. One way is to expand the water supply through the betterment process. However, the Town would like to ask people living on the roads that could receive municipal water what their opinion is. No does not mean no, and yes does not mean yes. There could be a default to plan C, and the Town puts in the water. The Town has to reclaim two of the roads (Surrey Drive & Carriage House Drive), since they cannot be paved over. The roads need to be taken up and started over from scratch. The Town would like to handle the process in a friendly manner, not an unfriendly manner.

Chairman Zienkiewicz stated that the Town is fortunate that there is a large water main on Route 18 that carries water to the prison in Bridgewater. It is a 16 inch main and has the capacity to provide water for the 49 lots under consideration. Back when the Water Master Plan was drawn up, the engineers, Camp, Dresser & McGee had these streets on the map for 8 inch pipes, which is the same that the Taunton Water Department would ask the residents to put in. This is the standard size for fire protection. It is a relatively easy run, and the Town is familiar with some engineers and contractors in the area. The roadways are 20' wide of asphalt, but it is really a 40' road layout, since the Town does own a 10' right of way on each side of the 20' considered to be the street. The pipes are typically put beside the paved portion of the street, not underneath the street. When they put the water main in, they tap it off and bring the stub or curb stop right to the edge of the lawn. Then they backfill it, and that is the extent of the work that gets paid for with the betterment. A significant effort is crossing Route 18, since that is a State highway, and scheduling has to take place a few months in advance. After that goes through, it is pretty easy going in those neighborhoods. When they complete the main and the roadway is fixed, it will never have to be dug up again. If a resident chooses to tie into a stub left for their lot, that is good, and if not, in five (5) years they still can tie in, since the stubs are there. The betterment is just a way of spreading out the cost.

These two (2) developments were built roughly around the same time and have similar frontage with similar sized houses. There are no commercial businesses, stores, churches, or factories, and there is no way to extend the street any further. It is simple to split up the cost with all having equal interest. There are other places in Town where you will not hear that same story. People will be paying differently, since their lot sizes are significantly different. This area is essentially all the same as far as the betterment is concerned. The pipes come with a 75 year guarantee. They expect the pipes to be there for life. There are a lot of inspections, and care is taken when the piping is put in and the actual meter is inside your house. If there is anything leaking, from either Taunton or Lakeville water, since they are being very careful for how the pipe is going in, it is a big deal, since any lost water has to be paid for. If someone wants to tie in, they can hire a contractor. They dig through your lawn right up to the house. A plumber then does the tie-in inside the house. That is probably a day's work for the plumber. The betterment was originally expected to cost less than \$20,000 each, divided amongst the 49 lots. There are State procurement laws, and Lakeville has to jump through a lot of ropes and paperwork to get this done.

Chairman Belliveau stated that this project will have to be done by an engineer to get an exact figure. He thought we were saying \$15,000. Saying \$20,000 is an overestimate to make sure everything is covered. Chairman Zienkiewicz added that there are plenty more chances to stop this process. If everyone likes the project, then it is for the Selectmen to proceed ahead. At the stage of 50% design, everyone can see what is taking place with schematic plans. Then they would do the detail work and preliminary pricing, and then send it out to bid. It is certainly something that will take months to prepare for. It should be ready for next spring. Chairman Belliveau stated that is why the Board wants to hear from the residents first, since once they pave the roads, the Town would not do this. This is the proper time to ask the residents. We all have wells, including me, and it costs me \$1,000 a year to change filters and take care of my filtering system.

Robert Chestnut asked if there would be hydrants installed as well. Chairman Belliveau responded that there would be, every so many feet. Mr. Mills responded that it is typically every 500 feet. Those who live on Paddock Hill and Surrey Drive can check with their insurance company to see if they can get a reduction on their insurance bill. They should be able to, since there is now a hydrant nearby and water available. Mr. Chestnut asked if the next step is to determine if all the residents or fifty percent agree. Then the residents will be provided a definitive number. Chairman Belliveau responded in the affirmative. One of the residents asked about a ball park figure. Chairman Zienkiewicz responded that there will be a connection fee of \$2,000 for the one (1) inch connection and \$650 for the capital improvement paid to the City of Taunton. The resident also has to purchase a meter, so it is almost \$3,000 for those costs alone. Then, there is the pipe that goes from the curb stop, next to the right of way, inside the house. This is a plastic pipe that comes in 500 foot rolls and does not cost a lot. There are several contractors in this area that do this type of work often and quickly. Then there is a need for a plumber to do the inside work. The well water cannot be mixed with the Town water, since they are both at two (2) different pressures. However, the homeowner can use the water from two (2) different connections for different purposes. The plumber has to put in a valve bracket and pressure reducer on what was the well entrance, and then they would put the meter into that bracket. If you are used to having hard water or un-softened water, you would want to stay with what you have. The water is from Elder's Pond and Assawompset Pond. If you use a water softener, you probably won't get rid of it. If not, you would probably continue not using it.

One of the residents stated that this gets pretty expensive, almost \$100 a month. When he lived in a MWRA (Mass Water Resources Authority) District, he paid \$150 a month, and that was only for him. Chairman Zienkiewicz stated that the costs are about half a penny per gallon. Another resident said he believes we will still drink Poland Springs water. This is quite a large expense for not much of a change. Today it is a stub, and we do not have to tie in. Tomorrow may be different, and you may be required to tie in. Chairman Zienkiewicz stated that no, that is not legal. Chairman Belliveau stated that he is not trying to sell anyone the Town water. He is just saying we have a problem here, and I am trying to solve it. We also have roads that will be repaved. Selectman Powderly noted that the hook up from stub to house is approximately \$25-\$26,000. It depends how far the resident is off the street. Chairman Belliveau stated that the project has to be done by street. A resident stated that the initial response from residents was 15 against the water line. Chairman Belliveau stated that this is just the starting point. We are talking about expanding the water throughout Lakeville. One street said no, and another said yes. Selectman Burke stated that it is not fair to put the burden of the water tower on the neighborhoods. To say to you that there is an opportunity to get water is ok with me. We have had discussions that if everyone gets water in Lakeville, it still would not pay for the water tower. If you want this resource, it is available. So they are separate issues, and he does want to put the burden out there. Chairman Belliveau stated that the Water Advisory Committee did put a plan together to pay for the water tower with hookup fees. Tonight's meeting is to see if you want the water or not, and whether to go forward or not. Selectman Powderly stated that what the residents say now is fine. They can change their minds and join in. The Board just needs a poll of the real numbers of interest.

Someone asked if it was an eight (8) inch pipe. Mr. Mills responded that it is not. It is duck line pipe. Another resident asked what the next step was. Another resident stated that the original letter talked about combining all streets. Are you now saying it is individual streets? Chairman Belliveau stated that originally it was six (6) streets, but now the Town is dealing only with the streets that are going to be paved. Mr. Mills explained that the process will be done through a loop system. If there is a problem on one (1) street. it can be isolated, since they have to put valves in, and then can shut it off. If it is just put down Surrey Drive and not Carriage House Drive, and there is a problem at the end, you will not have water. Chairman Zienkiewicz stated that he wrote the letter to the residents, but did not consult with Board of Selectmen who will vote on this. If you all feel one way, then we will notice that. Or if you feel another way, we will see that also. Chairman Belliveau stated that the Board would like to see everyone vote. The Board did not get everyone's opinions the last time, and a lot more people have showed up tonight at this meeting. We wanted to make sure that we reached out to the residents to get a better consensus.

Selectman Powderly mentioned that there had been a question at the last meeting that if natural gas and water were desired, would there be a cost savings. The answer is no. Two (2) different trenches need to be dug, and also the jobs are done by different contractors. Chairman Zienkiewicz stated that the gas line runs typically three (3) feet down, and they will provide the work for free, providing you start using the line in three (3) months. The water line is five (5) to six (6) feet down. They have to cross the street to the other side or mole (tunnel under). Mr. Chestnut asked what the moratorium was on tying in. Chairman Belliveau stated that the Town does not have one in Lakeville. However, he doesn't think anyone will want to open up a road that is under five (5) years old. Another resident stated that he was also from a MWRA District

and his last water bill was more than his taxes. We are concerned that will happen here also. Chairman Belliveau stated that he did not think Taunton had increased their water rates much at all. Another gentleman stated it would be different, if like when the cable company ran fiber down the street, we did not have to pay for it. Chairman Belliveau stated that if 90% of the residents want it, you will be paying for it.

Selectman Burke stated that he personally would not do this unless there was 100% positive responses from everyone. We have not discussed as a Board the percentage we want to say yes or no about. We did not think all this through when we built the water tower, and now we are trying to think it through. The ideal world for me would be to build the infrastructure, and then people could tie in if they want to. In my opinion, it becomes a property rights issue. If they put water down Vaughn Street, he would have a big problem if my Elected Officials did this, and he had to shell out the money to pay for it. Selectman Powderly stated that if someone does not want to change their vote, that is fine, and if you did not vote, then you can do it here now privately if you want. A resident asked if it raises property taxes, since it is a betterment. Chairman Zienkiewicz stated that point was discussed with the Board of Assessors. The agreement was, at that time, that they would not immediately add this to the tax bills. But, as the properties are sold and resold through the years, since Town water is considered to increase property values. Another resident asked if they (Assessors) will they put that in writing. Chairman Zienkiewicz stated that it should be in their minutes.

A resident asked if the pipe is ten (10) feet off the street, who would be responsible to repair the lawns and driveways that are dug up. Mr. Mills stated that the contractor will make sure that they fix what they dug up, both in the driveway and the lawn. A resident stated that is another reason why people might not want this done. They don't want their lawns dug up. Mr. Mills stated that they have to put back in slurry cement instead of dirt, and when they get to your driveway, they will know that they need three (3) yards of hot mix to make it be the same way it was before they touched it. Whatever they do to your property, they have to fix. Another resident asked what are the advantages to tie in for \$30,000. Mr. Mills responded that if the power goes out, you will still have water. The only other thing is that you should get a reduction in your home insurance. Chairman Belliveau and Chairman Zienkiewicz stated that the values on the properties will go up over time since they have water, however, you may not recoup it, until you sell your house. Chairman Zienkiewicz noted that when you sell your house they test the water, and you will not have to worry about that, since with Town water there are no arsenic or bacteria issues. If you like your water now, you will not want the taste to change. If you have had problems, then you may want the water. It is a personal decision.

A resident asked will you just make us do it? Chairman Belliveau responded that the betterment cost does not go to the Town. It is for the cost of the pipe. The Town does not benefit at all for the pipe going in. A resident asked how is the Town paid back. Chairman Belliveau responded that if the Town goes into the water business, there is the water usage and hookup fees that will go to Lakeville, but not the betterment fees. Chairman Zienkiewicz agreed. Chairman Belliveau added that a percentage of the water bill would go to Lakeville and Lakeville will receive the hookup fees. The water usage will not pay for the water tower, but the hookup fees and other things would with our five (5) year model. Chairman Zienkiewicz stated that one of the difficulties is that Taunton, Middleborough and New Bedford have established how much people pay for water. It is clean water, but they sell it so cheaply that there is no money made to spend on capital improvements. The water is a bargain at the prices that are out

there right now. That is the good and the bad side. A resident stated she will have to use a lot of water to get back the \$30,000. Is that a guarantee that my house will be worth \$30,000 more? Chairman Belliveau stated that he has so much iron in his water and has six (6) tanks in his basement to pump out the iron and has replaced three (3) pumps. Another resident stated that they have lived there for 26 years and have never replaced much more than the filters twice a year. Selectman Powderly noted that he has been living in his home for 35 years and replaced one (1) pump. Another resident stated that what seems wonderful today may not be tomorrow. You cannot say that 20 years from now it will be wonderful thing. Selectman Powderly stated that there is that flip side that someone would want a well instead, so there are both sides. The bad part is the \$25,000 bill and a monthly water bill. The positive is that you will keep receiving water when you lose power. A resident asked what is the next step. Chairman Belliveau responded that if everyone wants it, and we have already paved the roads, then it is too late. That is why we want to offer it prior to paving the roads.

Ms. Garbitt surveyed the residents present and got a tally of the votes of the residents. All residents were not in favor of having Town water.

Adjournment

Upon a motion made by Selectman Powderly and seconded by Selectman Burke, the Board

VOTED: To adjourn the Selectmen's Meeting at 7:58 PM.
Unanimous in favor.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Mills and seconded by Mr. Gouveia, the Committee:

VOTED: To adjourn the Water Advisory Committee at Meeting 7:59 PM.
Unanimous in favor.