

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MEETING MINUTES
TOWN OF EPPING, NEW HAMPSHIRE
August 12, 2020
SPECIAL INFORMATIONAL MEETING**



**MEETING OF THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN
VIA ZOOM FOR BUSINESS
MEETING ID #827 4068 0251
PASSWORD #376600**

ATTENDANCE

Chairman Adam Munguia; Selectman Mike Yergeau and Selectman Joe Trombley. Town Administrator Gregory C. Dodge. Vice-Chairman Bob Jordan and Selectman Cody Belanger were not in attendance. Executive Secretary Joyce Blanchard was excused.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Adam Munguia called this special informational meeting of the Board of Selectmen at 6:00 PM via Zoom.

SPECIAL WARRANT ARTICLE

Chairman Adam Munguia announced that this special informational meeting will replay on ETV channel 22 repeatedly up to Election Day on September 8, 2020. He stressed that this special warrant article is to accomplish the decommissioning of sewer lagoons #1 and #2 and to take advantage of a great financing package which must be accepted by the end of the Federal fiscal year, September 30, 2020. In attendance for this meeting were various members of the Municipal Budget Committee who will hold a Public Hearing on the warrant article following this informational meeting. Presenting this evening on behalf of the Town is Dave Mercier of Underwood Engineering and Chief Water/Sewer Operator Jim Pouliot. Chairman Munguia then introduced David Mercier.

\The Special Article being considered is:

ARTICLE 1: SEWAGE LAGOON DECOMMISSIONING AND CLOSURE PROJECT, SEWAGE TREATMENT PLANT SOLAR FIELD INSTALLATION

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Thirteen Million, Five Hundred Twenty-Three Thousand Dollars (\$13,523,000.00) (gross budget) for the purpose of the engineering, design, decommissioning and closure of the Town's sewage treatment plant sewage lagoons #1 and #2. which have been ordered closed by U.S. EPA, and to prepare the closed sewerage lagoon land area for the installation of a solar energy facility that will provide electricity to the Town's adjacent sewerage treatment plant at an annual electricity cost savings estimated at \$180,000.00 per year (the "Project"); and, to authorize the issuance of Six Million Two Hundred Thirty Thousand Dollars (\$6,230,000.00) in bonds or notes for such purpose, in accordance with the provisions of the Municipal Finance Act (RSA 33), and to authorize the Selectmen to issue, negotiate, sell and deliver such bonds and/or notes, and to determine the rate of interest thereon and the maturity and other terms thereof; and further, to authorize the Selectmen to apply for, obtain and accept Federal, State, or other aid, grants or other funds which may be available for the Project that may reduce the amount to be financed with bonds or notes, and to authorize the Selectmen to expend such monies as they become available and to comply with all laws applicable to the Project; and to authorize the Selectmen to take any other action or to pass any other vote relative thereto, with the remaining \$7,293,000.00 to come from Federal and State grant, aid or other funding, including a possible Community Development Block Grant. Without impairing the general obligation nature of the bonds or notes, it is the intention of the Town that the bond or note repayment shall be paid for by sewer users.

Dave Mercier-Underwood Engineers

Mr. David Mercier of Underwood Engineering gave an in depth overview of the reasons why both lagoons were being decommissioned at the same time and the need to do so. The lagoons are affecting the Nitrogen and Arsenic levels in the Lamprey River and Great Bay. Pursuant to an EPA Administrative order the Town needed to be in compliance with decommissioning of both lagoons, lagoon #1 2/31/2021 and lagoon #2 12/31/2032. Decommissioning both Lagoons at the same time will take advantage of cost economies of scale and free up the site for solar construction. Showing a higher financial need yielded a larger grant offer (Town gets 1 lagoon done plus most of solar for free). Mr. Mercier then went into the funding aspect of this project. The total cost of the project is \$13,523,000.00. \$7.293M will come from an approved USDA Grant and in addition the USDA is offering a \$5.73M USDA 30 Year Loan with an interest rate of 1.125%. Mr. Mercier said that this is an excellent financial package. It is also anticipated that the Town could receive an additional \$500,000.00 from the Clean Water SRF 20-Year Loan with an interest rate of 2.0%. The anticipated payment on the loan is \$254,000.00 annually. With the solar panel project included it could yield up to \$180,000.00 which would result in a direct savings on electrical expenses. The annual Solar Cost Savings would essentially be applied to the Bond. The sewer users would be responsible for \$74,000.00, of which there is approximately 921 users. He calculated that out as follows; $\$74,000/921 = \81 annual sewer user fee increase for bond repayment.

Mr. Mercier paused for questions from the Board of Selectmen and some members of the Budget Committee.

Mr. Mercier went on to explain the benefits of solar by stating, reusing existing land for green renewable energy generation and reduction of CO2 emissions to help the environment. It will also provide power to the Wastewater Treatment Facility and water and sewer facilities. Solar energy would save the Town of Epping approximately \$180,000 per year in energy costs. The Town of Epping would own the solar panels and its infrastructure. The Water and Sewer Department would be charged with maintaining the panels.

Jim Pouliot added a few points regarding this project and its importance. He said that in addition to the brochure mailed out it is also on the Town website. Yard signs have also been posted throughout Town.

Hearing no further questions or comments and with the time getting near the start of the Budget Committee meeting, Chairman Munguia asked that any further questions if there were any should be held until the Budget Committee meeting.

ADJOURN

Motion by Selectman Mike Yergeau to adjourn. Seconded by Selectman Joe Trombley. Roll Call Vote; Selectmen Mike Yergeau, Joe Trombley and Adam Munguia all voting aye. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 6:54 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

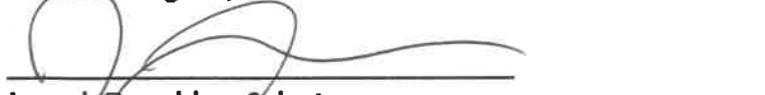


Gregory C. Dodge
Town Administrator



Adam Munguia, Chairman

Michael Yergeau, Selectman



Joseph Trombley, Selectman
(Selectmen Bob Jordan, Cody Belanger not in attendance)

Dated: August 18, 2020