

Town of Rockland SEWER COMMISSION



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Michael Mullen, *Chair*
Matthew Ryan, *Vice-Chair*
Walter Simmons, *Commissioner*
David P. Taylor, *Interim Superintendent*

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Rockland Sewer Commission Meeting
March 24, 2025

In Attendance: Michael Mullen, Matthew Ryan, Walter Simmons, David Taylor, Megan Lynch and Frank Occhipinti of Weston & Sampson.

Call to Order

Michael Mullen calls the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

Approve Minutes

Motion made by Matthew Ryan, 2nd by Walter Simmons, to approve meeting minutes of February 27, 2025. All in favor 3-0.

Weston & Sampson (Frank Occhipinti)

Frank Occhipinitti, of Weston & Sampson, gave an overview of the projects Weston & Sampson have been working on with the Sewer Department over the last several years.

Inflow & Infiltration (I&I) and Operations & Maintenance (O&M) Program

Using a 2021 Sewer System Evaluation Study (SSES) from AECOM, Weston & Sampson targeted 228,000 gallons of previously identified infiltration and removed about 50% or 113,000 gallons of infiltration between 2022 and 2024.

The I&I Plan is a 15 year plan. Year 1 was spent capturing flow data by installing flow meters and monitoring rainfall; years 2 through 4 were focused on infiltration; year 5 was focused on inflow and year 6 was focused on rehabilitation. Year 7 the cycles start repeating through Infiltration, inflow and rehabilitation.

Year 1 - (Spring 2023) The town was divided into 15 sub areas. 15 flow meters, 3 ground water gauges, and 1 rain gauge were installed for a monitoring period of 10 weeks. The metering study identified areas 6 and 11 for further investigation followed by subareas 9 and 13.

Year 2 – (Fall 2023) Approximately 37,300 linear feet of sewer pipes and 172 manholes were inspected in sub areas 6 and 11. 45,000 GPD of infiltration was observed, along with approximately 110,000 GPD of unidentified I&I.

Year 3 – (Spring 2024) Approximately 36,000 linear feet of sewer pipes and 216 manholes were inspected in sub areas 9 and 13. 68,800 GPD of infiltration was observed, along with approximately 9,000 GPD of unidentified I&I.

Year 4 – (Summer/Fall 2025) Rehabilitation work from the manhole and sewer pipe inspections in sub areas 6, 11, 9 and 13 from Years 2 and 3.

NDPES and Operations & Maintenance Plan

A NPDES O&M plan refers to the Operations and Maintenance Plan required under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program.

Key components typically include details of the collection system and equipment; guidelines for daily operations, including monitoring and reporting; routine and preventative maintenance tasks to ensure equipment operates effectively; information on staff training and qualifications; documentation procedures for operational data and maintenance activities; strategies for handling emergencies or failures in the system and a summary of activities during the previous calendar year.

Town-wide Smoke Testing

Sewer smoke testing is used to identify any leaks, defects or sources of inflow in sewer pipes. The process involves introducing non-toxic, odorless smoke into the sewer system, which then permeates throughout the pipes and escapes through any defects, such as cracks, broken pipes, or improperly sealed connections.

Town-wide smoke testing took place in the Fall of 2024, covering about 50% of the entire sewer system. Manhole and television inspections continue this Spring. Findings include (1) open cleanout, several suspect sources of inflow from down spouts, and (1) source of inflow from a sump pump. No public sources of inflow were found but the analysis suggests that there are probably many residential sump pumps connected directly to the sanitary sewer system.

Rate Study

Weston & Sampson performed a rate analysis several years ago and proposed a 15 year rate increase plan for the Sewer Commission. The first 8 year period suggests a 10-12% increase per year; followed by a 7 year period of slower increases dropping from a high of 8% per year, down to 2%. The study included projected cash flows for future retained earnings, operating expenses, rate funded capital, existing debt, new debt and revenue in preparation for pending plant upgrades.

As we free up gallons through I&I remediation, we will be able to approve some development and those development and I&I remediation fees should help to temper the rate increases.

When comparing rates with other towns we need to be cognizant of the differences between towns. For example, Abington does not have a sewer plant, while Rockland does.

OPM Discussion (committee)

The committee, consisting of Megan Lynch, David Taylor, Courtney Bjorgaard, Allison Quinn and Michael Mullen, received 4 proposals for the Outside Project Manager role. The committee rated the applicants based on the evaluation ranking survey prepared by the Assistant Town Administrator and have come up with the top 2 firms. A meeting is scheduled for next week to present the top 2 firms to the Sewer Commission. A list of potential interview questions will be reviewed at the same time. Interviews with all 4 firms will be scheduled for late April.

Administrative Update

Abatement Request – 23 Millbrook Drive

An abatement request was submitted for 23 Millbrook Drive. The resident filled the pool with a hand-held hose.

There was some discussion about previous pool and sprinkler abatement policies. About 5 years ago, the pool meter abatement program, along with the sprinkler meter abatement program was discontinued to not encourage outside water usage during our long standing water ban(s).

The Interim Sewer Superintendent will contact the Water Superintendent for any thoughts on this issue.

No action taken at this time.

Drainlayer License Renewal(s)

One drainlayer renewal application was presented for T. King Excavation Corp.

Motion made by Matthew Ryan, 2nd by Mike Mullen, to approve the drainlayer application for renewal. All in favor 2-0.

Superintendent Update – David Taylor

WWTP

Miscellaneous tree work has been completed at the plant to eliminate root infiltration and to prepare for future site work with the plant upgrades. We are reconfiguring the rear asphalt area behind the main building, removing miscellaneous scrap metal and adding storage for the Godwin pumps. Parking areas are shifting around the main building. The ADA spot will be moved to the left of the main building and easily accessible to the existing ramp, Town employee parking will be shifted beyond the back door, reserving the front spots for visitor parking and Veolia employee parking will be on the back side of the building. Miscellaneous asphalt patching will be done throughout the lot and new striping will be done to keep us in compliance with ADA.

The clarifier units need some work but original parts are no longer available. Working with the Plant Manager, we are looking into bringing in a welder to help fabricate some components to get by until upgrades.

The generator project is complete. We are still working on the last of the payment requisitions and deciding who's responsible for the overage between the manufacturer, the installer and the Sewer Dept. This should be resolved over the next couple of weeks.

Collections

Goddard Ave: There was an issue last week where the sewer line was backed up in front of the High School and there was a small amount of back-up in the basement of the Trinity Church via their floor drains, which are tied into the sewer line. We met with church personnel on site; there was no smell of sewer but we hired a cleaning company to clean the floors. The issue in the street was jetted by Hoadley and vacuumed by Legacy Pumping. We pulled some brick remnants out of the manhole and had to camera the line. We found that the pipe from Town Hall is 6" to 90° SMH, then turns to 8" to 90° SMH, then 8" to the street. The pipe that runs parallel to the school is 226 feet of 6" segmented clay. The camera work displayed a lot of visible I&I; therefore, we will replace the 226 feet of 6" segmented clay with 8" plastic sewer pipe and three precast SMH's. Weston & Sampson will document the camera and rehabilitation work for any I&I credits through the MADEP. We will send a letter to the church advising them to remove their floor drains. This should prevent back-up into their facility in the future.

MASS DOT Project: 12 manholes will be replaced on Centre Ave. We have begun applying for the permits through the online SHAPS (*State Highway Access Permits System*) program. Weston & Sampson will document the I&I remediation for the manholes in order to get I&I credits through the MADEP. The project was originally started by the current Interim Superintendent during his last stint as Interim Superintendent but was never followed up on. We plan to have the project completed this Summer.

Sewer Line Maintenance: We are scheduled to begin sewer line maintenance in late Spring, which is a continuation of the work we began last Fall.

1119 Union Street Project: The Interim Superintendent walked the property, including the sewer easement that runs through the property and out to Warren Ave in the Lorretta Ave neighborhood. Language was added to the Form K advising that the manholes will need to be accessible during and after the project and the final plans need to include the easement.

Beal Court Extension: 48 Beal Court Extension, the last home on a dead-end street, is looking to tie into the sewer system. Other homes on Beal Court Extension are tied-in but we don't have as-builts for those properties. We will be pulling manhole covers in that area to determine where the ties-ins are located. There is also an easement that runs through to Saw Mill Lane and we will be verifying/documenting connectivity for those properties on Saw Mill Lane, as well. We should be able to determine where and if 48 Beal Court Extension can tie-in, once we gather all of the information.

52 Gardner Street

The owner of 52 Gardner Street is rehabbing the home for handicap access and is seeking to tie-in to the Rockland sanitary sewer system. The owner pays taxes to Rockland, as a portion of the property at 52 Gardner is located in Rockland, and she paid for the sewer stub onto the property several years ago, prior to the road being repaved.

The project is 4 bedrooms, so does not come up against the moratorium. Also, a new septic is problematic because the rehab project would push the septic closer to the reservoir. Tie-in and remediation fees are considerable at \$8,950.00, but still less expensive than installing a new septic.

Motion made by Matthew Ryan, 2nd by Walter Simmons, to approve the tie-in and fees for 52 Gardner Street. All in favor 3-0.

Veolia Update

We are allowed a maximum flow of 2. MGD, per our NPDES Permit.

We treated an average of 2.3 MGD in January for a total of 66 MG treated for the month.

2.32 inches of rain during the month.

We processed 301,000 gallons of sludge, producing 123 wet tons of sludge.

The daily flow for February was 2.730 MG

Future / Upcoming Meetings

Sewer Commission/OPM Update/Rates - March 31, 2025 - 6:00 PM (Monday)

Sewer Commission Monthly Meeting - April 28, 2025 - 6:00 (Monday)

Adjourn

Motion made by Matthew Ryan, 2nd by Walter Simmons, to adjourn at 7:40 pm. All in favor 3-0.