

Salem Sewer Study Committee
Live meeting at the Historic Salem Courthouse Community Center
September 22, 2020

Minutes

Members and guests in attendance:

Herb Perkins, Chair
Ted Wilson
Rebecca Brown
Brenda Levey
Kay Tomasi
Sue Clary
Pete Carrolan

Presenter: Mary Beth Bianconi

Graphic: Map board depicting the proposed boundary of the proposed sewer “district” (Study Area)

The meeting began informally at 7:00 PM with an impromptu “executive summary” of the presentation to come because not all members had arrived. When more members were present, Chairperson Perkins requested Mary Beth to begin her presentation. The presentation was open to question and answer throughout.

The purpose of the presentation was to define the area to be included in the Income Survey (Survey). The Survey was presented as the next and critical step to acquire up to 95% of the funding needed for construction of a collection, conveyance, and treatment system for waste water.

When the Survey area is defined, the presenter and company will develop a GIS (Geographic Information System) database which will identify the addresses included and prepare an Excel spreadsheet to be used as the basis for the survey.

Mary Beth continued with some suggestions for conducting the Survey and the logistics of such; gained from her experience with multiple waste water projects for communities of varying size and with similar difficulties to overcome as has Salem. Those projects were all eventually successful. The word “eventually” is used because Mary Beth emphasized that a few projects took several years to complete (for various reasons) and ended up costing considerably higher than if the projects had been completed at a faster pace.

The presenter provided strategies for funding from both State and Federal (and a few private?) sources; outlining a variety of options. It was emphasized that the various combinations of loans and/or outright grants are dependent on the outcome of the Survey. Mary Beth gave some of the financial thresh holds for meeting loan/grant criteria (eg. 13.1% at the poverty level for some Community Development Block Grants [a single most lesser expensive funding source]).

The presenter emphasized the need for a plan of finance; the objective of which is to get us in a position for financing. Mary Beth reiterated the need to create a sewer district and possibly look at sewer rules such as those addressing questions such as, “do I have to connect to the sewer?”

Mary Beth continued, restating that all of the above is contingent upon the conduct and ensuing results of an income survey; and the primary necessity of defining the boundaries of that Survey. She stated multiple times that the boundaries of the Survey and the Study Area need not be congruent. As a result, there was some discussion regarding boundaries and question/answer regarding as to why the current boundaries were as they are (as shown on the map graphic) (eg. Why is all such and such an area included? Etc.)

The group came to resolution that the Boundaries should remain where they are with the following changes:

1. Extend south down Route 22 as far as the pizza business
2. Extend north up Route 22 to Quarry Rd.
3. Extend west out Route 30 two (2) additional houses
4. Contract the current boundary back to Warren St.

Chairman Perkins then asked members to vote on some outstanding issues.

Those issue were:

1. Request to approve Ted Wilson as new (committee) secretary
-Approved
2. Announce the resignation of Jim Carrolan due to family commitments
3. Nomination of Pete Carrolan to replace Jim
-Approved
4. Postage report from Sue Clary
- There was some discussion regarding the cost - supplies, mailing, etc. Mary Beth offered that she could provide some supplies and postage much cheaper than the estimate given to the committee. This offer was accepted'
5. Plans for future committee meetings and Holiday meeting issues.

After some discussion, the presenter reminded the committee of the emphatic need for timeliness and that the Survey mailing should be completed in November with a target date of early 2021 for the Survey to be completed.

Next meeting will be at the Courthouse Community Center, at 7:00 pm, on Tuesday, October 27, 2020. That meeting and all our meetings are open to the public, with social distancing in effect.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:03 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Ted Wilson