

Salem Sewer Feasibility ZOOM Committee Meeting

January 26, 2021

Committee members present:

Herbert Perkins, committee chair <hperkins3@verizon.net>,
Nancy Higby, temp sec'ty <nancy.hand.higby@gmail.com>,
David Higby, Jan 26 zoom host dhigby@gmail.com
Dave Glover <dglover@salemcsd.org>,
Sue Clary, Salem Town Supervisor <sueclary@hotmail.com>,
Peter Carrolan <pcarrolan@gmail.com>,
Tina Fleming <tfleming0707@gmail.com>,
Kay Tomasi
Pete Carrolan

Interested Citizens present:

Socrates Fronhofer
Brenda Levey, Salem Town Board blevey1211@gmail.com

Guests:

Mary Beth Bianconi of Delaware Engineering mbbianconi@delawareengineering.com

Committee members absent:

Bruce Ferguson <Fergusob1@gmail.com>,
Chris Preble <cpreblerealty@gmail.com>,
Barbe Thomas <barbethomas1@aol.com>,
Ted Wilson

Interested Citizens absent:

Rebecca Brown
Kellie Buckowski
Jim Carrolan
Leesah Hudson
Jim Gariepy
Kyle West
Susi Thomas
Stacey Loya <smorrison1234@yahoo.com>,
Kat Christensen <kathleen.kat@gmail.com>
Don McPhee <mcpheelawoffice@gmail.com>,
Marcy Armstrong <marcyarmstrong@gmail.com>,
Anthony Cafritz <awcafritz@gmail.com>,
Laura Dunham, Salem Town Board laura@laurasgardensite.com
Howard Law, Salem Town Board halaw62@gmail.com
Marcus Blanck, Salem Town Board mblanck@nycap.rr.com

Meeting opened 7:00pm by Herb

The sewer committee is without a secretary. Nancy Higby agreed to keep the notes for this meeting.

Herb reported that about 25% of the income surveys have been returned. We need to reach 72%, which we will attempt to accomplish by the end of February. Returned surveys are showing a \$50,000 median income level. MaryBeth says with a 25% level of return we're pretty much on target considering the timing of the mailing. Our original timing goals have been modified to accommodate complications introduced by the pandemic.

Candace Candace Balmer of RCAP Solutions New York cbalmer@rcapsolutions.org was unable to join this meeting. Herb will bring her up to date regarding this meeting and ask for her suggestions regarding our next steps. Candace indicated to Herb that she'll be preparing post cards to follow up on the initial mailing (which went to around 270 mailing addresses.)

Mary Beth explained that survey results averaging \$45,500 would qualify us for pretty much any low interest/grant funding and even just under \$50,000 would get us considerable help. If we can collect completed income surveys from renters, the result is expected to place Salem's median income at a level that would qualify us for hardship funding from various agencies. (NYState Revolving Fund, USDA Rural Development Fund, and Community Development Block Grant, through HUD)
The NYState Revolving Fund offers zero interest financing, if we qualify based on median income. A companion fund is reason-based (vs income based); and a good case can be made for reasons to invest in Salem (revitalize downtown, address vulnerability to flooding).
She explained that the income survey was mailed to about 270 addresses. The mailing list was generated from Salem's water district customers. The survey is envisioned to reach water users, who will benefit from a community sewer system. However, the water district lists property owners and would miss renters (whose water bill goes to the owner and is likely to be included in the rent). We need a plan to reach renters and encourage them to complete the income survey.

Mary Beth described having had a conversation with NYS DEC. She explained that LaBerge's Report will need to be modified to meet DEC's current (more stringent) White Creek water quality regulations. This service is included in the current Scope of Work agreement between Delaware and the Town and will be done at no additional charge.

Mary Beth said Cambridge is in a situation similar to Salem (needing community sewer) and is exploring the concept of a regional system solution ('shared services'). Stay tuned.

Discussion ensued regarding additional marketing/publicity to inform renters they are needed.

Mary Beth will generate simple, informative, large print posters and plastic sleeves (at sizes 8-1/2 x 11; 11 x 17; 24 x 36) to draw the attention of renters and explain the income survey. Posters will have Herb's phone # and email and Sue's email as contact points.

Herb will borrow the Rotary sandwich board and display it outside the Post Office.

Kay suggested the posters be displayed throughout Salem - at all the businesses and public buildings (Stewart's, Dollar General, Salem Hardware, A&J, Library Community Board, Fire Station, Jacko's, Blind Buck, North Main Gallery, Health Center, Laura's Garden, Napa, Glens Falls Bank, Steininger's, etc.)

There was discussion regarding the next steps and timeline:

How can we reach the renters?

Sue could display a poster at the Town Office (where property owners are coming now to pay taxes), requesting owners to inform us of their renters.

Sue (with the cooperation of rental property owners) is making a list of renters. She will continue to develop the list, including street addresses, phone numbers, PO box #. She needs help from anyone who may know which properties have rental units. Someone suggested "*ask Margaret, she knows everyone*".

Higbys: are willing to process an additional mailing, if needed and appropriate.

Sewer Committee members: Once the list is ready, it will be distributed to Sewer Committee members, who should review it, add anything they might know, identify renters they know and, if willing, contact renters to explain the importance of completing the survey.

note bene: Identifying the exact, geographical, location of the rental unit is critical to completing the funding applications. If a single structure has been divided into multiple units, we can assign a notation and add it to the street address. (e.g. 25 Park Place might become 25a; 25b;25c; etc. and visual notation could be made, such as red door, back corner, etc)

Mary Beth explained parts of the NYS budget, currently in discussion. There are many unknowns until, probably, late March/early April when legislators and the governor should reach agreement. In order for Salem to capture grant cycles, it would be good to complete the income survey this spring.

David Higby suggested we/Sue reach out to Carrie Woerner to request she work on behalf of Salem receiving support for our needs from the State.

Socrates, who owns three properties in the district, asked about the mailing, the proposed district lines, the design of the treatment system (his business is dewatering and he's very familiar with sewer system design). Mary Beth explained the mailing and the earlier LaBerge report - but said that some of his questions would be answered only as the system design is detailed.

Sue noted Salem School is a partner in the project. Dr. Glover indicated the School and Town partnership is all good.

Mary Beth explained that Delaware Engineering has a longstanding relationship with our DEC Region 5 Rep and will work with the Rep on a regional approach to addressing Salem's vulnerability to flooding. DEC has already done work on the White Creek.

Sue has requested a meeting to form a working group (DEC and stakeholders?) for a regionally based approach to develop an Action Plan and Funding sources to address flooding issues.

Next meeting date/time: A Zoom meeting will be announced for mid-February.

Next regularly scheduled Zoom meeting will be on Tuesday, February 23, at 7:00 pm.

Community members interested in joining any Zoom meeting should call or email Herb Perkins .

Cell: 518-859-3538 Email: hperkins3@verizon.net

Meeting adjourned by Herb at 8:23pm

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Hand Higby, January 26, 2020

Herb asked to insert this Addendum to the minutes:

Herb and David Higby discussed the Committee investigating other potential sources of funding and resources for (e.g.) watershed, clean water and economic development planning. Among these sources: the Lake Champlain-Lake George Regional Planning Board (Sue Clary has just joined this board).

<https://lclgrpb.org/water-quality/>