

**TOWN OF GILFORD
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
SECOND PUBLIC HEARING ON
SEWER ORDINANCE CHANGES
March 14, 2007
6:30 P.M.**

The Board of Selectmen convened a Special Public Hearing on Sewer Ordinance Changes on Wednesday, March 14, 2007, at 6:30 p.m., at the Gilford Town Hall, 47 Cherry Valley Road, Gilford, NH. Selectmen present were Chairman Dennis Doten, Alice Boucher and Connie Grant. Also present were Town Administrator Evans Juris, Assistant Town Administrator Debra Shackett, Administrative Secretary Sandra Bailey, Director of Public Works Sheldon Morgan, DPW Operations Manager Dustin Muzzey and Sewer Technician Brian DeNutte.

Following the reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance, Chairman Doten opened the public hearing and turned the meeting over to Assistant Town Administrator Debra Shackett, who made a presentation on the proposed changes to the Sewer Ordinance.

Assistant Town Administrator Shackett proceeded to explain the purpose of the meeting and the need for the sewer program to be able to cover its costs, which it is not currently the case. She also stated that no funds have been set aside for any major repairs.

ATA Shackett explained the two components of the proposed changes – those being that of the administrative fee and flow rate. The significant change with the administrative fee is that it will be charged for each living unit, as the ordinance states, but has never been done. Currently, an administrative fee is charged on the basis of each meter, not each living unit.

Gilford residents Dominic Guinta and Thomas Spence expressed concern that the problem with the sewer program has gone on for so many years.

ATA Shackett continued with her presentation, stating that the change in the way the administrative fee is charged will help the program to stop losing money. She further addressed the matter of the flow rate being increased from \$3.03 per thousand gallons to \$3.96 under the existing ordinance. Under the proposed ordinance, this rate will increase again from \$3.96 per thousand gallons to \$4.45.

A thorough explanation of the \$1,500 connection fee and the \$1,500 capital cost fee was provided next. ATA Shackett explained that the connection fee would affect new customers and the capital cost fee would

affect the 130 customers of the Gilford Village Sewer System. The Village customers will be able to pay this fee all at once or spread it out with their sewer bill.

Following additional comments from Mr. Guinta, ATA Shackett reiterated that charging the administrative fee times the number of living units will cover the administrative costs. Chairman Doten provided further clarification of the Selectmen's responsibility to follow the ordinance.

Thomas Spence asked the approximate amount of increase under the new ordinance. ATA Shackett replied that the Administrative Fee will be approximately \$10.50 per quarter, plus the additional flow rate. She then provided some examples of how the cost would be affected in a typical household (living unit).

Brief discussion ensued on how this change could potentially affect boatyards and yacht clubs.

Mr. Guinta asked when the proposed changes would take effect. ATA Shackett advised him that it would be with the next billing, scheduled for the end of April.

Leo Sanfacon inquired about the issue of the School District and Town financial contribution to the Village sewer system. ATA Shackett advised him that the School District contributed \$385,000 to the initial construction. She further explained how the advantage was given to residential properties, to offset the School and Town usage.

Chairman Doten reiterated that the infrastructure for the sewer system needs to be in place, regardless of the usage. Therefore, all customers will pay the administrative fees and the usage will vary by customer. ATA Shackett also briefly reviewed past correspondence that has been directed to Village sewer customers regarding the pending connection fee.

At this time, Selectman Boucher recognized the diligence and hard work of Assistant Town Administrator Shackett in working on this project over the past few years. Chairman Doten also pointed out that a considerable amount of research was required to bring us to the current proposal.

Penny O'Connor suggested adding some definitions into the ordinance. ATA Shackett stated that the current changes are covered in Chapter II of the ordinance, which primarily deals with sewer billing. Changes will be forthcoming in Chapter I, which covers definitions.

Brief discussion ensued on the matter of the York Village sewer system.

There being no further questions or comments, Chairman Doten closed the public hearing at 7:15 p.m.

Alice Boucher moved to adopt the proposed sewer ordinance, with changes as presented by Assistant Town Administrator Shackett, effective for the quarter ending on March 31, 2007. Connie Grant seconded. Motion carried.

Connie Grant moved to adopt a policy to assess each user in the Village Sewer System with payment options, for the capital cost fee of \$1,500.00. Alice Boucher seconded. Motion carried.

Town Administrator Juris commended ATA Shackett for the new ordinance and advised the public that several meetings have been held with Sheldon Morgan, Dustin Muzzey and Brian DeNutte over the past two years. He also pointed out that the problems with the sewer ordinance were inherited from past administrations.

The public hearing was adjourned at 7:29 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sandra J. Bailey
Administrative Secretary