

**TOWN OF ALLENSTOWN
BOND PUBLIC HEARING
Saturday, January 17, 2009 at 10:00 a.m.
Allenstown Elementary School**

Board of Selectman, Chairman Thomas R. Gilligan, opened the Bond Public Hearing at 10:00 a.m. on Saturday, January 17, 2009 by reading Warrant Article #4 in its entirety.

Chairman Gilligan turned over to questions from the public and Sewer Commission.

Resident, Jim Boisvert, asked to speak to Sewer Commission.

He has three questions:

- 1) How much in bank accounts;
- 2) Where do you stand with sludge fund?

Dana Clement, Allenstown Sewer Superintendent, answered: Sludge \$480,000, SWTF improvement/construction \$110,000 Allenstown Sewer improvement & construction \$180,000; SWTF reconstruction/equipment \$30,000; Allenstown reconstruction/equipment \$100,000

Mr. Boisvert – so roughly you have \$800K at the end of 2008
Plus \$355K in plant checking and \$275K in Allenstown Sewer accounts

Mr. Boisvert - What do you plan on doing with the \$1.2 million?

Superintendent Clement - The Allenstown improvement & construction is designated for a force main on Library Street that will be roughly \$250,000 and will be done in 2009. The Allenstown reconstruction & equipment is for emergency replacement of equipment in plant. The SWTF construction & improvement (\$150K) is for limited improvements to the treatment plant.

The SWTF (\$480K) is for truck scale to weigh trucks when they come in; odor control – ongoing project for the next two years; replacing watering equipment. Other than those projects the Sewer Commission assesses what they are going to do with that money on an ongoing basis.

Mr. Boisvert - So basically you have a \$800K slush fund? Can you tell us how much money you have put into infiltration in 2007 and 2008. Two years ago you thought infiltration was at 25%.

Superintendent Clement – we are still in the assessment phase.

Michael Trainque, Engineer with Hoyle & Tanner Association - noted that this Spring they did test and flow metering. They are still reviewing the television work done and are compiling that information to identify priority areas where you will get the most bang for the buck. Also looking at recommended fixes for infiltration.

Mr. Boisvert - whatever you are going to do down at the Plant is fine with him but you need to fix that 25% infiltration or it's just a waste of money. We already know the bad areas why aren't they being fixed?

Mr. Trainque - believes that the infiltration is closer to 10 or 12%.

Mr. Boisvert - asked if they will have the amount and price to fix these at the next meeting. This is how you get more flow in the plant – you fix the infiltration so you aren't treating clean water.

Mr. Boisvert - asked what the infiltration rate is? Where the bad areas are? What are you going to do this year? And the price?

Mr. Boisvert - have you contracted senator and congressmen to get on the Obama wish list?

Superintendent Clement - Yes submission was made to NHMA and DES.

Mr. Boisvert - You know that this will never pass. Why don't you bring the price down and use your slush fund?

Mr. Boisvert - there is no rate increase for 2009?

Superintendent Clement & Sewer Commissioner Jim Rodger both agreed, no, there will be no rate increase in 2009.

Mr. Boisvert – tell us where the bad pipes are, how much it will cost to fix and how much more flow we will get in the plant. You owe another Town right now right?

Mr. Boisvert - I work for another Town but my opinion is for Allenstown. Pretty soon the State is going to come down and order the Town to do this.

Mrs. Pauline Boutin - What are you doing to control the odor? I live on Main Street and the odor is still a problem.

Superintendent Clement – maximum daily record for trucks is 35 from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. What are we doing to limit the odor? Since the beginning when we were getting a lot of complaints. We have reduced that down to the last two complaints in Sept or October. We did temporary measures, a misting system and an evaporative system. Since we went with the evaporative system complaints have gone down. Next year, we are evaluating a bio system or a wet scrub system.

Mrs. McKenney – will that be even if the bond doesn't pass?

Superintendent Clement - yes

Mr. Boutin – Complaints may be down because as the weather gets bad people are inside.

Superintendent Clement - agrees but complaints are down from 40 to 50 to maybe 10.

Mrs. Boutin – the Allenstown Elementary School Nurse has made complaints to the State of children getting sick. She isn't sure if they are making more complaints. Yes she is.

Superintendent Clement - notes that if he doesn't get a call about the odor they don't know.

Mrs. Boutin - are the covers on?

Superintendent Clement - Yes and the number to call for complaints is 485-5600

Mr. Roger Blazon – it isn't just the odor. It seems that you don't have the answers. If you have that kind of money why are you asking us for this money?

A resident - Have you considered not contracting to dump from other places?

Superintendent Clement - if there were a need to reduce the traffic to the plant that would be a consideration but in view of the economy the revenue stream is significant enough to make the sewer commission keep taking the trucks.

A resident – you make over \$1 million.

Superintendent Clement - Yes there is probably a \$1 Million but that is not net. We have about \$480K in the bank from that. Should articles continue to fail, the sewer commission is trying to raise this money on their own.

Mrs. Dawn Lebreche - most of us are lay people here and we don't understand. You are telling us that the plant is full why are we still taking these trucks from God knows where?

Superintendent Clement - The trucks only represent about 1% of the flow and these trucks don't go through the whole process.

Superintendent Clement - Pembroke is about 65% of the flow and Allenstown is 45%

Mr. Boisvert - you said \$480K at the end of 2008 and another \$400 for 2008.

Superintendent Clement - We haven't transferred the funds yet. We send the bills out and we don't get paid the next day.

Mr. Boisvert - I'm not being mean, but enough is enough. Are you saying you could have \$750K in the slush fund?

Superintendent Clement – it could but it won't all be there when we finish all the projects.

Mr. Boisvert - this isn't going to pass this way. Why don't you use that slush fund, lower the amount and maybe it will pass. If we don't do it by a bond and pay for it up front, you could use Pembroke's money.

If Allenstown pays \$800K out of their slush fund and get \$600K in one year and don't bond it. Pembroke would still pay the \$775K.

Sewer Commissioner, Jim Rodger – the feeling of the Sewer Commissioners is that all the money we collect from the plant belongs to the rate payers. This bond will benefit the whole town. So why should the sewer rate payers pay for this?

Mr. Boisvert- Because a lot of the people who are voting on this are not on the sewer and they will vote no.

Commissioner Rodger – it should be because it will benefit the whole town. If the whole town decides they're happy – we're happy. If the whole town decides they don't want this then we can start to give that money back to the rate payers.

Mr. Boisvert – Jim, you're doing a great job but you haven't fixed what is going on under the ground.

Commissioner Rodger - I don't know where you got that number. The national rate is 10%. A lot of the infiltration is coming from house services so that is far more difficult to chase down.

Selectman Roger LaFleur – 20 years ago Pembroke put through a plan to extend their sewer line and in so doing they have been able to expand their commercial base, during this time Allenstown has done nothing. I am not speaking on behalf of the Sewer Commission. Our revenue continues to shrink and our assessed values continue to shrink and both of those numbers have a huge impact on your tax rate. If we don't do something about increasing revenue and increasing tax base (commercial) taxes will continue to grow.

Mr. Blazon – that's a catch 22 no business will come here with the high taxes. No one is going to come.

Selectman LaFleur – the only part of the equation you can change is the budget – what town services do you want to get rid of?

Resident – so I have to pay for a service I'm not receiving. Why should we pay for this.

Chairman, Board of Selectmen, Tom Gilligan – good questions. We can absorb the cost only on the rate payers or only on the tax payers. The town is already paying some part of the sewer dept rates on taxes.

Commissioner Rodger – It was all the way back to 1975 and the town had a chance to replace every pipe in the town for 5 cents on the dollar and the Town wouldn't do it. We have 4 capital reserve accounts that we maintain in case something happens. One of the things on looking at this is the town is looking at an impact fee. Every hookup that someone gets there will be an impact fee (maybe \$3000)

Mr. Carl Schaeffer – a lot of discussion about lifting the moratorium. What percent of connections will be Allenstown and what Pembroke. The estimated is 1200 hookups and it will be 50/50 between the two towns.

Mrs. Boutin – November we opened our tax bills and had a \$4.19 increase. Jimmy you know this isn't going to pass. We are seeing foreclosures every month. People are looking to cut. Maybe if we turn around and propose a better plan.

Commissioner Rodger - so we went from \$15million to \$1.5 million. We aren't wasting money down there. We still need to go through this process so that the rate payers and

the tax payers know what's going on. The only thing that we are concerned about is why should the sewer rate payers pay the whole amount?

Mr. Merrill – people in the audience cannot hear the questions.

Resident – Are you telling me we are going to get 600 more families to use these hookups?

Commissioner Rodger – no but you cannot even add a bedroom to your house without more hookups.

Mr. Boutin – how many Wastewater Treatment Plants are there in NH?

Superintendent Clement - 85.

Mr. Boutin - What % comes too Allenstown

Superintendent Clement - 20%

Chairman Gilligan asked for a motion to close public hearing on bond. Article 4 Selectman Roger LaFleur made a motion to close the public hearing on the bond. A resident seconded. Motion passed with a voice vote at 10:56 a.m.

Minutes transcribed by Kelley Collins

Reviewed and Approved by
Allenstown Board of Selectmen

Thomas R. Gilligan/Chairman

Carol M. Merrill/Selectperson

Roger LaFleur/Selectman