

# Wayland Wastewater Management District Commission

## FY 2017 Annual Report –9/29/2017

The Wayland Wastewater Management District Commission (WWMDC) operates a sewer system that serves business and residential properties along Route 20 from Route 27 to the Town Center development. Wastewater discharged into the system flows to a treatment plant located on Town-owned property within the Town Center development. The treated wastewater is discharged to the Sudbury River.

**Managerial Oversight of the Wastewater System:** In Fiscal Year 2017, the Wastewater Treatment Facility (WWTF) continued to run with no major operational issues—including no detected infiltration of groundwater into the system. The WWMDC did incur higher than expected expenses related to routine equipment replacement in the plant, routine alarm calls, and a valve failure in the street portion of the system.

In addition, the Commission was unable to respond to a dig safe mark out request within the statutorily-mandated timeframe, which led to a dig-in by a third party contractor. Because the Town's insurance does not cover underground assets, the WWMDC paid the costs for remediating damage out of its repair and contingency reserve budgets. In response, the WWMDC has been working with Town officials to professionalize our capability to respond to mark out requests and emergency situations.

The high number of routine alarms calls continued to be an issue. In an annual review meeting with plant operator Whitewater, the WWMDC reiterated the need to make repairs or adjust system settings in a timely fashion so as to reduce the number and cost of repeat emergency calls. To provide stronger professional oversight, the Commission has been working with the Town Administrator, the Director of the Department of Public Works and the Town Engineer to contract for support by individuals with wastewater expertise and licensing.

**Discharge Permits and System Usage:** The WWTF continues to operate under permits issued jointly by the Federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the State Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). The permits allow discharge of an annualized average limit of 52,000 gallons per day (GPD) into the Sudbury River. An application for renewal submitted on time in June 2013 seeks an increase in discharge capacity to 80,000 GPD. As of June 2017, the application remains pending with the EPA.

In FY2017, the average discharge from the plant was approximately 25,050 GPD, down about 2.6% from 25,730 GPD in FY2016. Growth in flow from the Town Center development has stabilized as construction plans near completion and occupancy has growth has leveled off. The average flow is expected to remain well below the current permitted limits.

**Rules and Regulations:** The WWMDC performed an extensive review of its Rules and Regulations to update, clarify and harmonize standards and procedures. Additionally, water conservation standards approved subsequent to the last revision of the Rules and Regulations were fully incorporated in the current version. The revised Rules and Regulations were tentatively approved by the Commission, subject to a review by the WWMDC's Executive Administrator for consistency with laws and best practices.

**Transfer of Capacity to the Town Library:** The WWMDC and the Board of Selectmen completed an agreement to transfer 820 GPD of discharge capacity to the Town of Wayland to use for the current Library Building, in exchange for a Payment in Lieu of Betterment of \$52,291. As part of the transaction, one of the previous owner of the transferred capacity paid off outstanding operational charges and transferred the associated parcel of land to the Wayland Conservation Commission at no cost.

**Administration and Finances:** Income for FY2017 was \$758,912. Of this amount \$442,834 was earmarked for paying off outstanding bonds (\$430,138 betterment and interest payments, \$12,706 for privilege fees for increased discharge allocations). Operating income was \$295,690, and operating expenses were \$251,438.

The Commission's undesignated fund balance at the end of FY2017 was \$1,339,191, including money collected in prior years for bond payments. At the end of FY 2017, the outstanding balance on the WTTTF bonds was \$4,458,182.

The WWMDC developed a budget for FY2018 of \$712,244. This includes \$241,687 operating income and expenses, and \$471,057 bond and interest payments. The capacity rate for users was \$1.94/per gallon, a 30% decrease from FY2017; the flow rate was 1.22, 31% reduction. The key drivers were reduced legal costs, and increased flows against stable fixed costs.

The WWMDC engaged the Abrahams Group to review its financial management practices and to develop and automate standard monthly reporting. Additionally, the Abrahams Group was asked to evaluate the sufficiency of funds available to pay off bonds, to model a cash flow analysis over the lives of the bonds, as well as to examine the disposition of bond proceeds to quantify any leftover uncommitted funds. The Group's work was reviewed by the WWMDC in three meetings and accepted as presented.

**Commission Membership and Staffing:** The Wastewater Management District Commission began FY2017 with full membership: Fred Knight, chair; Sam Potter; and Rick Greene. Due to professional responsibilities, Sam Potter was frequently unable to attend meetings, and in June 2017 he asked that his term not be renewed. No replacement has been named. Jane Capasso continued as the WWMDC's part-time Account Specialist, working to resolve administrative issues, building teamwork with other town departments, and bringing greater order to the Board's financial reporting.

In the Spring of 2017, Town Administrator Nan Balmer met with the WWMDC to explore ideas having either the Director of Public Works or the Town Engineer support WWMDC operations. Both individuals are professionally licensed and experienced managing wastewater systems. In April 2017, the Board of Public Works approved a six-month trial period where the Director and Engineer would provide consulting support to the WWMDC. In the future, it is expected one of the two individuals could to serve as part-time Executive Administrator (estimated at 20% FTE) to manage day to day technical issues related to the wastewater system operations.

