# Wayland Wastewater Management District Commission

## FY 2018 Annual Report –Final

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 2018, the WWMDC worked closely with the Town Administrator, the Board of Public Works and the Department of Public Works (DPW) to upgrade internal oversight of our system and the vendors who provide operational support and services. Following discussion with DPW and an initial trial period, the WWMDC agreed to fund part-time support from the DPW Director and the Town Engineer, both of whom are licensed by the State in wastewater operations. Both have contributed expertise in working with Whitewater—the vendor responsible for the day to day operation of the Wastewater Treatment Facility (WWTF)—and have provided the Board with professional guidance regarding more cost effective system maintenance and operation.

Additionally, the WWMDC agreed to hire a full-time Wasterwater Operations Manager (WOM) in FY2019 to reduce dependency on external contractors in daily operations and emergency response. This position will be 60% funded by the WWMDC and 40% by the Wayland Public Schools, which will receive similar support in operating the High School wastewater treatment plant. Day-to-day supervisory responsibility will be provided by the DPW. It is anticipated that the creation of the WOM position will result in longer-term cost savings through reducing overtime charges by the vendor as well as moderating monthly contract fees for system operation. The net financial impact of bringing contract services in-house will be reviewed at least annually. Additionally, it was agreed with the DPW to join with the School Department to seek a single bid for operating both the WWTF and the High School plants to achieve potential cost savings.

**Operation of the WWTF:** In FY2018, the WWTF experienced a number of emergency situations. The most serious was in late January, triggered by a leaking toilet at one of our commercial users and exacerbated by a delayed response by the operational vendor. In the investigation that followed the event, the Town Engineer identified a number of opportunities to improve plant maintenance and operations, which were subsequently implemented. A major part of the expenses related to the event were credited back to the WWMDC by the vendor following a review of the event.

A root cause analysis of factors that contributed to the January event identified the need to do a deep cleaning of one of the processing trains in the plant. This was completed, and a more robust monitoring and maintenance schedule was put in place for both processing trains.

The WWTF continued to experience a high number of routine alarms calls. The WWMDC agreed with the DPW that remediating this situation would be a priority for the new Wastewater Operations Manager.

**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, 2018, the renewal application remains pending with the EPA.

In FY2018, the WWMDC somewhat modified its philosophy for allocating discharge capacities based on information provided by the Town Engineer and changes in the oversight philosophy of the Massachusetts DEP. As a result, the board has approved some applications of additional discharge capacity upon payment of a privilege fee. The WWMDC remains committed to ensuring discharge remains well within approved limits, and has also asked larger users to provide the board with more comprehensive long-term plans regarding capacity needs.

In FY2018, the average discharge from the plant was approximately 23,661 GPD, down about 5.5% from 25,050 GPD in FY2017. This is partially attributable to vacancies at the Town Center development, as well as the departure of Whole Food and other tenants from the Wayland Village shopping center. The average flow is expected to remain well below the current permitted limits.

**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 owners 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 FY2018 was $740,551. Of this amount $477,033 was earmarked for paying off outstanding bonds ($400,056 betterment and interest payments, $76,978 for privilege fees for increased discharge allocations). Operating income was$202,864, and operating expenses were $246,675. A share of current year operating expenses was paid out of retained earnings from the prior fiscal year.

The Commission’s undesignated fund balance at the end of FY2018 was $1,255,193, including money collected in prior years for bond payments.

The WWMDC developed a budget for FY2019 of $795,149. This includes $283,063 operating income and expenses, and $452,086 bond and interest payments. The capacity rate for users is $2.88/per gallon, a 45% increase from FY2018; the flow rate was $2.16, a 74% increase. While both rates represented a sizable increase over 2017 rates, they were in line with rates in 2016 and earlier. The Commission is committed to managing budgets to ensure more rate stability going forward.

**Commission Membership and Staffing:** The Wastewater Management District Commission began FY2018 with two members: Fred Knight, Chair; and Rick Greene. In October, Uday Virkud was appointed by the Board of Selectmen as the third member, and joined the board as of November 8, 2017. Jane Capasso continued as the WWMDC’s part-time Account Specialist, working on administrative issues, communicating with other town departments, and managing the Board’s financial reporting.

