

Fiscal Year 2021 Town Manager's Goals Status Report

May 24, 2021

Paul E. Cohen

Town Manager

Address town sewer capacity, including the implications of current sewer connection moratorium. Establish short, medium, and long-term options and recommendations. Implement short-term viable solutions.

Jan 2021

- Obtained Town Meeting approval to fund a study to determine the options to increase the capacity of the sewer system;
- Contracted with Weston & Sampson Engineers, Inc. to develop alternatives to address the Town's wastewater capacity limitations;
- Communicated with other communities served by the Lowell Regional Wastewater facility;
- Monitoring sewer flow;
- Provided an update on the sewer capacity study at January 25th Select Board Meeting;

Address town sewer capacity, including the implications of current sewer connection moratorium. Establish short, medium, and long-term options and recommendations. Implement short-term viable solutions.

May 2021

- Weston & Sampson Engineers (WSE) provided an update on wastewater capacity alternatives analysis at the May 3rd Select Board meeting;
- WSE is identifying areas to remove infiltration and inflow to increase capacity;
- WSE is investigating alternatives for discharging wastewater to Billerica;
- WSE is investigating possible in-town wastewater management alternatives;

Conduct a root cause/ lessons learned analysis to identify process issues contributing to the Town's current sewer capacity situation. Identify opportunities for improvement and recommend changes.

- Reviewed historical documents regarding the provision of sewer service in the Town of Chelmsford;
 - Weston & Sampson Engineers 1984 Chelmsford Wastewater Facilities Plan;
 - March 1995 Major Changes to State Sanitary Code (Title V);
 - Weston & Sampson Engineers July 1997 Wastewater Facilities Plan Update
 - ❖ Between 1984 – 1989 Town Meeting authorizations and ballot question approval to sewer 68% of the Town;
 - ❖ Sufficient capacity exists under the Lowell Regional Wastewater Facility agreement to sewer the remaining 32% of the Town, including the sale in 1995 of .35 million gallons per day of capacity to the Town of Tyngsborough; {The offer to sell .70 million gallons per day of capacity to Westford is withdrawn in 1995 in order to sewer 100% of the town.}
 - ❖ A phased 10-year program to sewer the remainder of town.
 - ❖ There would be approximately 250,000 gallons per day of capacity to serve future development.
 - ❖ “It is recommended that the Chelmsford Planning Board and Sewer Commission continually monitor additional flows projected from new developments, taking into consideration the existing intermunicipal agreement limitation on sewer capacity.”

Conduct a root cause/ lessons learned analysis to identify process issues contributing to the Town's current sewer capacity situation. Identify opportunities for improvement and recommend changes.

- Sewer Commission 2002 Two-Year Sewer Moratorium
 - ❖ “The Sewer Commission has determined, that in light of real estate development and changes in property use, or intensity thereof, within the Town, the Town may not have sufficient capacity in the public sewer system to meet its current commitments in providing sewer service in the Town;”
- Sewer Commission secures special state legislation (Chapter 92 of the Acts of 2003) to establish a special account to collect funds to be used to secure additional sewer capacity.
- Sewer Commission amends its regulations in April 2004 to establish a sewer capacity impact fee.
- Sewer Commission December 2007 letter to Lowell City Manager seeking additional capacity by re-rating the capacity of the Lowell Regional Wastewater Facility, reducing infiltration/inflow in Chelmsford and Lowell, and water conservation;
- Weston and Sampson Engineers April 2010 Memorandum to the Sewer Commission providing an updated wastewater flow analysis:
 - ❖ There are approximately 1,100 existing residential properties that have not yet connected to sewer. The estimated additional daily flow is slightly higher than the estimated available capacity.

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- Weston & Sampson Engineers April 2010 Letter Report for Alternatives to Increase Wastewater Capacity recommendations under a Priority site Development Grant:
 - ❖ Develop measures to encourage/improve water conservation and waste reduction;
 - ❖ Ongoing infrastructure maintenance program and possible inflow removal program;
 - ❖ Implement a water/sewer bank;
 - ❖ Incorporate these items in appropriate regulatory documents;
 - ❖ Educate the public about the various alternatives;

- Town Manager October 31, 2019 memorandum notifying the Select Board that the Town reached its permitted sewer capacity in Fiscal Year 2019.

Conduct a root cause/ lessons learned analysis to identify process issues contributing to the Town's current sewer capacity situation. Identify opportunities for improvement and recommend changes.

- Weston & Sampson Engineers August 2020 Letter Report Existing Wastewater Flow Analysis and Katrina Road Pump Station Capacity Analysis
 - ❖ Although Chelmsford has never exceeded their total allowable ADF of 3.01 mgd to Lowell, in 2018, the Chelmsford annual average flow did slightly exceed their 2.66 mgd capacity, which means that if Tyngsborough were using their entire 0.35 mgd, the 3.01 mgd would have been exceeded.
 - ❖ For the purpose of this analysis, we have assumed that Tyngsboro will ultimately utilize its entire 0.35 mgd capacity and all calculations of available capacity under the IMA are based on Chelmsford's flows and their 2.66 mgd of allocated capacity.
 - ❖ Based on the information presented in Table 2, Town-approved developments will add approximately 0.069 mgd of ADF to the existing wastewater collection system. The additional wastewater will increase the Town's ADF to Lowell to approximately 2.66 mgd which is Chelmsford's current allowable ADF per the IMA. Based on this analysis, it is recommended that no additional permits for connection of proposed development to the Chelmsford Municipal Sewer System be approved until such time as additional capacity can be secured.
 - ❖ Based on potential additional wastewater flows of 145,000 gpd for future anticipated developments and 52,000 gpd for additional unanticipated development and redevelopment (see Table 4), it is recommended that any negotiations for additional wastewater capacity start in the range of 150,000 to 200,000 gpd of ADF.
- August 2020 Joint Meeting of Select Board, Planning Board & Board of Health
- DPW Enacts Sewer Moratorium in October 2020

Conduct a root cause/ lessons learned analysis to identify process issues contributing to the Town's current sewer capacity situation. Identify opportunities for improvement and recommend changes.

- During the period of Fiscal Years 2010 – 2018, there was little development in Chelmsford:
 - ❖ 16 Additional Apartment Units (1,031 -> 1,047) {1.6%}
 - ❖ 69 Additional Condominium Units (2,591 → 2,660) {2.67%}
 - ❖ 42 Additional Single-Family Homes (8,998 -> 9,040) {.47%}

- An unprecedented period of residential development during the past three fiscal years:
 - ❖ **476 Additional Apartment Units**
 - ❖ 66 Additional Condominium Units
 - ❖ 23 Additional Single-Family Homes

Conduct a root cause/ lessons learned analysis to identify process issues contributing to the Town's current sewer capacity situation. Identify opportunities for improvement and recommend changes.

- Town Officials became aware of sewer capacity limitations over 20 years ago;
- Despite the enactment of a sewer moratorium in 2002, only the establishment of a funding mechanism for additional capacity has occurred;
- The recent rapid change in housing development/preferences to the construction of multi-family apartment buildings accelerated the exhaustion of the Town's remaining sewer capacity;
- Sewer flow and capacity needs to be on the forefront of future planning and development. Reports on sewer flow and capacity should be provided at least annually to the Planning Board, Select Board, and Board of Health.

Develop plan for use of the Warren-Pohl Farm

Jan 2021

- The Town Manager and Department of Public Works have assisted the Conservation Commission in the development of a plan for the use of the Warren-Pohl property.
- The Conservation Commission provided a report to the Select Board at its February 8, 2021 meeting.
- Future support will be provided for the establishment of parking areas, property maintenance, and the enactment of a conservation restriction.

Develop plan for use of the Warren-Pohl Farm

May 2021

- The Conservation Commission is seeking funding under Article 27 of the 2021 Spring Annual Town Meeting to construct a parking area off of the Boston Road entrance to the property;
- Other improvements will include trail markings, fire access gates, and kiosks;
- The Conservation Commission is finalizing a conservation restriction that will ultimately be submitted to the Select Board for approval.

Review the FY21 financial status of the town monthly with the Select Board including considerations attributed to the dynamic pandemic environment.

Jan 2021

- The Town Manager and Town Accountant have provided timely financial updates to the Select Board.
- The Town Manager coordinated a financial update at the September 21, 2020 Tri-Board Meeting of the Select Board, School Committee, and Finance Committee.
- The Town Manager coordinated a financial update at the January 11, 2021 Tri-Board Meeting of the Select Board, School Committee, and Finance Committee.

Review the FY21 financial status of the town monthly with the Select Board including considerations attributed to the dynamic pandemic environment.

May 2021

- The Town Accountant provided a financial updates to the Select Board at its May 3rd meeting.
- The Town Manager has provided the Select Board with the amount of financial assistance that will be provided to the Town under the federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA).
- The Town Manager is gathering information regarding the allowed uses of the ARPA moneys to present to the Select Board.

Establish a FY22 budget recommendation that raises the tax levy below the 2.5% limit while slowing the rate of increase on resident and local business property taxes. Work with the Tri-Board (Select Board, School Committee, Finance Committee) to establish a revenue target.

- At the conclusion of the January 11, 2021 Tri-Board budgetary meeting, the Select Board voted to direct the Town Manager to utilize the Town's full Proposition 2 ½ levy capacity in his development of the Town Manager's proposed Fiscal Year 2022 operating budget.
- The Town Manager recommended that at the 2021 Fall Annual Town Meeting, when more information is known about the FY22 economic conditions, the Town can address whether/how much of its Free Cash and/or Stabilization Fund be applied to reduce the FY22 property tax levy.

Provide monthly updates and progress measurements of traffic safety issues and action items.

- The Town Manager has had the Traffic Safety Committee provide monthly reports to the Select Board at its televised board meetings.
- Action items have included:
 - installation of flashing STOP signs at the intersection of School Street and Graniteville Road;
 - Main Street traffic calming pilot project;
 - Worthen Street & North Road Intersection Reconfiguration;
 - Developed and presented traffic safety options for Ledge Road;
 - Obtained Town Meeting approval for Ledge Road bus turnaround easement;
 - Various traffic safety signage installation;
 - Numerous speed limit studies;

Review outcomes of Criterion Report and other audits to assess next steps for Fire Station Engines 3, 4, and 5. The end goal is understanding what would need to be done to keep these Engines operational and in compliance with current standards; if not then what is the plan?

- The Permanent Building Committee is evaluating proposals for the North Fire Station (Station 2) reconstruction/expansion project.
- The Fire Chief recommends that Station 3/Roberts Field Fire Station undergo a similar renovation and expansion.
- Upon the successful completion of the North Fire Station, a proposal will be brought forward to renovate Station 3.
- Based upon the Criterion Report that all areas of the Town can receive an adequate response time from Stations 1, 2, and 3, the Town would then be presented with information regarding the cost to renovate, equip with fire apparatus, and staff Station 4 or Stations 4 and 5.

Implement a means of providing accurate, accessible, and current listings of Board and Committee members on the town web site. Implement easy access to Town Meeting Representatives contact information and an easier way of emailing them by precinct.

- The Town's website has been updated with a current list of elected and appointed Town officials and Town Meeting Representatives. The listing is updated monthly. The mailing address, email address, and telephone are provided for each member.
- We are continuing to explore web-based products that can perform these functions.

Consider restarting local events

- The Town's Veterans Day, Holiday Prelude, and Winterfest events have been postponed due to the Massachusetts Department of Health's outdoor gathering restrictions as a result of the COVID-19 pandemics.
- It appears at this time, that a Memorial Day parade may not be possible. Considerations for a 4th of July parade will take place as that date approaches.

Implement the recommendations of the Vision and Values Committee

Jan 2021

- The Vision and Values Committee report was distributed to Department Heads and to Superintendent of Schools Dr. Jay Lang on July 28, 2020.
- The Vision and Values Statement has been posted in municipal buildings and on the Town's website.
- Core principles of the Vision and Values Statement such as excellence in education, access to open space, and fiscal responsibility are reflected in the Town Manager's proposed FY22 operating and capital budgets.
- The Select Board is scheduled to discuss implementation of the Vision and Values Statement at its February 8, 2021 meeting.

Implement the recommendations of the Vision and Values Committee

May 2021

- The Select Board adopted a Policy for Vision and Values Acknowledgment and Review at its March 29, 2021 meeting.
- The Vision and Values Statement will be presented to employees during the annual performance appraisal process.
- Boards and committees will receive the Vision and Values Statement during the annual appointment process in June.

Support the efforts of the Age-Friendly Committee and its pending action plan recommendations as appropriate and applicable.

Jan 2021

- The Town Administration has been actively involved in the development of the Age-Friendly Action Plan. Members of the Age-Friendly Core Team include:

Deputy Police Chief Dan Ahern

Town Manager Paul Cohen

Library Director Becky Herrmann

Director of Business Development Lisa Marrone

Public Health Director Sue Rosa

Building Commissioner Shaun Shanahan

Assistant Library Director Vickie Turcotte

Community Development Director Evan Belansky

Assistant Senior Center Director Natalie Dussault

Veterans Agent Regina Jackson

Community Services Coordinator Jennifer Melanson

Fire Chief Gary Ryan

Director of Human Services Debra Siriani

- The Age-Friendly Action Plan is scheduled to be presented to the Select Board at its February 8, 2021 meeting.
- The Town Manager and Community Development Director have submitted a District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) grant application to assist in the implementation of the Age-Friendly Action Plan.

Support the efforts of the Age-Friendly Committee and its pending action plan recommendations as appropriate and applicable.

May 2021

- The Age-Friendly Action Plan has been approved by the AARP;
- The Town received a District Local Technical Assistance Grant to aid in the implementation of the plan.
- The Town Manager appointed the Age-Friendly Implementation Committee.

Monitor & Support progress of the Diversity, Racial Equity & Inclusion Committee

- The Town Manager has monitored and provided support for the Diversity, Racial Equity & Inclusion Committee. The Committee has a vibrant website, and its meeting agendas, videos, and minutes are current.
- Police Chief James Spinney has participated in a successful “fireside chat” with the committee.
- Human Resources Director Jeanne Parziale met with the committee to discuss the Town’s diversity training.

Update Board policies

- The Select Board reviewed its policy document at its February 22, 2021 meeting;

- The Select Board developed and implemented policies pertaining to
 - Contract/Bid Review
 - Licensing Pub Breweries
 - Issuing Proclamations and Resolutions
 - Vision and Values Acknowledgement