

Infrastructure Committee

September 11, 2012

ATTENDEES

Councilors:

Patricia Blanchette
Geoffrey Gratwick

Nelson Durgin
Charles Longo

Benjamin Sprague

Staff:

Art Morgan, City Engineer

Cathy Conlow, City Manager

Brad Moore, WWTP
Superintendent

Guests:

Meeting convened at 5:00 p.m.

Councilor Blanchette wished to take a moment of silence for this historic day and to remember the 3,000 people taken on September 11, 2001.

1. Discussion: Sewer Connection Fee

Art Morgan explained that over the last twenty years the City expended a great deal of resources to upgrade the sewer system to increase capacity for future development and more upgrades would be needed to the sanitary sewer system. The proposal was to implement a sewer connection fee and a sewer impact fee to address the future needs. Brad explained that during the budget process they talked about the need to raise revenue at the Wastewater Treatment Plant. Currently the fee for a new connection was sixty dollars, which covered just the inspection. He also stated a lot of dollars had been expended to improve the infrastructure to provide capacity, to the collection system, as well as at the WWTP, of which there were costs and debt retirement associated with it. The new sewer users use that capacity without having funded the costs for providing the capacity. A connection fee would level the costs by shifting capital consumption costs to the new users who had not funded sewer projects and the debt service associated with the projects. Since the late 1980's sixty-three million, one hundred thousand dollars had been used to improve the sewer collection system at the secondary treatment plant. The WWTP has capacity of eighteen million gallons per day on a monthly average. He provided examples from his memo on proposed calculations to charge for a three bedroom residence and a seventy-five seat restaurant. Sewer fund infrastructure expenditure of 63,100,000 divided by the monthly average treatment plant capacity of 18,000 gallons equals \$3.51 per gallon. For a residence using the State Plumbing Code rate of 270 gallons per day would be charged a new connection fee of 947.70. Brad provided fees charged by other communities: Saco over \$2,200, Portland over \$9,300, Auburn \$750, Ellsworth \$500 and was asked about Brewer's rate but he had not heard back from them before the meeting. Brad requested that, if accepted, there be a dedicated line item just for infrastructure.

Councilor Longo did not wish to compare with other communities and said it looked good on the surface but he was concerned about inhibiting growth. Councilor Durgin asked about other types of new connections such as retail. An area such as the Bangor Mall where it was complex, could they negotiate

a price with the developer/owner. Brad responded in that situation it would be on a per square foot or per fixture basis charge.

Councilor Sprague moved and Councilor Durgin seconded.

There was continued discussion regarding the need to incorporate language to include the ability to negotiate with future potential businesses wishing to have new connections.

Councilor Longo, currently opposed, said he could go along with it if it were a tiered system and there would be a gradual increase in price over the next few years. He was concerned about all the other tax increases to be imposed.

Art said it was staff recommendation to draft and return to the Infrastructure Committee future meeting.

Councilor Blanchette retracted that it should go to the full Council; instead would come back after staff had time to draft ordinance language.

Vote: 4-1, Councilor Longo opposed.

Councilor Blanchette stepped away briefly with Councilor Sprague temporarily chairing.

2. **Discussion: Sewer Impact Fee**

The impact fee would be for upgrades to the existing service. For instance if the size of the pipe were not large enough to accommodate capacity and a new larger line would need to be installed in its place to serve the facility they could charge the facility an impact fee. Language already existed in the ordinance. He had concerns about the current ordinance limiting to the area capital investment district and would like to see that changed.

Councilor Longo moved and Councilor Durgin seconded.

Vote: Unanimous Approval

3. **Authorization to Enter Into an Agreement with Carol Epstein and Tom Ellis to Acquire Kittredge Road Right of Way**

Councilor Longo moved and it was seconded by Councilor Durgin with no further discussion.

Vote: Unanimous Approval

4. Amending Chapter 271, Streets, of the Code of the City of Bangor, By Authorizing the City Engineer to Issue Curb Cut Permits

Art stated that under the current ordinance the Engineering Department could authorize curb cut permits, but does not specify the Engineering Department would issue them. The amendment would correct that and the language to read that the Engineering Department approves and issues permits, which is consistent with practices.

Councilor Longo moved and it was seconded by Councilor Durgin with no further discussion.

Councilor Gratwick asked if applicants were required to provide photos when making a permit request.

Art responded that it was not required but could be easily accomplished. Currently the applicants must provide sketch/map of the location indicating where the curb cut will be. In the cases such as utility projects, it was common practice to video before the start of projects.

Vote: Unanimous Approval

Meeting was adjourned at approximately 5:38 p.m.