

Comprehensive Planning Committee

Minutes December 13, 2022

Members attending: Joanne Joy, chair; Robert Schott; Laura Arnold; David Asumssen; Jan Marks; Peggy Christian; Kim Bedard.

Staff: Jenn Curtis; Jason Lamoreau, Recreation Director and Age Friendly staff

Bowdoinham Water District: Don Lamoreau, chair; Steve Cox; Bratt Miller

Minutes for the November meeting were approved unanimously.

Representatives from the Bowdoinham Water District gave a slide show and answered questions. The district was established in 1957 and is not a branch of Town Government. Trustees are appointed by the selectboard except for one representative from the town of Bowdoin. The district shares office space with the town of Richmond. The district serves 292 residential accounts plus Bowdoinham Central School, Bowdoinham Estates, Greenleaf Apartments; FHC and town owned government buildings. There are 54 hydrants on the system. There are two shallow, 40', wells in Bowdoin that produce between 20-25 gallons per year. There is a generator in case of a long power outage.

There are 9 miles of pipe, a mix of cast iron, ductile iron, asbestos cement and other materials. There were two significant leaks in the past year, the most vulnerable material being the ductile iron. Leaks can be difficult to find. There is normally a 10–20-gallon loss per year. There is currently no schedule to replace aging and weak pipes. There are several areas in town where there are no bypass loops so customers are without water until a leak is repaired.

District water rates are on the high size- primarily because of the small size of the district. The average quarterly charge is \$75. The annual revenue is around \$220,000 with \$62,000 coming from the towns for fire protection. The current debt service is \$535,000. The Public Utilities Commission must approve rates which normally rise minimally every few years.

The district is prohibited by state law from using revenue from current customers to expand the district. To expand, a developer could extend water service to the new development and then turn that extension over to the district for service. That has happened several times. The town could act as a developer to expand the water district.

We reviewed Land Use Data. There are many gaps in information about where new housing has been built in recent years. What modifications need to be made to land use bylaws to allow more density of housing and protection of open spaces?

The next housing forum sponsored by Comp Planning and BCDI is scheduled for Feb 1 with a snow date of Feb 8. Joanne reported that the Genesis Fund has received funding to work with Maine State Housing. Also Grow Smart Maine will be partnering with Maine Farmland Trust on the issue of housing focusing on three communities. Caribou, Gray and Bowdoinham.

Respectfully submitted,

Peggy Christian