

https://www.capenews.net/bourne/news/wastewater-group-in-bourne-still-awaiting-word-on-federal-funding/article_b7711f9d-c6a9-5d90-bc34-1b431485517a.html

Wastewater Group In Bourne Still Awaiting Word On Federal Funding

By MICHAEL J. RAUSCH May 30, 2018

Home / Bourne / Bourne News

The town is still waiting to hear whether federal authorities will approve a \$2 million grant that will help offset the cost of a wastewater treatment plant in Buzzards Bay. The funding was part of a presentation that resulted in residents overwhelmingly approving the use of town funds to have the treatment facility built.

The treatment facility has been approved for construction adjacent to the site for the new Bourne Police Department station, near Queen Sewell Park in Buzzards Bay. At Special Town Meeting in October 2017, residents gave thumbs-up to the town paying for the \$6.5 million facility by a vote of 132 to 24.

A portion of the cost was to be paid through a federal EDA (Economic Development Authority) grant. At the May 2 meeting of the Wastewater Facility Design and Building Committee, chairman Mary Jane Mastrangelo said it likely will not be until later this month that the town will hear if its application has been approved.

The town has applied to the EDA for \$2 million. Coupled with a \$1.5 million state grant, the town's share of the project's cost comes to roughly \$3 million. The sewer enterprise fund would cover \$2.5 million, and the remaining \$500,000 would be borrowed, Ms. Mastrangelo has said.

If the EDA grant is not approved, the \$3 million would come out of borrowing or debt service, Ms. Mastrangelo said.

The \$2 million from the EDA would only be used for items connected with the structure itself—the building, the pump station and associated utilities—and not the leaching fields associated with the project, Ms. Mastrangelo said. Committee member Elmer I. Clegg asked if there were any time limits imposed on the grant. Ms. Mastrangelo said she is not aware of any.

The committee is waiting to hear if a revised application submitted in February has passed muster with federal authorities. Last November the committee received notification from Leslie Richardson with the Cape Cod Commission regarding problems with the town's application for the EDA grant. The commission is serving as co-applicant on the grant.

Ms. Richardson said the federal grant review committee felt the town's application fell short of criteria that would move it to the next level of review. The review committee wanted clarification on how the treatment plant will advance the entire region economically, Ms. Richardson said.

Questions posed included what makes Buzzards Bay special with regard to regional economic issues and how the project would result in new job opportunities. She said the committee encouraged the town to submit a revised proposal. That revision has been submitted and is currently under review, Ms. Mastrangelo said.

"We did a lot of work on the economic development piece and submitted letters from people, including the National Marine Life Center and the Marine Renewable Energy Collaborative, on how the treatment facility would help them and support their plans," Ms. Mastrangelo said.

Ms. Mastrangelo said the committee is making good progress with the wastewater facility project. She said the disposal fields will be included in construction of the new police station. Groundbreaking on the new station is expected to begin sometime this summer.

The wastewater committee is still working on the design for the treatment plant. Bid documents are expected to go out sometime this fall. Construction is expected to begin next spring with a completion date for the station, and the treatment facility, in November 2019, she said.

The new wastewater treatment plant has drawn both advocates and critics. Supporters have said the facility is needed for the town's economic development and growth. Naysayers have questioned whether the plant would ignite the kind of business activity in the downtown Growth Incentive Zone that has been speculated.

The wastewater treatment plant has been cited as crucial to the future economic growth of downtown Buzzards Bay. Development in the downtown business district has stalled, due in part to a lack of wastewater capacity that can be allocated to project applicants.

An intermunicipal agreement allows Bourne to send 200,000 gallons a day to Wareham's treatment facility. All but 7,000 gallons of that allotment has been appropriated. The new plant is designed to increase wastewater flow by 100,000 gallons a day. Ms. Mastrangelo has been previously quoted as estimating there is roughly \$100 million worth of investment in Buzzards Bay that is being held up by the lack of wastewater capacity.

Construction on the new wastewater plant is expected to begin next spring with a completion date for the station, and the treatment facility, in November 2019.