



Town of North Brookfield

Board of Sewer Commissioners
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NORTH BROOKFIELD WASTEWATER TREATMENT FACILITY (WWTF) UPGRADE BALLOT QUESTION PROJECT INFORMATION

What is the status of the project?

Town Meeting approved \$13.1M for the project on August 18th. A debt exclusion ballot vote is scheduled for November 3rd, which must be approved for the project to proceed. The preliminary design for the upgrade has been completed and approved by the MassDEP and USDA.

Why does the Town have to upgrade and renovate the WWTF?

The WWTF was last upgraded/renovated over 25 years ago. The WWTF is well maintained but it's past time for improvements, and the construction won't be completed for 2-1/2 to 3 years. Both EPA and MassDEP have mandated higher levels of treatment. Failure to comply will result in significant daily fines.

Can we wait a few years to fund and start the project?

No, the construction must be completed by April 1, 2024. Any delays beyond the November 3rd date will likely cause the April 1, 2024 completion date to be missed.

Will the project improve water quality?

Yes, the WWTF is routinely providing excellent treatment, and the project will result in even higher levels of treatment including nutrient removal. Our wastewater ultimately ends up in the Connecticut River and Long Island Sound.

Is there grant and loan money available?

Yes, both USDA and MassDEP have committed both grants and low interest loans to the Town. Overall, we can expect government funding roughly equal to 30% of the project cost to be paid with grants and the remainder in 0% loans.

Why can't the project be phased in over many years to reduce the cost?

Phasing the project would cost the Town and users more in the long run due to reduced government funding and inflation.

How does the cost compare to what other Town's are paying for similar projects?

Our cost is less than other towns on a dollars per gallon basis.

As a homeowner what is the project going to cost me?

We will start debt service payments for project in late 2024 or 2025. The Town has a large amount of debt being paid off in 2025 and 2028, which will help to reduce the financial impact. The debt service that is expiring between now and 2028 will total more than the overall anticipated project costs after the application of grant funding. This means that the tax rate would not increase because of this project.

How much will the sewer rate go up?

The Sewer rate would not increase significantly if this project is funded as a debt exclusion. The Sewer rate would only be impacted based on the operating costs of the new facility.

What happens to the sewer rate if this is not passed?

If the project is funded only by the sewer users an anticipated 30-40% increase from the current rates is expected due to construction costs.