

Water and sewer project to begin next phase

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BOW - It's been talked about for eight years, and now Bow Town Manager Jim Pitts said an agreement is near that will begin the next phase of the town's water and sewer project.

At the Tuesday, May 25, selectmen meeting, Pitts told the board, "It's imminent," when asked when the final easement agreement with a Route 3A property owner would be signed.

Speaking the following day, Pitts said, "I've learned over all these years that it's not a done deal until people sign the documents. That has not happened yet, but it'll happen any day now. And it'll all be public at that time."

Pitts said the state Department of Environmental Services has already approved the plan and the town is just waiting on the final easement signature. Once that's completed, it's up to selectmen with how

to proceed.

"The moment that I have the signatures on this last easement, I'll notify the selectmen and the ball's in their court," Pitts said. "They can take a vote on whether to go out to bid or not. They're talking as if they will do that, but I don't speak for them."

A timetable on the project has yet to be decided. Voters approved the \$12 million bond in 2002 and construction prices have changed since then.

"Construction costs have changed a lot in eight years, but in many cases they're better than they were before," Pitts said. "I'm hopeful we'll find that the money we have left will be sufficient to do entire project."

Pitts said it's possible the project could be done in phases.

At this year's Town Meeting, voters decided not to rescind the water and sewer project, originally approved in 2002, in a vote of 202-180.

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*Steven Heavener, executive director
Capital Region Development Council*

Opponents suggested the new water and sewer lines would do little to bring new businesses in and taxpayers would be left with the tab.

The first portion of the water and sewer project, costing about \$2 million, has already been completed. The overall project costs about \$12 million.

Pitts said that first portion of the project largely consists of a well that would provide water to the new system. "We have a well in the ground and it's capped," he said.

The proposed water and

sewer system was the subject of lengthy discussion at Tuesday's selectmen meeting, which also included members of the school board and business leaders.

At several points in the meeting, Steven Heavener, executive director of the Capital Regional Development Council, which is working with Bow officials on growing business in town, said the water and sewer system is much anticipated.

"We thought this water and sewer thing was going to be deployed two years ago," Heavener said.

Heavener also said there's a business that wants to build a multi-million dollar investment on Route 3A but has been waiting for the town to adopt water and sewer and business-friendly practices.

"An existing business is ready to do a \$10 million to \$20 million investment," Heavener said. "They're ready to pull the trigger. This is a real deal that's soon to become public."