



## THE CITY OF SPRINGFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS

MAYOR DOMENIC J. SARNO

*HOME OF THE BASKETBALL HALL OF FAME*

May 28, 2020

Josh Schimmel  
Executive Director  
&  
Board of Commissioners  
Springfield Water and Sewer Commission  
250 M Street Ext.  
Agawam, MA 01001

Dear Director Schimmel and Board of Commissioners:

Please accept this letter as my written comment for the proposed FY21 budget for the Springfield Water and Sewer Commission.

While we do have one of the best water systems in the country, I am sensitive of the fact that we must continue to invest and improve our water and sewer infrastructure, which is key to keeping it top notch. We must continue to make the delicate balance between assuring that our infrastructure improvement and maintenance needs are met while being mindful of the surreal and extraordinary times we find ourselves in, especially to our ratepayers – our residents and business community.

As I originally wrote back on May 8<sup>th</sup>, though we must remain cognizant of the fact that we do not want a major water system failure here, I also want to be reasonable and compassionate to our residents and businesses. I expressed my serious concerns with the original proposed rate increase of 16.9%. In addition, I respectfully asked if the Commission could reexamine the discount for senior citizens.

I was pleased to hear that the Commission, which reported on May 15<sup>th</sup> that the new data from the April billing cycle had shown better than projected usage, and that the Commission had recommend a revision to their original proposed FY21 budget which should have a positive impact on the proposed final rate recommendations. I was also happy to see the Commission voted to increase the discount for senior citizens and disabled veterans from \$33 to \$75 per year, effective July 1, 2020 to provide further relief for our residents.

I also want to encourage the Commission to explore and pursue any and all potential state and federal infrastructure funding initiatives to offset the anticipated expenses in the FY21 budget and beyond for maintenance and water system infrastructure investment and improvements.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

  
Domenic J. Sarno  
Mayor