

# TOWN OF SEWALL'S POINT



**TO: Town of Sewall's Point Commission**  
**FROM: Robert Daniels, Town Manager**  
**SUBJECT: Discussion and Decision on Highpoint Grinders**  
**DATE: Special Commission Meeting - November 4, 2025**

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

In 2022, the Town Commission authorized a Septic-to-Sewer conversion project with the help of an \$8.4 million grant from the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). Martin County Utilities (MCU) authorized 340 connections on a low-pressure force main, even though the grant was for funding of 706 connections. Part one of the project was completed in January 2025, consisting of 169 connections. Part two of the project began on October 15, 2025, with 171 connections, scheduled for completion in May 2026. Work has started on Island Road and will begin in December in the Highpoint subdivision. This leaves 366 connections remaining to be completed in Part Three. Unfortunately, Martin County Utilities will not authorize the installation of any further grinder/low-pressure mains. MCU will authorize the Town to rehabilitate approximately 150 connections of the 366 connections remaining, utilizing existing gravity sewer mains. Due to the increased cost of a gravity system, the Town does not have sufficient funding to cover all 366 connections. Staff have attempted to secure further grants, but the funding opportunities now require mandatory connections to the MCU Sewer System.

At the Regular Town Commission meeting on October 14, 2025, there was a discussion about moving grinder connections from Highpoint to lower-lying areas, such as Riverview and Palm Roads. Legal complications were mentioned, as well as the approvals required for such a change. On October 28, 2025, the contractor, Sunshine Land Design, advised that conceptually, they were not objecting to changing the location of grinders. The change would require expedited approval from Martin County and DEP. Time is of the essence since all construction must be completed by June 30, 2026, and no extensions will be granted. If it is not completed, the Town would have to pay for the project's completion.

The following are the identified options for the Town Commission's review:

1. Leave the original plan in place with the construction of the grinder system in all of the Highpoint subdivision.
2. Move approximately 20 grinder connections from Middle Road in the Highpoint subdivision to portions of Riverview Road and Palm Road.

3. Move approximately 75 grinder connections from the Highpoint subdivision (not including Island Road) to Riverview and Palm Roads, Kingston Court, and Oakwood Drive.
4. Authorize 76 gravity connections in the Rio Vista Subdivision.

The risks involved in choosing any option besides option 1, are getting the approval (Interlocal Agreement) from the Martin County Commission promptly, completing the engineering and permitting for the new areas on time, and completing the formal approval by Sunshine Land Design and DEP. Option 4 – the Rio Vista gravity connections – could meet the timeframe if the Town Commission approves this option. An additional positive measure for option 4 would be the elimination of the flushing station required for Part 1 and Part 2 grinder connections. This work would install lining in the existing sewer pipes and the installation of a lift station in Lantana Park.

The downside of options 2 or 3 is that the area would not receive any sewer connections under the current grant, and any subsequent grant opportunities would require mandatory hook-up within 365 days and possibly an assessment for gravity connections.

Lastly, the option to not continue with this capital project after Part Two also exists, leaving Martin County Utilities to provide sewers for the remaining 366 connections.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

This is a policy decision reserved for the Town Commission.