Officials grilled about sewers 9/1/94

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WINSTED – The Water Pollution Control Authority will call another public hearing to discuss preliminary assessments for the new sewers at Highland Lake.

A fiesty and sometimes angry crowd of more than 100 people grilled and quizzed sewer officials on the sewer assessments.

Lake resident Lucy Maggiorotto said she lived alone, and used little water. "I don't think it's fair I have to sell my house because you guys are making me get this damn sewer," she said.

One of the primary gripes was that the assessment of $13,130 for the majority of the households was more than the original $10,000 assessment estimated by the WPCA. The assessment increased officials said, because the grant fund from federal Farmers Home Administration was less than the anticipated 50 percent.

People at the meeting asked the WPCA for more information, and a breakdown of costs. WPCA Chairman Stephen Vaill said financial information will be sent out to residents before the next public hearing.

"If you want more (information), we'll try to satisfy you," Vaill said.

Community lawyer Charlene LaVoie chided the officials for failing to provide residents with information detailing the finances. "It just doesn't make

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New hearing

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sense," she said. She urged them hold another hearing.

Most of the crowd advocated having the town pick up a share of the $6.2 million project, rather than forcing lake residents with the new sewer lines to solely pay. The entire town voted in the referendum to expand the sewers, so they should pay for some of it, they reasoned. Lake resident Clare Stevens said the town should pick up a portion of the project loan because it benefits from the lake through use of the beaches and such.

"What we're trying to say is we're getting the shaft," Linette Branham said. "This is really unethical."

The lake residents may appeal, although it must be done through the courts.