



TOWN OF MEDWAY COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

Department of Public Works

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APPROVED 11/10/2020

Director

David D'Amico

Deputy Director

Peter Pelletier

October 13, 2020

Pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, and the Governor's March 15, 2020 Order imposing strict limitations on the number of people that may gather in one place, no in-person attendance of members of the public will be permitted at this meeting. Board members will be participating remotely. For public hearings, access via Zoom is provided for the required opportunity for public participation.

In attendance via Zoom: Michael Callahan, Chairperson
Leo O'Rourke, Commissioner
Steven Burke, Commissioner

Also in attendance via Zoom: David D'Amico, DPW Director, Barry Smith, Water & Sewer Superintendent, Paula Lawless, 6 Vernon Road, and Kelly Millette, Administrative Assistant and Recording Secretary

Commissioner O'Rourke called the Water & Sewer Advisory Board meeting to order at 6:15 P.M.

6 Vernon Road – Sewer tie-in cost

Ms. Lawless is interested in connecting her home to town sewer, expressed her concern on the filing fee to connect, stating \$4,000.00 was a lot of money – they've lived in Town since 1987 and if they knew it was \$100.00 before they would have tied in then. Hoping for some assistance and feels that maybe a lifelong senior discount should be in place for this type of cost. Planning on selling the home in the near future and feels it will be worth more if it was hooked up to town sewer. Commissioner O'Rourke stated that this may be better off discussing with the sale of the home and the buyers.

Commissioner O'Rourke expressed his opinion that if we were to assist one we would need to assist all. He recommended that at this time Mr. & Mrs. Lawless should schedule a Title 5 test to even see if this was a necessity at the moment. Superintendent Smith let the residents know once again how the rate came about. This included research from surrounding towns and budget information.

Commissioner Callahan and Commissioner Burke were also in agreement that at this time it was not something that was planned to be modified.

Meeting Minutes from the meeting on 9/15/20 were not ready for review at this time. Tabled until next meeting.

Board Reorganization

All commissioners were in agreement to keep the board as is. Commissioner Michael Callahan will stay on as Chairperson.

Commissioner O'Rourke made a motion to keep Commissioner Callahan in his current position. Commissioner Burke seconded the motion. The motion carries unanimously. A roll call vote was taken due to the nature of the remove Zoom meeting.

Board voted to change Commissioner O'Rourke position title to Vice Chairperson.

Chairperson Callahan made a motion to change position title to Vice Chairperson. Commissioner Burke seconded the motion. The motion carries unanimously. A roll call vote was taken due to the nature of the remove Zoom meeting.

Abatement Requests

3 Steppingstone Drive

Tabled from meeting in September - Water & Sewer account. Abatement on bill due to nobody living there - passed papers on 2/27/20, stayed at son's house in Mendon that night then flew to Florida the next day until 3/31 and then stayed with relatives until 4/3, then went to our NH home. First night to stay at the condo will be 9/15 to 9/16. Outside spigots weren't even on until 7/1 - that's when furniture was moved in. I can see the minimal use on the dates they say they had made day trips to the condo but can't explain the high usage on 5/16, 5/17 and 5/18. There was 2,293cf used on the current bill. Using the previous bill of 329cf, that's a difference of 1,964cf. The breakdown of the water usage 500cf - \$46.14, 1,464cf @ \$10.61(Tier 1) - 155.33 = Total Water \$201.47. The breakdown of the sewer usage 500cf - \$38.19, 1,464cf @ \$7.64(Tier 1) - \$111.85 = Total Sewer \$150.04. The total is \$351.51 that could be possibly abated.

Commissioner O'Rourke suggests checking meter. Superintendent Smith agrees and will check meter. Superintendent Smith stated the meter test has not been completed yet.

Tabled until next meeting as we await meter test results.

2-3 Pine Ridge Drive

Tabled from meeting in September - Water & Sewer account. Homeowner is seeking abatement - claims usage spiked with no changes to the home. Research was done showing the meter to be working properly - stopping, as it should, for periods of time during the night (typically when people are sleeping). It was explained that during this bill period, we are in the middle of a pandemic, everyone is home a lot more than usual, it has been a very hot few months and the rates went up. The time period from 7/8 - 7/13 had very high usage. Average usage for this period is 1,298cf - this period there were 3,199cf used. 1,901cf over what is normally consumed - breakdown of cost is as follows: Water 500cf @ \$46.14, 1,401cf @ \$10.61(Tier 1) = \$148.65 TOTAL \$195.79. Sewer 500cf @ \$38.19, 1,401cf @ \$7.64(Tier 1) = \$107.04 TOTAL \$145.23. The amount that could possibly be abated is \$341.02.

Superintendent Smith spoke to the homeowners, asked them if they had checked all 3 toilets to make sure there are no leaks. The homeowner's claimed they are all working properly.

Director D'Amico states some general information about the summer water usage (August bill). The town pumped 9.7 million gallons during the last quarter, we sold 9.4 million gallons. Our forecasted sales for

this period, based on the same period a year ago was 8.1 million gallons. Everyone is home, lawns, gardens, more laundry.

Superintendent Smith stated the meter test has not been completed yet.

Tabled until next meeting as we await meter test results.

3 Spring Street

Sewer only account. Watering plants from private well – asking for an abatement on the sewer charges since the water used didn't go into the sewer system. There was 3,158cf used during this billing period. The average of same periods is 2,182cf with the difference of 976cf. Breakdown of cost is 500cf @ minimum of \$38.19 and 476cf @ \$7.64(Tier 1) is \$36.37 with a total of \$74.56 that could possibly be abated.

Commissioner O'Rourke suggests Mr. Cutler higher a plumber to put a spigot on before the meter to avoid further need for abatements. Superintendent Smith suggests Mr. Cutler call and make an appointment for the Water/Sewer Department to come and give him direction on a spigot prior to the meter.

Commissioner O'Rourke made a motion to abate \$74.56 in sewer charges. Commissioner Burke seconded the motion. The motion carries unanimously. A roll call vote was taken due to the nature of the remove Zoom meeting.

98 West Street

Tabled from September meeting - Water & Sewer account. Homeowner requests abatement - 75% of the water used on this bill was to water grass, no sewage needed. It has been past practice that we do not entertain abatement requests during the DEP Mandated Water Ban for lawn watering. There was 8,004cf used this bill. The average was deducted of the same like periods of 2,745cf. The breakdown of the sewer charge is as follows: 500cf - \$38.19, 1,500cf x \$7.64(Tier 1) = \$114.60, 745cf x \$8.73(Tier 2) = \$65.04 - Total of \$217.83 that could be possibly abated.

Chairperson O'Callahan made a motion to deny this abatement per the mandated water ban. Commissioner Burke seconds the motion. The motion carries unanimously. A roll call vote was taken due to the nature of the Zoom meeting.

1 Meryl Street

Tabled from September meeting - Water & Sewer account. Homeowner is seeking an abatement on the sewer charges for the water used for the pool. In the past, we do not entertain pool top off abatement requests or pool fills during the DEP Mandated Water Ban. Research was done on the usage during the billing period and the meter looks to be working correctly.

Commissioner O'Rourke expresses concern with the pandemic going on and everyone is forced to stay home.

Director D'Amico spoke to Town Manager, Michael Boynton about the number of abatements and comments, explained with the pandemic and forecasted 8.1 million gallons, we sold 9.4 million gallons. We could do something across the board, not an abatement but a reduction or rebate and his opinion was

not to do that – there will be another increase this coming year and any extra money we collect now goes towards that.

Director D’Amico explained that all these abatements that were denied should have also been fined for using the water illegally, but the fines were not enforced.

Vice Chairperson O’Rourke made a motion to abate \$231.29 in sewer charges. Commissioner Burke seconded the motion. The motion carries unanimously. A roll call vote was taken due to the nature of the Zoom meeting.

7 Dean Street

Water & Sewer Account - Homeowner found 2 outside spigots leaking. Requesting abatement on the sewer portion due to the overage not going into the sewer system. 10,895cf used this quarter, average of same period 3,608cf - difference is 7,287cf. Breakdown is as follows: 500cf - \$38.19, 1,500cf @ \$7.64 = \$114.60, 1,500cf @ \$8.73 = \$130.95, 3,787cf @ \$11.65 = \$441.19 - possible abatement from sewer \$724.93.

Director D’Amico requests more of a breakdown of usage.

Commissioners tabled until November meeting.

63 Summer Street

Water & Sewer Account – Homeowner states they had received a notice of a possible water leak and found the leak - seeking abatement from sewer charges. 4,572cf used this quarter, average of same period 2,758cf with a difference of 1,814cf. Breakdown is as follows: 500cf = \$38.19, 1,314cf @ \$7.64 = \$100.39 - possible abatement from sewer \$138.58

Director D’Amico requests more of a breakdown of usage.

Commissioners tabled until November meeting.

Water Treatment Plant Discussion & Satellite Well at Populatic Discussion:

Director D’Amico states they have put together a committee and they will be meeting to start the process for a Request for Proposal (RFP).

I&I Update:

Superintendent Smith states that the smoke testing that was done in areas around town did not show any major issues. He is rethinking this strategy and will be reaching other prices from more companies in the future.

Directors Report

Director D’Amico advised that we were able to move \$200,000 into the I&I Study budget.

Commissioner O’Rourke asked about the online customer meter reading program. Director D’Amico explains that we close to a point that we could advertise and start collecting email addresses for the

AquaHawk program so they can access it themselves. We still have 40ish meters that we can't read but that will always be the case with those unfortunately.

Superintendent Smith stated that the well is almost at completion and Eversource would be working at the location. One that is complete, SCADA would move in to complete their part. He also stated that an upgrade was necessary. Brentwood water main project is also moving along. Many streets are coming off the temporary lines by the end of the month.

The next meeting was not scheduled at this time.

Commissioner O'Rourke made a motion to adjourn at 7:05. Commissioner Burke seconded the motion. The motion carries unanimously. A roll call vote was taken due to the nature of the remote Zoom meeting.