



OFFICE OF THE
WATER DEPARTMENT
TOWN HALL, 511 MAIN STREET
DUNSTABLE, MA 01827-1313
(978) 649-4514 FAX (978) 649-8893
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Approved: April 23, 2013

Water Department Minutes **Tuesday, February 26, 2013**

Meeting was called to order at 7:00pm by Chairman, Karl Huber
Members present: Joyce Cail and Bob Gamache
Meeting held: At the Dunstable Town Hall – lower level

Public Hearing on Schedule of Rates and Fees

Five residents attended the hearing on the Schedule of Rates and Fees. The Secretary provided a handout on the history of increases as well as proposed changes. Karl opened the hearing at 7:00pm. He started out by explaining that it has been six years since the last rate increase and a lot of the costs associated with running a public utility have increased during that time. The hiring of a part time water employee, the cost of reimbursement to the general fund (Town) for benefits, increases in testing costs, chemical increases and repairs have all contributed to the Board's review of the rates. Mr. Dean asked about the condition of the wells. Karl explained that currently we are running smoothly, however, the department has only about \$40,000 of funds not allocated to the budget/projects and there are some repairs that will need to be made in the near future such as replacing the aging Pond Street hydro pneumatic tanks, repair/replace the pump at Well #1, and mains that need repair/replacement (4" asbestos line). Karl went on to say that funding remains our biggest issue and we can no longer expect the 101 rate payers to pick up the tab. If the hydro pneumatic tanks breakdown, there will be a disruption of service to the Swallow Union Elementary School, Town Hall, Police Department, Fire Department, General Store and Library for an undeterminable amount of time. This would affect all residents of the town; therefore, it becomes a "town" problem.

Mr. Mikol said that this problem is not going to go away and it will need to be dealt with sooner or later. He felt that replacing the pressure tanks would be a more ideal solution rather than repairing them. He also asked about selling to bulk water distributors. Karl explained that we have looked into this and there are a number of concerns such as: a safe area for tankers to fill up, potential damage caused to our roads, no easy way for tankers to get into town to access a hydrant, limited hours of water superintendent and the Main Street bridge which is slated to be repaired by the state due to deteriorating conditions. Karl went on to say that we even looked at cell phone companies to put antennae at the well site but have not had much interest at this time.

Mr. Georges mentioned that the town as well as residents may save a lot of money on their homeowner's policies and this should be brought up at Town Meeting. Karl said that funding is the issue and he has even been talking with the Fire Chief about fire protection and working with him on applying for grants.



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Mr. Sullivan asked the Board if meters could be read at six month intervals because if there has been seven months since the last reading, he pays a higher tier level for that last month of water. The Secretary explained that now that they have a water employee once a week, that shouldn't be a problem. They will be read in April and October. Mr. Dean asked that the Board look into quarterly billing in the future.

Discussion turned to what percentage to increase the water rates. It was also mentioned that increasing rates yearly 2 ½% instead of once every six years may be easier for customers. The Secretary will look into this for the future.

Joyce made the following motion for changes/additions to the Schedule of Rates and Fees:

I.D.2. Minimum Rate up to 10,000 Gallons	\$63.00
I.D.3. 10,001 Gallons to 20,000 Gallons	\$0.0073/Gallon
I.D.4. Over 20,000 Gallons	\$0.0080/Gallon

I.E. Processing Fee, Unpaid Bills: In addition to any charges incurred pursuant to Section I.B., above, the BOW may impose a processing fee for overdue payment notices, consisting of **\$50.00**, plus any costs incurred for certified mail or service by constable. Any such charge shall be added to the account and be subject to lien process under Chapter 40 of the General Laws.

II.O. Back Flow Tests: Performed twice a year **\$75.00** per device

II.P. No person shall turn on, shut off or tamper with, including but not limited to water mains, hydrants, meters, or any component of the water system. Person(s) found violating this policy will be subject to a fine of \$250.00 per offense.

With all approved changes/additions effective as of March 1, 2013. Bob 2nd the motion. – Motion approved unanimously. Karl closed the hearing at 8:10pm and thanked all for their input.

Meeting Minutes of January 22, 2013

Bob made a motion to approve the meeting minutes, as submitted, from the January 22nd meeting. Joyce 2nd the motion. – Motion passed unanimously.

Review and Sign Monthly Bills

\$1,178.36 of bills were reviewed and signed by the Board.



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Review and Sign Employee's Payroll

The Secretary's and Water Employee's payroll slips were reviewed and signed by the Board.

Breakdown of Finances for FY2013

Members reviewed the fiscal year 2013 financial report.

Update on Money Owed to the Water Department

Currently there is \$2,050.76 owed. Bills with interest went out Thursday the 21st.

MassDOT Main Street Bridge

Karl told members that he had been talking with Tom Emerick from MassDOT regarding the Main Street Bridge repair over Salmon Brook. As-built plans for the water main that runs under the bridge were mailed to Kuok Chiang (MassDOT) for review. Tom gave the department three options: 1) include a new water main on the bridge structure – we would be responsible for all costs associated with the relocation of the water main onto the new bridge; 2) MassDOT will provide future accommodations for a new water main; 3) Do nothing. MassDOT will provide pricing for option 1. The Board will then need to choose an option.

Discussion on new Pond Street locations

Karl will contact the appropriate personnel about possibly using the old Town Garage or 160 Pleasant Street garage for a new pressure tank location.

Additional Topics Discussed Not Noted on the Agenda

None

Meeting was closed at 8:22pm. The next meeting of the Water Department will be Tuesday, March 26, 2013 at 7:00pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl A. Mann
Secretary
Dunstable Water Department