



TOWN OF MEDWAY
WATER & SEWER COMMISSION
MEDWAY, MASSACHUSETTS

Commissioners

Cranston Rogers, Chair
Robert Wilson, Member
Leo O'Rourke, Member

Meeting Minutes

April 30, 2014 – 2:00pm
DPS Office
155 Village Street, Medway MA

Present: Chan Rogers, Robert Wilson, Leo O'Rourke, DPS Director Thomas Holder, Operations Manager Sarah Pawluczonek, and Town Treasurer Melanie Phillips.

The Water/Sewer Commission meeting was motioned to start at 2:10pm by Robert Wilson. Leo O'Rourke seconded, unanimous vote, 3-0.

Water & Sewer Rates

Tom Holder began by going over the water rate study explaining that the new debt service line represents the water main projects plus the 15% share of the proposed DPS facility. He reviewed that requested changes to the rates from the last meeting were to modify the necessary increase by altering the percentage increase between tiers. Tier 1 would increase the least by 3% and the tier 2 would increase by 4% and tier 3 by 5%. He pointed out the impact to the average users on the first page of the study. No vote was necessary today because the goal was to have a consensus before we pass this along to the Board of Selectmen. To make this more palatable we have restructured the increases to be less to tier 1.

Robert Wilson asked about the sewer rate study.

Tom Holder explained that the main driver to the 20% rate increase is the Charles River Pollution Control District. Both the O&M and Capital Assessment had increased. Most significantly the increase to the O&M which is outlined in the table at the bottom of the summary page. It is due to the sampling showing higher industrial strengths then before.

Chan Rogers asked if some of the newer industrial businesses could have caused this.

Tom Holder said that the newer businesses, specifically Cybex and Lawrence Waste, are not likely contributing to the problem. He will be looking into them regardless. He was just not sure if FY13 was an anomaly or if FY14 is since we see the strengths had gone down. Our concentrations are up though.

Leo O'Rourke asked if Lawrence Waste possibly does cause the problem.

Tom Holder explained their use of a particle separator which would remediate any large discharge of solids.

Leo O'Rourke asked of the Department could create a Fact Sheet about the rate studies to detail some of the reasons for the change in rates. Explain what is improving and why.

Tom Holder agreed to put something together. He went back to the sewer study pointing out the use of retained earnings to keep the rate as low as possible and then the intent to build them back up slightly to a comfortable level.

Leo O'Rourke asked if the revenue line could be broken out into the different sources of revenue.

Tom Holder recapped the increased percentages which are to water tier 1, 2 and 3 going up 3%, 4%, and 5%, respectively. For sewer the tier 1, 2, and 3 increase was going to be 15%, 25%, and 30% respectively.

Robert Wilson asked where the rates stood as of now.

Tom Holder answered that he was pleased with the current iteration of the studies and would recommend moving ahead with them.

Leo O'Rourke brought up his concerns about the street paving due to water and sewer main projects and the fact that the general fund should bear some of the costs for that.

Tom Holder said he would have the fact sheet ready for them by Town Meeting.

Robert Wilson asked if we could monitor the new industrial park sewer expansion to see if that section is the source of the higher industrial strengths since they seem to have started after that sewer was added.

Melanie Phillips asked what could be done once we find out the source.

Tom Holder replied that they would be told not to exceed any regulatory limits.

Robert Wilson remarked that they could also be back-charged for the expense.

Tom Holder asked if the Board was comfortable publishing these rates to the Board of Selectmen.

Robert Wilson suggested that we plan a joint meeting with the BOS prior to the rate hearing to go over the studies.

Robert Wilson made a motion to accept the rates and forward them to the Board of Selectmen.

Leo O'Rourke seconded, unanimous vote, 3-0.

Member Prerogatives

Leo O'Rourke asked about how we were doing with the 30% unaccounted for water. He asked if there were any pressure differences.

Tom Holder explained that Medway has one pressure zone which was isolated and did not display any evidence of a problem. The valves at the tank were holding. Also, the night rates drop off so he does not suspect some major leak. The Department has moved to investigating possible unmetered connections and data integrity. He said he was confident that they would find it and get below the EPA required 10%.

Leo O'Rourke asked if the new meters could even be registering all that much better. He thinks the reduction in use is due to the water ban on irrigation.

Next Meeting will be held at 7:30am on either Wednesday, May 21, 2014 or Wednesday, May 28th, 2014. We will coordinate this with the BOS.

Robert Wilson made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 2:50pm.

Leo O'Rourke seconded, unanimous vote, 3-0.

Respectfully submitted by,

**Sarah Pawluczonek
Operations Manager**