



TOWN OF MEDWAY  
WATER & SEWER COMMISSION  
MEDWAY, MASSACHUSETTS

*Commissioners*

Cranston Rogers, Chair  
Robert Wilson, Member  
Peter Gluckler, Member

## Meeting Minutes

February 11, 2013 – 6:30pm  
Tom Holder's Office  
155 Village Street, Medway MA

Present: Chan Rogers, Robert Wilson, DPS Director Thomas Holder, and Operations Manager Sarah Pawluczonek. Also present were residents George and Lisa McMains.

**The meeting was called to order at 6:38pm by a motion from Robert Wilson.**

**Chan Rogers seconded.**

**Motion approved, unanimous vote, 2-0.**

Chan Rogers confirmed that Peter Gluckler, Board Member, is not going to be attending tonight.

Sarah Pawluczonek said no, he would not be present.

### Betterment Abatement – 16 Granite St

George McMains introduced himself and his wife Lisa. He explained that they were seeking abatement because the new sewer system did not in fact better his property. He spoke about the estimate he received from PL Trufant to connect his home to sewer, which was \$132,000, and the market value increase letter from Realtor Marcia Kramarz, which said the property value would at best, increase by \$15,000. He stated that even if they wanted to hook up to sewer, they could not afford it.

Robert Wilson said that he agreed.

Chan Rogers said that he did as well, but would prefer to discuss it further and notify the McMains of their decision by mail at a later date.

George McMains said that the previous owner had attempted a driveway out to West Street but it was impossible with the wetlands.

Chan reiterated the Board's feelings that this connection does not seem feasible, and that they would decide and let the McMains know the outcome.

The McMains left.

Tom Holder said that he would like to get an opinion from Legal Counsel about disallowing any future connection to the sewer line should this property ever wish to do so, pending the payment of the betterment assessment.

Robert Wilson agreed that it would be a good idea.

Tom Holder said that since the nature of things can change, and the need to connect could arise in the future, it would not be fair for them to do so without paying the betterment.

Robert Wilson said that it is possible that septic could one day be outlawed.

Tom Holder explained that the situation at 16 Granite is exactly the same as 14 Granite and so judgement could be applied to both abatement requests. In the case of 4 Granite, though, the matter is different in that it is not nearly the connection issue that 14 and 16 have, it is a wetlands issue of a much smaller magnitude with regards to connection cost. The judgement made here would not really apply to 4 Granite Street.

Chan Rogers said that it seems that 14 and 16 Granite Street have no practical way to connect and he feels they should be abated.

Robert Wilson said he agreed but would like for Tom Holder to pursue the caveat of an entrance/betterment fee for connecting if so desired later on.

Tom Holder asked if the Board felt ready to vote regardless of legal opinion on the caveat previously mentioned.

Chan said he would prefer to wait for the resulting opinion before voting.

Sarah Pawluczzonek suggested enforcing some of the language in the Water and Sewer Regulations which state something to the effect that a sewer entrance fee will be assessed for all properties that have not paid a sewer betterment.

#### Utility Abatement – 74 Main Street

Sarah Pawluczzonek explained the abatement for 74 Main St, Unit #9, a commercial business in a plaza known as Duckfeathers. They were seeking abatement on the sewer charges generated from a large water leak on a sprinkler system which was discovered early in the morning on 6/6/12 and was unable to be stopped for 3 hours. They submitted the repair bills to show they had it fixed, and we provided a graph showing the increased usage for that two day time frame. Sarah suggested that since no exact figure of what did not truly go into the sewer can be calculated that the Board considers an approach to reduce the high sewer charge to the average of the past three same cycle sewer charges, which would result in an abatement of \$141.52.

Robert Wilson made a motion to approve the abatement for 74 Main St, Unit #9.

**Chan Rogers seconded.**

**Motion approved, unanimous vote, 2-0.**

#### Approval of Past Meeting Minutes - 10/01/12, 10/22/12, 12/10/12, 01/14/13

Robert Wilson said that he had read through all the minutes and was only concerned with transcribed minutes of the 10/22/12 meeting.

Chan Rogers said he would like more time to read through them all before voting.

Sarah Pawluczonek said she would email the 10/01/12 minutes since those were recently typed and not yet emailed to the Board members.

### Directors Report

Tom Holder informed the Board that the I&I Report had been submitted to the Charles River Pollution Control District (CRPCD). Mentioned in it was the Town's intent to bid for the \$200k capital project to make repairs to the Chicken Brook Interceptor.

Tom Holder also informed them of the consideration to begin billing for utilities on a quarterly basis starting in FY14. He explained that he had recently met with the Abrahams Group to refresh our three year rate study plan. The bill cycle change will marginally impact our revenue stream positively, but the bigger benefit is the increased customer service allowing better budgeting and detection of leaks sooner.

Tom Holder mentioned the New England Water Works Association (NEWWA) is planning to offer a one hour seminar for "Being an Effective Water & Sewer Commission".

Tom Holder informed the Board of the Summer Street Easement associated with Norwood Acres which will be requested to be voted on soon. The Marshalls are going to build two homes for their sons. Our approach is to accept an easement and the responsibility of operating and maintaining that private portion of sewer main as a public system. The reason we are willing to accept this sewer as a public sewer is because we have been using it for public services already. This is unlike Speroni Acres, which is for private use only.

The Commissioners were receptive to this acceptance concept and will await additional information prior to vote consideration.

Chan Rogers asked what we were going to do with sewer systems in subdivisions. Where do we stand on the Neelon Lane issue with regards to sewer?

Tom Holder replied that he feels that once something is established as a private way he feels the services should be private as well.

Chan Rogers said the Paul Yorkis feels that if the services are private that they should not have to pay the same water and sewer rates as folks who tie in directly to the public mains.

Tom Holder said that we are still responsible for water quality and supply so it is just the same as any public to private system. We are responsible for water quality up to the last free flowing tap regardless of the size of the private system.

Robert Wilson concurred and offered an example that a 10 acre lot pays the same rate as a ½ acre lot.

Chan Rogers felt that both sides had good points, and that a decision will inevitably have to be made.

Robert Wilson asked what these private subdivisions do for fire protection.

Tom Holder answered that they have private fire hydrants which the Fire Department and Insurance companies require annual inspections on.

Robert Wilson asked if these subdivisions could be asked to put up a bond in case we are forced to make an emergency repair on the private system.

Tom Holder replied that in past cases we have just back billed the residents of the private way on their next utility bill.

Robert Wilson asked if private systems can be built with plastic piping.

Tom Holder said yes, but all public service piping is made of copper.

Tom Holder finished by saying that he planned to inform Susie Affleck-Childs, of the Planning & Economic Development Department, that the Water/Sewer Commission is open to the concept of taking an easement on the Summer Street private sewer system. Tom said that Mr. Marshall had proposed becoming a drain layer and doing the work himself, although he has never done this type of work before.

#### Next Meeting

Tom Holder suggested that the next Water/Sewer Commission be held on March 11, 2013.

All agreed.

**Robert Wilson made a motion close the meeting at 7:38pm.**

**Chan Rogers seconded.**

**Motion approved, unanimous vote, 2-0**

**Sarah Pawluczonek  
Operations Manager  
Department of Public Services**