

MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC WORKS COMMISSION
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2014 – 2pm

1. Present: Chairman Walter Liff, Supr. Steven Tabbutt, Ex-Officio Selectman Dave McGuckin, Secretary Pamela Cullen

Members Present: John Ireland, Normand Houle

Members Absent: Walter Glidden

Alternates Present: Reg Whitehouse, Chet Fessenden

In attendance: Accountant Debra Knowles, Building Inspector Don Graves

2. Chairman Liff called the meeting to order at 2pm to review and work on the fy2014 Public Works budget, with 3pm the regular monthly meeting.

3. Chairman Liff reviewed and read the checks to the Board. Normand Houle made a motion to approve the checks as written. John Ireland seconded the motion. Motion carried.

4. John Ireland made a motion to accept minutes of January 8, 2014 as amended. Selectman McGuckin seconded the motion. Motion carried.

5. Old Business:

a. Grease pit – The Commission questioned if Building Inspector Don Graves was ever contacted regarding the exit water temperature at the out-going grease trap at the Hotel. The question arose as what would be the correct exit temperature to make the trap more effective. Building Inspector Don Graves said the exit temperature was 160 degrees at the hotel and he felt confident that the water temperature has been turned down. McGuckin said to Steve Tabbutt to call the hotel's engineer to see when they are going to clean the grease trap.

6. New business:

a. Late fees – Accountant Debra Knowles explained the current procedure implemented for late fees for the water and sewer billing. Currently the town charges a \$20 flat late fee. Knowles said she and Selectman McGuckin discussed changing the late fee to a percentage; 18 percent per year. Knowles said that she had called BMSI (software company for the town's accounting) and this can be done easily so that the system will post late interest charges on delinquent accounts. Knowles wanted to bring this suggestion to the Commission for changing the late fee to a percentage. Currently the town has about 30 accounts out of 300 who are in arrears. John Ireland asked if the town has terminated any water accounts for non-payment. The town has not turned off any accounts for some time. Ireland asked if the \$20 late fee covers the cost of the work involved when handling late accounts. Chairman Liff read from the water sewer ordinance regarding the penalty structure. After a lengthy discussion regarding the issue of cost coverage, the Commission decided to stay with the current flat fee of \$20.

b. 32 Main Street request – Accountant Deb Knowles addressed the problems that have arisen regarding property at 32 Main Street. Knowles explained that the new current owners (Sandra Bisset and Wally Mallet) have paid their current water and sewer bill but are contesting their obligation to pay this amount on a vacant lot. The owners sent an email stating that the water and sewer lines were removed during demolition of the house on this property, and that this

property is no longer hooked up to the water and sewer. They are requesting not having to pay a minimum fee for the water and sewer. The Commission discussed the policy on billing the water and sewer, and how often vacant lots are billed. The Commission agreed after a lengthy discussion to return Bisset and Mallett's payment, and going forward that they will not be billed the minimum.

c. Portsmouth public works - The Commission discussed status of the two letters dated November 22, 2014 from Portsmouth Public Works Department, water division (attachments). Steve Tabbutt said that Portsmouth has replaced the water meters in the Main Street and Wentworth Road pit and the Shapleigh Island pit. Normand Houle questioned what direction the water flows. Steve Tabbutt said that the flow goes either way. Normand Houle would like getting additional information regarding the direction of the water flow. The Board concurred about additional information. Steve Tabbutt will call Portsmouth Public Works.

d. Chairman Liff asked for any other business to come before the board.

1). Reg Whitehouse brought up a suggestion to the Commission that when they are speaking to Portsmouth Public Works about information on water lines to include Fire Chief Blanding. Selectman McGuckin said that the town hasn't talked to Portsmouth Public Works regarding water lines for quite some time. McGuckin said that about four months ago he watched Channel 22 about Portsmouth's CIP which had information about the water lines. Portsmouth is looking at alternate services and not replace the water line from Rye to Wild Rose Lane.

Normand Houle made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Dave McGuckin seconded the motion. Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 4:40pm.