

MINUTES OF THE WATER & SEWER COMMISSION MEETING  
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 9, 2014 – 2PM

1. Present: Chairman Walter Liff, Ex-Officio Selectman David McGuckin, Supr. Steve Tabbutt  
Members: Normand Houle, Walter Glidden, John Ireland  
Alternates: Reg Whitehouse  
Absent: Chet Fessenden  
In attendance: Accountant Deb Knowles

2. Chairman Liff called the meeting to order at 2pm to review and work on the water/sewer ordinances.

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

The Board discussed a check for \$75K drawn from the water operating checking account for deposit into the Water Trust Fund. The balance in the water checking account is \$27,483.09. The Water and Sewer Trust Funds have been divided.

The Water Trust Fund has \$127,500.

The Water Fund (Checking account, Trust Fund, NHPDID) totals \$157,451.86.  
(\$2,468.778 in the NHPDID which is part of the water operating account)

The Sewer Trust Fund has \$268,268.95, with \$139,698.66 in sewer checking account.

The sewer fund (checking account and the trust fund) totals \$407,967.61.

Accountant Knowles said she spoke to Town Auditor Roland Bergeron regarding his fees for working on the division of the Water and Sewer Funds. Bergeron indicated that the bill would probably only reflect a couple of hours as the Accountant did most of the research. The Board was most grateful for the final changes to the trust funds and noted that it was a longtime forthcoming. Applauds to all.

4. John Ireland made a motion to accept minutes of March 12, 2014 as amended. Selectman McGuckin seconded the motion. Motion carried. Secretary Cullen asked for the attachment of the notice of charges regarding delinquent accounts to be for the minutes.

5. Old business

a. Water/Sewer transfer - Selectman McGuckin spoke about a five page written informational statement regarding the transaction between the City of Portsmouth and New Castle for the water and sewer. The slow process is not the fault of the town but Portsmouth has limited resources. If the transaction becomes accepted by Portsmouth, the town will have to vote on this transaction between New Castle and Portsmouth. Selectman McGuckin talked about how the transition, if it happens, could take a period of time.

b. Water/Sewer billing – Selectman McGuckin reported that because of Accountant Knowles' efforts, 100 percent of the customers for water and sewer have paid before the end of the cycle (December through April billing).

c. Information regarding water meters - Steve Tabbutt reported on the request from the Board about water flows at the pits of Shapleigh Island and Main/Wentworth pits. Tabbutt said that the water flows in both directions and measurers accurately.

6. New business

a. Name change – Chairman Liff started the Department of Public Works discussed changing their name to the Water and Sewer Commission, and questioned who has the authority to approve such a change. The Board noted that the name of Water and Sewer Commission was used back in 1977. Selectman McGuckin said that after a vote to approve the name change from this Board that he would present it to the BOS for their approval. Normand Houle made a motion to change the name of the Board from the Public Works Board to the Water and Sewer Commission as it more accurately defines the function of this board. John Ireland seconded the motion. Motion carried.

b. Water meters for two family houses – Selectman McGuckin brought up the account at 160 Main Street which only has one water meter for a two family house. The question arose if each family should have their own water meter. After a lengthy discussion of various examples of multi-family homes, the Board decided that this was not an issue.

7. Chairman Liff asked for any other business to come before the Board.

- a. The Board discussed Bill Drew’s old house at “Off Laurel Lane” which had a water meter that was not reading and was determined that it was installed backwards. Steve Tabbutt said that the meter was changed but that it is still not working correctly. The Board agreed not to charge the owners for a new meter.
- b. Selectman McGuckin wanted to bring up the hydrants at the Common and to address their working status. Steve Tabbutt said that he needed water to compact a ditch at the Common and opened up a hydrant and used the water but that the hydrant requires a special wrench to open it. The second hydrant at the four way intersection also works and that was installed about 15 years ago. Reg Whitehouse explained that the hydrants are not used for practice by the fire department anymore. Selectman McGuckin asked Whitehouse to confirm the hydrants working ability with the fire department. Normand Houle asked to have confirmation that all the fire hydrants work and report back to the board, and if not working to be repaired and flagged if is not in working order.
- c. Sewer application for 85 Piscataqua Street – Steve Tabbutt presented to the Board a sewer application for owners of 85 Piscataqua Street. This is a new construction but they have existing water and sewer lines and are hooked into a clay pipe. Tabbutt said that this was not acceptable and suggested to the owners to apply for a sewer application. A bond was posted in the amount of \$2k. The Board discussed the detaching from the clay pipe and hooking up into the stub. Normand Houle made a motion to approve the sewer application for 85 Piscataqua Street. Walter Glidden seconded the motion. Motion carried.

- d. 148 Main Street billing - The Board discussed the house at 148 Main Street that flooded. Reg Whitehouse said that the burst pipe was discovered when water running water was seen running out of the bulkhead. The broken water pipe used significant amount of water. Accountant Knowles said that the property owners were billed for 84 units which would be \$1,202.88. Selectman McGuckin said that the town will charge for the water used but not for sewer. The new bill reflected \$474.56 which is minimum sewer and 84 units of water. Knowles sent the owners a note of explanation regarding the bill. Chairman Liff asked for an approval vote for amending the bill to the owners of 148 Main Street. John Ireland made a motion to accept the revised water/sewer bill for 148 Main Street. Normand Houle seconded the motion. Motion carried.
  
- e. Water and Sewer billing - Accountant Deb Knowles informed the board that the first water and sewer billing has 309 accounts, 257 for sewer accounts and 52 just water. There were 4,860 units of water used and 7,100 units billed. The sewer usage was 3,951 units and 5,825 units billed. We are currently billing approximately 46 percent above consumption (water and sewer).

A motion was made by Selectman McGuckin to adjourn the meeting. Normand Houle seconded the motion. Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 4:35pm.