

MINUTES OF THE WATER AND SEWER DEPARTMENT
WEDESDAY, MAY 13, 2015 – 3PM

1.) Chairman Walter Liff, Ex-officio Dave McGuckin, Supr. Of Public Works Steve Tabbutt, Accountant Deb Knowles, Secretary Pamela Cullen
Members: John Ireland, Walter Glidden, Normand Houle
Alternate Member present: Reg Whitehouse
Alternate Member Absent: Chet Fessesden
Guests: John Baer, Edmund Tarbell

2.) Approval of checks:

a. Chairman Liff read the checks to the Commission for their review and approval. Normand Houle made a motion to accept checks as written. Walter Glidden seconded the motion. Motion carried.

3.) Approval of Minutes:

a. Normand Houle made a motion to approve minutes of March 11, 2015 as amended. John Ireland seconded the motion. Motion carried.

b. John Ireland made a motion to approve minutes of April 8, 2015 as amended. David McGuckin seconded the motion. Motion carried.

4.) Old business:

a. Normand Houle said that he emailed the Commission on April 12 regarding an update on zero based billing. He explained the results from the various levels of depreciation from \$10 to \$50K. The Commission also wanted to ask Selectman Buxton's opinion.

5.) New business:

a. Resident John Baer, 40 Quarterdeck Lane, spoke to the Commission regarding his most recent water and sewer bill. He explained that the bill was an inordinate increase over his previous bills. Normally he said that his bill was around \$260 but that this bill was \$678.24. Baer said that he was not even living at the residence this past winter. He said that the reason for the water being turned on was that an outside spigot was compromised by heavy snow fall. He asked the Commission if there was anything they could do to adjust the bill. Chairman Liff explained not wanting to set precedents regarding forgiving water/sewer bills and can't forgive the water usage. Deb Knowles said the Baer's bills have always been minimum. The Commission all agreed to charge Baer for minimum sewer usage but the water would be what was used. John Baer thanked the Commission for their consideration in adjusting his bill.

b.) Resident Mundy Tarbell, 96 Portsmouth Avenue, asked again what the Commission will do about the exorbitant water and sewer bills, and is the Commission making any progress on the billing system? Normand Houle said that Commission is sensitive to Mr. Tarbell's situation and hoping to implement the change in the August water/sewer billing which will be the zero based billing. The Commission is trying to calculate over-head costs. Houle then explained about depreciation and how it would effect this system. He then explained how the system would be set up but would not be a tiered system. Tarbell asked what is the logjam? Houle said the issue

of a deprecation amount has not been determined as in the past this was not accounted for correctly. The Commission explained about the dilemma of coming up with a depreciation cost, overhead costs, along with the long term problems of the conveyance to Portsmouth. Tarbell thanked the Commission for their time.

c. The Commission discussed property at 23 Oliver Street that had a water issue this past winter. Selectman McGuckin explained how a tradesman came to the building inspector's office to obtain a building permit for property owners at 23 Oliver Street. The contractor stated that the owners had water pipes that froze on the second floor resulting in the basement flooded with three feet of water. The owners of the property received an enormous water/sewer bill. The Commission agreed that the owners would just pay the minimum amount on the sewer side of the bill but the water side would be what was used.

d. Public safety building water meter – Steve Tabbutt said that currently there is no water meter at the Municipal Safety and the water is not metered at all. The question arose if a meter should be installed for the building. Tabbutt said that it would not be the normal size water meter but a one that would accommodate the larger lines and is expensive. John Ireland explained the water stand pipe that supplies the trucks for water and that this should not be metered. Normand Houle made a recommendation to review the plans to the Public Safety Building, and to look how to properly meter the building. Tabbutt will report back at the next meeting.

e. Normand Houle said he would like to compliment of the Water/Sewer Commission on the their section in the 2014 annual town report.

f. The Commission discussed the appointments that are up at the end of May 2015. John Ireland moved to nominate Walter Liff as chair and also to reappoint Liff and Normand Houle as members. This motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

g. Chairman Liff asked for any further business. There being no more business, the Chair asked for a motion to adjourn. Normand Houle made a motion to adjourn the meeting. John Ireland seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 4:30 pm.