

WATER AND SEWER COMMISSION MEETING  
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 2015 – 3pm

Present: Chairman Walter Liff, Supr. Stephen Tabbutt, Secretary Pamela Cullen,  
Selectman Board Representative David McGuckin  
Members present: John Ireland, Walter Glidden, Normand Houle  
Alternate members: Chet Fessenden, Reggie Whitehouse

1. Chairman Liff called the meeting to order at 3pm. The Chair explained there are no checks for approval because of the accountant being out ill. Chairman Liff will come in to the town hall to sign checks when they are ready.

2. Walter Glidden made a motion to accept minutes as amended. John Ireland seconded the motion. The motion carried.

3. Misc. business:

a. Road Agent Steve Tabbutt reported that he is doing a monthly reading of water consumption for the USCG to obtain a base line reading and flow. The water readings change because of the different usages during the seasons. The sewer usage is being based on their water consumption, but previously, it was just an estimate of usage with a flat fee.

b. 28 Atkinson Street water line - The water line for residence at 28 Atkinson Street froze up last winter multiple times. Currently the owner is having a new water line being installed coming from the Piscataqua Street side. The old point of entry on Atkinson Street was capped from the main line. The work was done by Chris Co at the owner's expense.

4. Old business:

a. Estimates from Portsmouth for replacement of the pump stations – Steve Tabbutt explained that he spoke to the engineering company that is jointly hired by the town of New Castle and the City of Portsmouth regarding obtaining some figures. Tabbutt said that he should have an estimate before the year is out.

b. Resident Mundy Tarbell came before the Commission to talk again about water rates and stated that he had been to their meetings previously but still see nothing has happened regarding tiered rates. Chairman Liff said that it doesn't seem to be feasible that this change will happen in the near future. Tarbell said that maybe it would be cheaper to have Portsmouth take over the town's system. John Ireland said that is an ongoing process with Portsmouth with the possibility that they will take of the town's water and sewer system at some point but we are still in the negotiation stage. John Ireland stated that one of the big stumbling blocks is the town's three pump stations and the state of their conditions.

c. Llewellyn sewer permit application for 12 Main Street – Normand Houle stated the sewer permit for the Llewellyns is not complete because they need to have a form signed entitled “Hook-up of Private Sewer Line into Town Sewer Line.” The secretary will have a letter mailed to them.

d. Tiered rate – Normand Houle said that he is not going to summarize a meeting with Buxton., but in short, many things were said. Two issues came out, one being about fairness, and the rate decision would be made by the Select Board.

Normand said he would like to formalize transfers to Trust Funds and proposed two transfers for the Commission to consider.

Motion 1:

That the town accountant, in consultation with the town treasurer, transferred \$8,000.00 from the Water Fund and Sewer Fund checking accounts to their respective Trust Funds to account for the depreciation of each system’s assets. Transfers should occur on the last business day of the following months: August, November, February, and May. The only allowable exception to this action and schedule would be in the event that the accountant and treasurer together conclude that this action would be imprudent. Such an exception is to be reported to the Water & Sewer Commission at its subsequent meeting, at which time the Commission would decide on some alternate reduced amount. In that August 31, 2015, occurred before this motion, the transfer for that month should take place at the earliest opportunity following adoption of this motion.

Motion 2:

That the town accountant report the balance of Water and Sewer Fund Checking accounts as of the last business day of each month at the subsequent meeting of the water & Sewer Commission.

Selectman McGuckin said the Commission might reconsider not having a fixed amount but some base/amounts left as a cushion and whatever the excess would be transferred. The Accountant would be more knowledgeable about a minimum amount. John Ireland suggested doing this three times a year possibly coinciding with bills going out. The motions were withdrawn when it was learned that Houle would not be able to meet with the town accountant because of illness. Selectman McGuckin said he would inform Houle when such a meeting might be possible.

e. Water line at the common – Selectman McGuckin explained about the brown water that has occurred in town, and there have been some complaints. He said he talked to Steve Tabbutt and this is a problem when the town does not flush their hydrants. The town didn’t flush the hydrants because of the water shortage. It was decided that the town would flush the hydrants despite bands in the future.

Other business:

John Ireland said that he had received a call from resident Joanne Arsenault regarding her water and sewer bill. Ms. Arsenault's water bill went from a normal 12 to 14 units to 26 unites. At a closer look at Arsenault's past consumption, her bills have always stayed under 20 units. Arsenault has asked to pay just the minimum 20 units given her history. The Commission said that they agreed they she could pay the minimum but if something was found out of the ordinary regarding consumption or problems that should arise that they would revisit her billing cycle.

Chairman Liff said that there was no further business and asked for a motion to adjourn. John Ireland made a motion to adjourn. Normand Houle seconded the motion. Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 4:10pm.