

44 Normand Houle asked how would the town's usage (that is, water NOT used by customers) be
45 addressed. Specifically, he referred to water used in knocking down fires, in flushing the
46 hydrants and any other usage attributable to town operating expense. That Portsmouth charge
47 should be part of the budget. Maybe that should be considered next year.

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49 Select Board Chair David McGuckin commented that **Lorn's** understanding of finance was way
50 above others. David McGuckin asked that the Water and Sewer Board develop a plan to go to
51 the Select Board. He emphasized that the billing plan must be fair to customers, but that the
52 town cannot lose money.

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54 In addressing synchronizing the billing cycle and charges from Portsmouth with the billing
55 cycle from New Castle, it will be challenging to adjust water loss and sewer profit for this
56 current fiscal year.

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58 A discussion arose about Debra Knowles' replacement when she retires in March 2017. That
59 would be happening just as this billing rate transition was getting under way. It was suggested
60 that overlapping Debra Knowles' work schedule with her replacement might provide for a
61 smoother transition. New Castle's fiscal year runs from July to June but ideally would be from
62 June to May. This would result in one odd billing cycle, making the adjustment synchronized.
63 The change, however, may confuse the customer base.

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65 Select Board Chair David McGuckin asked if one month over budget OK with the state but
66 DRA (Department of Revenue Administration) may not be happy with that.

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68 SB Chair McGuckin said that, going forward, we need to make the New Castle water and sewer
69 billing charges more equitable, more like Portsmouth's billing system. He then added that 20
70 units minimum charge will go away. Finally, he said that this issue won't be resolved today, but
71 at least the effort has been started to do so. He asked the Water and Sewer Board members if
72 "we" are in agreement: stick with the water charge as it has been proposed and address the new
73 sewer rates as they evolve.

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75 Normand Houle asked when we would transition to "zero-based billing?" Select Board Chair
76 David McGuckin suggested that to lessen the shock to transitioning to the higher rated, he
77 proposed the use of a step-up plan. Normand Houle suggested billing in August using the old
78 rates and system and moving to zero based billing in December 2016. It was suggested that an
79 explanation for this new billing be provided to all customers. SB Chair McGuckin said the next
80 billing cycle (August) should be like the past 20 years. Charge at the old rates.

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82 It was noted that the December billing would reflect Portsmouth's \$.81 per unit of water usage
83 with \$12.24 per unit as the new sewer rate. In April the water rate would increase to \$3.35 per
84 unit of water and remain at the \$12.24 per unit of sewage.

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86 Normand Houle asked that firefighting and fire hydrant flushing line items be added to the
87 budget for fiscal year 2018. The terms need to be defined accurately when introduced to the
88 budget.

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90 The meeting was adjourned at 3:48 p.m.

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92 The next meeting of the Water & Sewer Commission is scheduled for September 14, 2016 at 3
93 p.m. in the New Castle Town Hall meeting room.

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