

FINAL APPROVED
MINUTES OF THE WATER & SEWER COMMISSION MEETING
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2018
3:00 P.M.

Members Present: Damon Frampton, Ex-Officio Select Board, Steve Tabbutt, Supervisor of Public Works, Normand Houle, Member, John Ireland, Member, Clint Springer, Alternate

Members Absent: Walter Liff, Richard White, Chet Fessenden

Also Present: Christiane McAllister, Accountant, Anne Miller, Secretary, Ben Jankowski, Department of Public Works, Don Graves, Building Inspector

Public Present: none

Mr. John Ireland, Acting Chair, opened the meeting at 3:05 p.m. It was noted that, due to the lack of a quorum, the group could neither authorize expenditures nor vote.

1. Review, approve and sign checks

Mr. Normand Houle moved to set checks aside until a quorum can be gathered. Mr. Damon Frampton seconded the motion.

Ms. Christiane McAllister noted that Central Signal agreed to an initial charge for January through April (\$360 = \$90 for each of 4 months), followed by monthly billing, at \$90/month, that can be terminated with 30 days' notice.

Checks include a payment to Underwood Engineering (UE), the cost of which is to be split with the City of Portsmouth. The Town is in receipt of Portsmouth's \$2500 reimbursement, equivalent to their portion of the total contract.

2. Approve meeting minutes of January 10, 2018

Minutes of the January 10, 2018 meeting of the Water & Sewer Commission were reviewed and amended, and those amendments set aside for action when a quorum can be gathered.

3. Bank Balances

Water

January Revenue:	(\$1,302.56)*
December Expenses:	\$9,807.58
Checking Account Balance as of January 31, 2018:	\$168,733.09
Trust Fund as of January, 31 2018:	\$131,308.48

* Negative balance due to an adjustment made to an overcharged account that resulted from the software system's duplication of the account's meter reading.

Sewer

December Revenue:	\$150,787.62
December Expenses:	\$36,014.52
Checking Account Balance as of January 31, 2018:	\$297,302.42
Trust Fund as of January 31, 2018:	\$39,324.73

4. Water Sewer Ordinance update

The final approval will be postponed until a quorum can be gathered.

Mr. Houle invited Building Inspector, Mr. Don Graves to comment on the provisions for sewer connections described on p. 15 of the Draft Ordinance. Inspections inside the building are the purview of the Building Inspector. The Commission suggested revising the proposed Ordinance to state: *To prevent concealment of illegal connections under slab, the building's sewer shall be brought to the building at an elevation at least 12" above the basement floor.*

Ms. McAllister asked that the Commission address the protocol for return of the requisite \$2,000 bond held by the Town when a trench opening is required, and proposed the language: *All trench openings in the town roads shall be bonded for one year from the date of completion of the project. Bonds will be released upon satisfactory final inspection by the Supervisor of Public Works.*

Mr. Houle suggested that he and Ms. McAllister meet to integrate the new language into the the existing Draft Ordinance.

Commissioners requested that Appendix B title the transfer fee, *Property Transfer/Final Meter Read Fee.*

5. New Business - Budget

Water Budget

Ms. McAllister distributed a budget worksheet packet that supersedes previous budget worksheets. Currently the revenue and appropriations bottom lines are not equal, but will be in the final budget calculations.

An amount of \$1,000 was suggested for the new line item, Training and Certification, on the Water Appropriations worksheet.

Commissioners noted that past Water Quality report costs weren't recorded. Ms. McAllister believes that the City of Portsmouth has not billed for the service in previous years. Mr. Houle asked Ms. McAllister to ask the City whether those costs are rolled into other costs or if the Town can expect a separate invoice for the reports in the coming year.

Potentially, there may be water budget expenses generated by the proposed Water Infrastructure Project, even though it is expected to be recommended as a Town expense. The ballpark budget figures of \$2,500 for Attorney Fees and \$2,500 for Engineering Fees were agreed upon.

Mr. Houle noted an increase in the salary costs from the previous months' budget worksheet; Ms. McAllister explained that the increase was to cover the cost of additional staff, a clerk.

Mr. Steve Tabbutt observed that Portsmouth is increasing its cost of hydrant maintenance and asked whether the Town should likewise increase the cost of winterizing the hydrants owned by the Wentworth by the Sea Master Association. The Commission agreed. Ms. McAllister will notify the Master Association of the impending cost increase.

Mr. Ireland foresees more water line breaks when the water infrastructure work begins. While the Water Line Repair and Maintenance estimate is adequate for next fiscal year, it should be increased in the subsequent budget, assuming the infrastructure work moves forward.

While Ms. McAllister did not have an adequate explanation for the depreciation expense, she noted that it is the same as previous years' and that amount has been carried forward.

The Capital Reserves Transfer is the amount that the Commission has identified to transfer at the end of the fiscal year into the Water Trust Fund.

The Miscellaneous Supplies and Expenses was lowered because training is now reflected in its own line item. Mr. Tabbutt suggested, and Members agreed, to set the Miscellaneous Supplies and Expenses budget at \$1500.

Sewer Budget

Ms. McAllister provided a map that delineates the geographic Authorities which are noted in the budget. Authority 1 reflects the portion of New Castle within the New Castle water district. Authority 4 is the Coast Guard only. Authority 2 includes the Wentworth Hotel + some residences. Authority 3 is the remainder of the sewer customers within the Portsmouth Water District. Members requested that the "NC Residential North and South" revenue lines also include the corresponding Authority.

A Final Read Fee line will be added to the sewer revenues to collect fees for final reads within the Portsmouth Water District. A property transfer within the New Castle water district will be posted as water (only) revenue.

The sewer budget items associated with the pump station project will not be carried in to the budget for next fiscal year.

The overall sewer rate may not drop significantly however based on the note repayment.

Attorneys fees are projected to be lower upon completion of the pump station project.

Engineering fees were reduced to \$3,000.

Once the new sensor system is installed, there will no longer be a need for telephone and alarm as the SCADA system will serve as the emergency contact. The \$300 Telephone and Alarm cost will remain in the budget until the following fiscal year when the new system is operational.

Miscellaneous Supplies and Expenses were budgeted at \$500. Additionally, \$1000 for Training and Certification will be added.

The Town hasn't yet signed the note so the principal repayment for the pump station project is based on the expected interest rate.

Mr. Houle ballparked that a yearly set aside of \$61,000 would be an appropriate deposit to accrue an amount approximately equal to 50% of the anticipated pump replacement cost 30 years hence.

Ms. McAllister explained that because of a delay in the pump station project, the budgeted principal repayment won't be used in the current fiscal year, but the budgeted repayment funds will be used to cover the cost increase of the project.

6. Next Meeting Date

John Ireland proposed, and the Members agreed, to schedule an interim meeting of the Water & Sewer Commission on February 21, 2018 at 3:00 p.m.

7. Resignation

Mr. Ireland reported that Alternate, Chet Fessenden submitted a letter of resignation effective February 12, 2018.

8. Budget Narrative

Mr. Houle volunteered to create a narrative to accompany the new budget.

9. Adjourn

Mr. Houle motioned to adjourn. Mr. Damon Frampton seconded the motion. All agreed.

Meeting adjourned at 5:20 p.m.