

## **FINAL APPROVED**

### **Water & Sewer Commission Minutes Wednesday, August 8, 2018- 3:00 PM**

**Members Present:** Normand Houle, Chair, John Ireland, Vice Chair, Walter Liff, Clint Springer (Alt), Steve Tabbutt, Selectman Damon Frampton, Ex-Officio.

**Also in attendance:** Ben Jankowski, DPW, Christiane McAllister, Town Accountant, Bette Jane Riordan, Recording Secretary, David McGuckin.

Chair Houle opened the meeting at 3:07, noting the presence of a quorum. Dick White and Carl Roediger were not able to be present.

#### **1. Public Questions: None**

#### **2. Individual Applications/Petitions: None**

#### **3. Approve Minutes of June 13 and July 11, 2018:**

Clint Springer made a Motion to Approve the minutes of the June 13, 2018 meeting as amended. This was seconded by Damon Frampton. Motion carried. The Board then reviewed the draft minutes of July 11, 2018. John Ireland had some questions regarding the adoption of new ordinance language regarding bibb meters, but this was clarified by Chair Houle. Chair Houle reviewed his edits and forwarded them to the recording secretary for incorporation into the final draft. Norm asked for clarification from Steve Tabbutt on what “finishing up” entails at the pump stations means for both Northeast Integration and the Town. Steve is waiting to hear from Underwood Engineers about the punch list, before final payment will be made to NEI. Chair Houle also asked for clarification about the bulkhead, which is an agenda item to be discussed later in the meeting. Chair Houle said the Dysinfection Byproduct Report is not in fact on the website and asked the Secretary to clarify what “DBP” stands for. Norm referred to some changes regarding the Wentworth Bridge.

**(No Motion to Approve the July 11<sup>th</sup> minutes was made.) Please put on next month’s agenda.**

Chair Houle asked the members to please review the draft minutes of January 10 and February 21 and be prepared to suggest any additions or deletions at the September meeting. There is also one more set to be reviewed, February 14, 2018. There were two budget meetings in February.

#### **4. Financials:**

Chair Houle referred to the summary sheet handed out by Christiane. She explained it is a short list because we have not received all of the invoices yet, and Portsmouth only yesterday decided how they were going to bill the Town for June sewer, and we have not yet received an invoice for July. With respect to this past June, they based the billing on the readings from June 2017, and credited us with the cost of two truck hauls for the two

breaks. Once she receives all of these invoices she will prepare the checks for Chair Houle.

**a. Review, approve and sign checks.**

Chair Houle called for a Motion to Accept the checks as written and presented. Walter Liff made the motion which was seconded by John Ireland. Motion carried.

**b. Accountant's report.**

As of the end of July 2018, the balances are:

**WATER: \$161,443.59**

**SEWER: \$311,916.11**

She did not report trust fund balances as she does not receive them until much later in the month.

Christiane reported on the fiscal year end for 2018: She was pleased to see that for water, 90% of the projected revenue was collected, and only 78% of the budgeted expenditures was expended. The year- end trust fund balance was: \$142,199.49.

Sewer: We collected 97% of the revenue. In expenditures, which exceeded the budget by approximately 1%. \$1,082,167.54 includes the full cost of the sewer pump replacement project, and the two breaks. The sewer trust fund ended up at \$39,411.44. She noted that the full cost of the sewer pump replacement project will be capitalized. The Commission thanked Christiane for her good work.

**5. Selectmen's Report.**

Damon Frampton reported that the SRF application was approved by the Governor and Council.

Keith Pratt from Underwood came to the July 23<sup>rd</sup> BOS meeting and the surveyors for the water project has begun.

According to Steve Tabbutt, a TTHM test was conducted on July 24<sup>th</sup> or 25<sup>th</sup> and a follow up was done 1 week later. Steve Tabbutt is waiting for the numbers to come in from these tests to see if there has been any improvement due to additional bleeding which was done. He noted that the bleeding costs are split with Portsmouth 50-50. Steve also reported he is working with the contracted surveying group as part of the water project. The surveying is being paid for out of a water funded ESR.(Engineering Service Request).

Chair Houle expressed concerns about money being available for needed sewer work. Is there any possibility of a negotiated contract for services for needed engineering or design work, especially in light of the recent breaks. Christiane explained how the Underwood contract was put together with the Town of New Castle. Of course this is exclusive to the water project. Christiane explained there is an RFP process which may

be available, in order to collect bids. Dave McGuckin commented that perhaps Norm was looking for solutions to unanticipated expenses. He suggested getting Keith Pratt from Underwood, in to discuss this with the Commission to get a sense of costs of design and engineering to preclude a total breakdown of the Sawtelle bridge that Norm is concerned about. Damon pointed out that the town has applied for another SRF loan specifically for sewer issues. Steve pointed out some other solutions which he has discussed with Underwood, such as directional boring. Norm pointed out that if we were fortunate, the SRF application process, including the needed Town Meeting, would be Fiscal year 20, when we'd get the money and then not until FY 21 could we expend the money. Dave suggested that Norm ask Keith for some fixed prices. Damon stated Keith already is aware of this. Norm wants to know if there something the Commission could do budget wise to preclude further problems. Further discussion ensued, and the matter will be taken up during the budget cycle.

## **6. Continuing Business:**

### **a. Status of “punch list” and payments for NEI sewer pump upgrade.**

Chair Houle noted that as soon as the punch list is complete, NEI would be paid. There are no further updates as of today.

### **b. Cost estimate for bulkhead and riser work at River Road pump station.**

Steve Tabbutt has spoken with Shea Concrete and has a meeting scheduled to discuss this project, which includes raising the bulkhead. The River Road area is the one which needs attention and needs to be replaced. Steve explained specifically what needs to be done. The company will have to make the piece to be installed. Chair Houle concerned about the 100-year flood issue, and also about having enough money to do what is necessary to rectify any problem. Christiane explained about how line item amounts can be shifted to meet needs as long as the amount does not exceed the total budget.

### **c. Dysinfection Byproducts report “on our website” per Portsmouth DPW.**

Chair Houle Emailed Keith Pratt to request an electronic copy of the TTHM report. Keith delivered, and a copy was given to our TAPC Ken McDonald who uploaded it to our website. Chair Houle encouraged all members to read the reports listed. Norm has hard copies for members if they prefer the hard copy to reading on line.

### **d. Letters to DOT Commissioner – no status.**

According to Chair Houle, he is still waiting for draft samples of letters from Select Board Chairman Tom Maher which were being compiled from residents as a result of a meeting with residents of the south end of New Castle to protest the delay in a decision to proceed with bridge improvements or replacement of the Wentworth Bridge. He has not heard any update but will inform the Commission when he has some information.

## **7. New Business**

### **a. Campbell Island water line. ( Crossing to Portsmouth)**

Chair Houle asked Steve Tabbutt for a status report. He reported that the problem was a flange which has been fixed. (It's an underwater flange). Clint has some questions and Steve responded that it is basically an expansion/contraction problem. It is Portsmouth water. Steve can open the Wentworth and Main valve when necessary. We have already paid for this water. Steve explained it's a couple of hours worth of water costs, but Steve did not believe it was a major issue. John Ireland pointed out some issues with this, and stated we should have a meter in both directions. Discussion ensued over this, and the time frame. No further decision was made.

**b. WSC Processes.**

Chair Houle explained his administrative memorandum regarding how the Commission works for the benefit of someone having to fill in as chair and run the group. It is an administrative aid designed to provide guidelines. We are trying to comply with NHRSA Right to Know Laws. Norm explained the memo to the members.

**c. UE reports:**

**TTHM Mitigation evaluation March 31, 2017**

([http://www.newcastlenh.org/Pages/NewCastleNH\\_Bcomm/works/THM.PDF](http://www.newcastlenh.org/Pages/NewCastleNH_Bcomm/works/THM.PDF))

**Alt 1D Water Main Improvement Refinement, July 19, 2017.**

([http://www.newcastle.org/Pages/NewCastleNH\\_Bcomm/works/0](http://www.newcastle.org/Pages/NewCastleNH_Bcomm/works/0))

Chair Houle asked that all members review these reports.

**d. PUC visit-sense of the Commission**

Chair Houle brought up the issue of unfair sewer rate charges from the City of Portsmouth to its New Castle users. Can we get this changed? Chair Houle's preference is to go right to the NH PUC and provided a handout explaining what he based his decision upon. He did speak with Christiane, our Town Accountant, who provided him with some more information to justify asking for a rate change, albeit using a different approach. Discussion ensued, with Dave McGuckin suggesting that prior to going right to PUC in Concord, that perhaps conferring with Portsmouth should happen first. Clint Springer pointed out the political realities and ramifications of dealing with this issue. After further discussion, it was the sense of the Board to bring this issue to Portsmouth in the first instance prior to any contact with the New Hampshire Public Utilities Commission.

**8. Any other business for the Board.**

Chair Houle stated there will be a meeting with the Select Board regarding "capital reserve lines" for the upcoming budget and asked members to be thinking about this issue. He asked the Commission to think about how to come up with an appropriate or adequate amount for a set aside for capital reserves. Dave McGuckin suggested the Commission check with other local towns for comparison as to how they operate or configure their capital reserves.

Chair Houle plans to ask members in September about their views and approaches to formulating a rational capital reserve policy.

**9. Adjourn.**

There being no further business to come before the Board, Damon Frampton, made a Motion to Adjourn seconded by John Ireland. Motion carried.

Meeting Adjourned 4:50 PM.