

Board of Health Minutes

May 4, 2010

The Meeting was called to order at 8:10 pm. Present at the meeting were Anna Ludwig, Michael Bean, MD, and Michael Wegerbauer. Also present were Steven Calichman, Director and Patti White, Department Assistant.

This meeting is being held for the purpose of public discussion regarding the Capital Budget line item for the DPW to install Network Meter Reading System throughout the town.

Dr. Bean read some comments from Dr. Soslow, asking for each side of the issue to provide a summary of the science, risk and experience, with a 250 word bulleted format to be presented at Town meeting and or to be printed in the Town Crier.

8:10 **Public comments:**

Gretchen Schuller 126 Old Conn Path: she is looking for information on the specifications of the equipment.

John McArthur-140 OCP – He has questions on the process of how this became a budget line item.

8:17: p.m. **Discussion regarding the Network Meter Reading System Capital Budget item Line Item 13**

Steve Calichman gave a brief overview of the past BOH meeting (042710) to update the board members and the residents.

Don Ouellette (DPW director) has had 2 DPW meetings regarding the meters, 2 meetings with the Fin-Com and an open meeting with league of women voters and another meeting last week. The network meter reading program was discussed at all the meetings.

Don O: briefing slides – At the present time water meter readings are done approximately every six months. A full time meter reader gets readings from one house at a time. Leaks are not being detected in a timely manner. There have been residents with very large water bills due to undetected water leaks.

The low power transmitter is FCC approved. The only change this year would be a box on the transmitter that the meter reading unit attaches to. The transmitter sends out signals 4 times a day, transmitted to Reeves Hill and then through a phone line to the town building.

AL: DPW has made the decision- are there health concerns that the DPW has been made aware of?

Eric ?(chair of DPW)- (as a resident) he is only aware of one question raised by a resident when it was first proposed, it is FCC approved and has been used in other towns.

DO: The economics of the system is a net benefit of \$200,000 per year savings prevents water loss and would be a town asset. System has been installed in Medford, (while he was working there). The health concern topic has never been brought up.

The accuracy of present water meters diminish with time and constant use. Meters are usually changed every 10–12 years, and now Wayland is at 15 years, the meters will be changed out in the future, the highest users first. When meters are being changed piping will be checked to remove all lead pipes if there are any in the town.

There will be an antenna receiver at Reeves hill to collect the data from every house.

Automatic readings will speed the time to handle final readings for real estate closings. Each time a home is sold a meter reader must go manually to the house to take a meter reading, and bring the info back to the office to issue the final bill.

Meter tampering can happen; this system will show inaccuracies in water usage.

Range of the antenna that will be sending out the signal to the homes to be 5 miles and line of site is 25 miles. 98.5% of the town will be read from Reeves Hill. They may need two booster antennas.

Ham operators are transmitting up to 1500 watts, similar to a 1500 microwave in most homes.

The proposed meters would transmit at 900 times less signal strength than the wireless phone signal in the home.

The question was raised regarding the possible impact on people. According to DO, there may be an opt-out option if a person has a pacemaker. They may make an exception- but that would have to go before the DPW board.

Gretchen Schuller OCP- Thank you BOH for the information being provided to the residents. Reeves hill is closer than 1000 feet to some houses. There are 5 cell carriers with antennas on the hill.

Anna asked Steve to explain the BOH position regarding the installation of the towers. FCC wrote a federal regulation. The Board of Health held several meetings with presentations on both sides of the issue in 1998. . Telecommunication act commission of Town invited Dr. Bose to speak on the subject back in 1998. BOH felt it would be best if cell towers were 900 ft from where people lived, worked or went to school. Court decision was that the town must have 4 carriers on Reeves Hill.

GS: most of her concern is the signals from the present 5 carriers and the additional antenna on Reeves Hills not the box on the house.

There was a question raised regarding residents using electronic health equipment- pacemakers- insulin pumps, medications pumps etc. what effect will the meter readers have on these people and their equipment.

Peggy Patton resident- 43 Plain Rd—there is a 6th carrier working on an application, and there are also additional public safety antenna. The antenna under discussion would be put on the police tower

Dianna Warren resident- 34 Decatur Lane- Smart meters being deployed nationwide and there is controversy across the country. Level of exposure is staggering high in accordance with the FCC standards. FCC does not have any health expertise regarding their safety standards. Dianna Warren is concerned about the fact that the water meter is just on the other side of the wall from her work desk.

Stanley Robinson- 9 Wheelock Rd. is about to receive a pacemaker- FCC standard for exposure is based on thermal effect. On the Sensus handout there is information about watts and milliwatts but no information about power density.

Lou Russell-105 Pelham Island Rd, has questions that it is a line item and not a warrant article-this needs greater consideration. Questions regarding the US standards that are not a small % of European standards. This needs further discussion

Don Mitchell- 26 Forest Hill Rd—Europeans have better standards than US. Reeves hill has constant power transmitting. Reeves hill sends out signals 4 times a day. Mr. Mitchell doesn't feel there are any power concerns for the residents as it is low power and short time.

Ron Hurston 29 Shaw Drive. There are no studies and there is no political push to do a study. He feels it is not prudent to proceed. What is the reason for 4 times a day- this doesn't seem practical? Where is the position of the meter on the house that might have an effect on the concerns of the residents? The water meter is presently next to his bedroom.

Kurt Tramposh 2 Weir meadow path. He feels that Wayland is experiencing antenna creep. The antenna zone was created and we are adding other items onto the antenna, this should be explored. Wireless technology has become more of a concern. This is beyond a line item, it deserves additional information and we still don't know the power from the antenna. What are the alternatives---drive by meter reading. KT was a person who had a leak and wound up with an \$8000.00 bill because the leak was not detected for 6 months. He paid the bill, but would like to prevent it from happening again, but just not this way.

AL- line item issue, is there a date/time line for the installations.

SC -once appropriated at town meeting they will probably proceed within the fiscal year.

AL can we get this as an item on the next BOH agenda (5/25)

9:45 The board is not entertaining any more input from the public

MW- feels the data is inconclusive and feels personally that he wants the item

AL- data is inconclusive there is no Medical-analysis to help support the health issues.

MB- motion to take information presented under advisement and consideration second AL

Vote 3-0- all in favor

9:50- Motion to adjourn vote 3-0 all in favor

Respectfully submitted

Patti White

Department Assistant

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Approved 111213