



WATER & SEWER COMMISSION

3 North Main Street . P.O. Box 438 . Assonet, MA 02702
508.644.4000 . Fax: 508.644.2053

2021 MAR 15 PM 3:32

Minutes of the Water & Sewer Commission meeting 2/11/2021

Meeting held at Council On Aging, East Freetown, MA

9:00AM	Meeting called to order by Bob Parker
Members present:	Bob Parker; Paul Sadeck; Lee Baumgartner
Staff present:	Steven Chandler
Not present:	Keven Desmarais (water line emergency)
Guest:	Peter Jankowski, Town Administrator

Sewer Rates

- Discussion of sewer rate for residential sewer customer.
 - At a prior meeting the rate to charge residential sewer customers was discussed.
 - Paul Sadeck makes a motion to set the rate at 75% of water volume used. Lee Baumgartner 2nd. All in favor. Motion carried.

New Bedford Water Bill

- Bob Parker asks why recent and previous month's bill is for the exact same amount.
 - Chandler explains that usage can be the same for multiple consecutive periods and that some of our water customers use the exact same amount of water for two or more quarters in a row.
 - Bob will reach out to New Bedford to confirm the read is actual usage and not estimated. Chandler will send Bob phone number.

Fall River Water Bills

- Bob Parker asks why there is still an outstanding balance for one of the accounts.
 - Chandler explains that he reached out to Fall River to let them know we are still receiving bills with an outstanding balance. He asked them how this can be when all bills have been paid and the credit for bleeding was to be applied and amount owed removed. Chandler asked Kim Fales, Town Accountant, for information regarding payments to Fall River and she provided a spreadsheet showing all bills received, all payments sent and check numbers for payments. It also shows the credit amount (provided by Fall River) from the beginning of the bleeding program that was to be applied. Chandler sent the spreadsheet with his email. He heard back from Fall River and was told they are looking into it.

- There is concern that when we begin bleeding again in April there will still show an incorrect balance due. Chandler will continue to work on getting this settled before bleeding begins for the 2021 season.

Bill Paying Procedure

- Bob Parker asks why bills have to go to selectmen if we are an enterprise fund.
 - Paul Sadeck explains the procedure which includes all bills going on a warrant to be reviewed and signed off on by selectmen as a formality.
 - Chandler explains that some payments are late because of the process a municipality has in place. Some bills, such as electric, come in a week or 10 days after the billing date and only a short time before the due date which is another reason why a bill may be received late by company providing service.

Sewer Meter Computer Board

- Bob Parker was present when the new sewer meter was installed and says the installer (contracted by WhiteWater) suggests that a computer board is needed to be able to interrogate meter.
 - Paul Sadeck makes a motion to purchase the needed equipment for sewer meter not to exceed \$1,000. Lee Baumgartner 2nd. All in favor. Motion carried.

Meter Reading Equipment

- Chandler explains that a new antenna and companion equipment is needed for the radio reading tablet. Keven Desmarais would have more information on what else is needed.
 - Bob Parker decides Keven should be present to discuss this further.

Annual Report

- Chandler created the inclusion for Freetown Annual Report and submitted to Timm McIntosh in Town Administrators office.

Old Filter Site & Bypass Valve

- Bob Parker would like to speak with Keven Desmarais to see if there is anything at the old filter site [which is no longer in use] that needs to be saved for the future.
 - Paul Sadeck asks if the filter site needs to be dismantled and Bob says MassDEP recommends it.
 - Will wait for Keven to be present to discuss.

Staffing

- Bob Parker would like Commissioners to start thinking about making a plan for the retirement of Keven Desmarais which is expected in 2-3 years.
 - Lee Baumgartner states the first thing is to determine what the qualifications the candidate should have. The FW&SC spends a large amount of money for an outside company to do the things we cannot do.
 - Chandler explains that WhiteWater performs a great deal of tasks that the department is not able to perform.
 - Paul Sadeck says that we should certainly discuss this with Keven at the next meeting.

- Discussion of the need for more staffing:
 - Peter Jankowski, Town Administrator, says that there should be another member of staff with Keven when he goes out to work in a roadway.
 - What happens if Keven Desmarais is out of work on medical leave, who does his job? Chandler states that he would call WhiteWater since they are contracted operators for the FW&SC.

Approve Minutes

- Minutes from November 23, 2020
 - Lee Baumgartner makes a motion to approve minutes. Paul Sadeck 2nd. All in favor. Motion carried.

No bills to sign this week.

Warrant Article Approval

- Chandler presents warrant article for a prior fiscal year balance to be paid out of certified retained earnings.
 - There were two bills from FY2019 that were not included in the batch of bills from the City of Fall River that were submitted to Accounting for payment. The bills were held back while they were working on determining how much of a credit Freetown would receive for bleeding as per their agreement. Chandler found them afterwards and let Kim Fales, Town Accountant, know immediately and notified Fall River of the error. Kim directed Chandler to create an article for the Special Town meeting in June 2021.
 - Paul Sadeck makes a motion to approve warrant article as written. Lee Baumgartner 2nd. All in favor. Motion carried.

Paul Sadeck motion to adjourn at 10:06AM. Lee Baumgartner 2nd. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,



Steven Chandler
Senior Clerk
Freetown Water & Sewer Commission