



WATER & SEWER COMMISSION

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

2021 AUG 26 PM 3:20

Minutes of the Water & Sewer Commission meeting 7/19/2021

Meeting held at office of FW&SC, Town Hall, 3 North Main Street, MA

9:04AM Meeting called to order by Bob Parker
Members present: Bob Parker; Paul Sadeck; Lee Baumgartner
Staff present: Steven Chandler; Keven Desmarais

Meeting being audio recorded by Paul Sadeck and Chandler

Letter to Board of Selectmen

- Paul Sadeck drafted a letter to the Board of Selectmen (BOS) regarding the use of the former policed station located at Chace Road, East Freetown.
 - Paul sits on the building committee and the building committee for the newly constructed police station. There were discussions regarding the future use of the police station with the BOS and two former Town Administrators and what to do with the old police station. Current BOS member Trevor Matthews was told by a former selectman that the police station could not be used and was to be demolished.
 - The Town has spent nearly \$300k on new windows and new HVAC system for the building and it is clear the building is still able to be used.
 - Various Town departments have great need for more space and this building would fit those needs, but instead it is being used by a food pantry without proper authorization by a town meeting vote by Freetown residents.
 - Lee Baumgartner agrees with Mr. Sadeck.
- Paul Sadeck makes a motion to adopt the letter and sent to the BOS. Lee Baumgartner 2nd. All in favor. Motion carried.

Simpson Lane

- Keven Desmarais states the in past years a few residents have expressed interest in connecting to Town water. There has been continued issues with wells in this neighborhood and residents have spoken to Keven and Chandler.
- If there is enough interest, perhaps half of residents, and would attend an information meeting, they were instructed by Keven to let the office know. Once there are enough residents the Board would set up a meeting and then have a study done to get an estimate on cost to extend water line from South Main Street to the Simpson Lane neighborhood.

- Funding sources would be researched and if approved, residents would have to agree with paying the betterment over time.
- Commissioners suggest interested residents ask to set up a meeting with Commissioners.

Quanapoag Infrastructure

- Keven will be at Quanapoag next week to determine location of existing infrastructure.
- Chandler has contacted USABlueBook for water filters but they do not carry GE filters. Chandler emailed resident asking where they buy the filters but has not heard back. He will reach out again.

Residential Sewer

- Paul Sadeck makes a motion to use the same rate per CCU that is used for Stop & Shop sewer. Lee Baumgartner 2nd. All in favor. Motion carried.

Meter Reading Equipment Update

- Lee Baumgartner makes a motion to order equipment upgrade as outlined in quote from MasterMeter in the amount of \$11,999.82. Paul Sadeck 2nd. All in favor. Motion carried.

City of New Bedford

- Because the City of New Bedford keeps insisting that the water line to Ste. John Neumann Church is not there's, and the church is not their water customer even though the bills come from New Bedford, the contractor installing the fire suppression line for the church will tap off of the current infrastructure within the church grounds.
- New Bedford has existing water customers in East Freetown to which they provide water and bill for water provided. New Bedford consistently tells their customers and contractors doing work at customer sites that their East Freetown customers are not the responsibility of New Bedford because they live in Freetown.
- The water line does belong to the New Bedford and just because they say it isn't does not make it so. They want Freetown to take over the lines because they know some of their lines are over 100 years old, some are approx 70 years old, and there are service lines to properties that have lead pipes.
- There has never been official correspondence regarding the transfer of New Bedford lines to Freetown.
- Representatives from New Bedford refuse to speak on record about this issue. The Freetown Water & Sewer Commissioners had a meeting with representatives from New Bedford and when they learned the meeting would be recorded they backed out and ended the meeting.

City of Fall River

- During a meeting held July 5, 2019 with Terry Sullivan at City of Fall River acknowledged that their main meter has been broken for many years and bills have been estimated. Fall River agreed to replace the meter and once the new meter was installed billing would be accurate. Commissioners state that Freetown would not be charged for any unbilled usage for the prior years. From the point of the new meter being installed Freetown would be billed for actual usage and will be given credit for water bled each day up to 220,000 GPD (gallons per day).

- When Fall River realized how much water they did not bill, they now want the Town of Freetown to pay \$174,857.35 in unbilled water.
- Lee Baumgartner makes a motion for the FW&SC look into this issue. Paul Sadeck 2nd. All in favor. Motion carried.

Staffing

- Discussion of requirements needed for an operator to transition into having inhouse staff conduct most of what an outside company does.
- Keven Desmarais suggesting hiring a part-time employee now to do meter readings, dig safe mark outs, change meters, and cover Keven's vacation time. This would keep the office flowing and keeps us from having to have outside company do tasks when Keven is out sick or vacation.
- Research is need to learn what is expended and needed. The money charged by the Town of Freetown for indirect costs in the amount of over \$93,000 annually could be used for department staffing needs.
- Paul Sadeck makes a motion to submit an article to eliminate the Enterprise Fund and have the FW&SC go back to be a Town department. This would eliminate the Indirect Costs which could be used for staffing and other needs within the department. Lee Baumgartner 2nd. All in favor. Motion carried.

Approve Meeting Minutes from May 26th

- Paul Sadeck makes a motion to approve. Lee Baumgartner 2nd. All in favor. Motion carried.

Approve and Sign Abatement

- Abatement for Freetown Fire Station 1 was created. They do not get charged for water.
- Approved and signed by Commissioners.

Approve and Sign Bills

- Approved and signed bills.

Paul Sadeck motion to adjourn at 10:52AM. Lee Baumgartner 2nd. All in favor. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,



Steven Chandler
Senior Clerk
Freetown Water & Sewer Commission