



WATER & SEWER COMMISSION

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

Minutes of the Water & Sewer Commission meeting 7/15/2019

Meeting held at Council on Aging, 227 Chace Road, East Freetown, MA

6:30PM Meeting called to order by Bob Parker
Members present: Bob Parker; Paul Sadeck; Brad Paiva
Staff present: Steven Chandler
Guests: David DeManche, Town Administrator; Kim Fales, Town Accountant

Meeting being recorded by Paul Sadeck

RECEIVED
FREETOWN TOWN CLERK
2019 NOV 20 PM 1:38

Open Session

Regular business:

- Minutes from 7.5.19
 - No minutes at this time; will be provided at next general meeting.
- Abatement to approve
 - Brad Paiva makes a motion to give abatement. Paul Sadeck 2nd. All in favor. Motion carried.
- Sign bills
 - Bills signed
- Sign payroll
 - Signed last week.
- Bob Parker states the Board will go into Executive Session and reads reason why based on Mass General Law. Paul Sadeck makes a motion to enter executive session. Brad Paiva 2nd. Bob takes roll call and all vote for Executive Session. All in favor. Motion carried.
- Bob Parker makes motion to not go back to open session and meeting will end after Executive Session meeting. All in favor. Motion carried.

Executive Session

City of Fall River

➤ Abatement and Inter-municipal Agreement

- Paul Sadeck outlines parts of the agreement with, and payments to, the City of Fall River for David DeManche and Kim Fales get them up to speed. The agreement includes the amount of water allowed for bleeding which is 220,000 gallons per day.
 - Paul created a spreadsheet of usage during 2017 and 2018 and calculated, based on the average, what is owed to Fall River, \$246, 952. Amount paid FR already is \$182,000 which leaves a balance owed of \$64,952.
 - The last two bills jumped incredibly...for May 2019 Fall River billed Freetown for 15,121 CCU's for large meter and 15,259 in June for the large meter claiming this both are "actual" usage. How can it be "actual" when their meters are not reading properly. This is subsequent to Keven submitting to Fall River a spreadsheet showing number of CCU's owed to Freetown for bleeding.
- Kim Fales needs to square fiscal year 2019.
 - Current balance in FY19 expenditure budget is \$77,534 that's available in water and another \$3,800 in sewer for a total of \$81,334.
 - There are FY19 bills still to be paid out of this balance.
 - Kim could encumber the \$64,952 because until the FW&SC reaches a settlement with Fall River there is no actual amount due. The problem is that all the revenue budgeted was not collected. Anything brought in now, after July 1st, cannot be used to pay outstanding bills for FY19.
 - Chandler continually send out reminder letters to customers who have not paid their bills to try and collect the outstanding water tax.
 - Options are go to Town meeting with unpaid bills, or, encumber the money to pay Fall River and raise that revenue on the tax recap.
 - When asked Kim's opinion she says she would unencumber and clean up the revenue deficit, then go to Town meeting in the fall and ask for the money out of Water Department retained earnings.
 - Charges from Fall River to be included in FY 19 go through May. June is in the next fiscal year because Water Department runs a month behind due to the way bills need to be paid based on the reading/billing schedule in Freetown. Department of Revenue doesn't make Freetown pay the June bill because Freetown bills for water used through May.
- Bob Parker states that during his meeting with Fall River they said Freetown can pay the outstanding bills owed when Freetown has the money. Whatever figure is agreed on will then go to Town meeting.
 - All bills are to be held and not paid until a resolution has been agreed upon by both Freetown and Fall River. Fall River water bills from February through June are currently on hold and Chandler is to add all future bills and hold until further notice.

- Brad Paiva states that if Fall River doesn't agree they made a mistake we aren't going to pay [what they claim we owe] because he's not voting to pay it. He thinks [Freetown] is being robbed and Fall River is trying to make up for their mismanagement. Paul Sadeck agrees.
- Paul Sadeck states that if Fall River has been incorrectly charging Freetown for water, and the FW&SC budget has been based on the a prior year's water charges, the water department will have to increase rates to water customers in order to pay the increased usage charges from Fall River.
- Discussion about water used for bleeding and turning over reads for each bleeder to Fall River on a weekly basis.
- Kim Fales summarizes:
 - Not going to encumber anything because usage and charges are still under dispute.
 - Let the unexpended appropriations offset the revenue deficit at fall Town meeting.

Paul Sadeck makes motion to adjourn at 7:07pm. Brad Piava 2nd. All in favor. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,



Steven Chandler
Senior Clerk
Freetown Water & Sewer Commission