



# 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 7/5/2019

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

9:30AM Meeting called to order by Bob Parker  
Members present: Bob Parker; Paul Sadeck; Brad Paiva  
Staff present: Keven Desmarais

Meeting being recorded by Paul Sadeck and Keven Desmarais

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FREETOWN TOWN CLERK  
2019 NOV 20 PM 1:30

### Open Session

- Bob Parker makes motion to go into Executive Session and reads reason why based on Mass General Law. 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

- Water Meters
  - Keven Desmarais and Bob Parker went to Fall River City Hall and met with Terry Sullivan and Tom Tighe of City of Fall River and discussed the installation of new water meters.
    - The new meters are infrared and have no moving parts, therefore, there will be no strainer basket installed to catch rocks should they pass through system.
    - Bob is concerned about Rocks coming into Freetown water system and creating issues. Keven states that while rocks could come through they would mostly stay at town line due to elevation going up from town line into Freetown and majority of rocks would remain at low point.
- AS of July 1, 2019 Fall River will increase charge for each CCU of water as per inter-municipal agreement.
- Abatement and Inter-municipal Agreement
  - Fall River will require Freetown to report water usage in bleeders on a weekly basis to start and then to a monthly basis.
  - Paul Sadeck reminds everyone that the FW&SC has been receiving bills for water from City of Fall River and signing off on them to be paid not knowing the charges were for

increased water usage which is due to bleeding water. Fall River was to allow 220,000 gallons of water per day to be used for bleeding the line as per MassDEP directive. He asked Bob and Keven what was discussed in the meeting with Terry and Tom regarding water charges and bleeding allotment.

- Bob Parker states that Freetown is going to pay Fall River what has been charged because they gave Freetown more water than what has been billed.
- Keven Desmarais states that at end of year when bleeding has stopped, he calculates the amount of water used to bleed. The abatement amount added up to approx. \$180,000 for water that was bled.
- After reviewing the CCU numbers Keven provided, the City of Fall River team discovered that they had been greatly undercharging Freetown for water used.
- Fall River proposed that if FW&SC is not in agreement with their offer to start over, not receive an abatement, pay the bills as they have been calculated which are well under what should be paid, or, Fall River takes the water meters out and send them out to be calibrated to see the percentage off and go back to the billing and add in the difference to make up for under charging Freetown. Paul Sadeck and Brad Paiva state that City of Fall River can't do that because Freetown has already paid bills [up until FW&SC was waiting for the abatement from Fall River].
- Paul Sadeck suggests looking at usual normally used for a period of time year after year and pay that amount. That's how Fall River should settle this. We are paying them a lot more than in the past and not getting the benefit of a credit for water allotted for bleeding. They will have to prove that we used water Fall River is charging Freetown in a court and no company will stand up and make that claim. Based on the agreement with Fall River, Freetown is charged based on FR meters.
- Freetown will pay the current bills at an average usage of prior three years for the same month. i.e. what was paid last May will be paid for this May, at the Fiscal Year 2019 rate per CCU. At the point that the new meters get installed Freetown will take Fall River readings and reduce it by the amount bled so we know what we actually owe [Fall River].
  - Go back and look at last year's bills and see what was paid during the months in question and let Fall River know that the same amounts in each of the months from prior year. This is to be done to pay the bills not yet paid to Fall River and will make it square and even.
  - They will install new meters and charge for accurate usage and Freetown will track the amount of water that is being bled.
  - This would be the fairest thing to do. If there meters are faulty that's on them not us.
  - Starting on the date FR installs new meters Freetown will take the billed amount of CCU's and deduct the bleeding amount for that month billed and that's how much water is purchased from FR.
- Brad Paiva states that the FW&SC had let Fall River know that the meters are not reading right and asked Fall River to change the meter in order to get accurate reads/bills. Fall River did nothing and are now going to penalize Freetown.
- Keven Desmarais suggests looking at what was billed to customers over the last few years for budgetary purposes.

- Paul Sadeck states the increase in water charges from Fall River means the FW&SC will have to adjust cost per CCU charged to Freetown customers.
- Keven Desmarais would like to see the abatement for water bled on the bills that come from Fall River.
  - Freetown should not have to wait until the end of the year to hand get abatement for water allotted for bleeding. When Bob and Keven met with Terry and Tom with Fall River they were amenable to the idea. This would be a change to inter-municipal agreement.
  - Freetown has the ability to bleed more than twice as much water on a daily basis than what we normally use. In theory, if bills are being charged 100% they should come to us with a figure 3 times as much on a monthly basis.
- Total owed to Fall River is approximately \$181,000 which is about the same as the credit for bleeding. Paul Sadeck states they aren't giving Freetown the credit.
- Keven will get Fall River billing info from past three years.
- Scheduled next meeting for Tuesday, July 16, 2019 at 6:30 at COA.

Brad Paiva makes motion to adjourn at 10:15AM. Paul Sadeck 2<sup>nd</sup>. All in favor. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,



Steven Chandler  
Senior Clerk  
Freetown Water & Sewer Commission