



# WATER & SEWER COMMISSION

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## Minutes of the Water & Sewer Commission meeting 8/8/2018

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
Absent:	Keven Desmarais

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FREETOWN TOWN CLERK  
2018 AUG 29 AM 8:55

### Land at Ashland/ISP

- 21-E Assessment Report has been received from Penney Engineering, Inc.
- A meeting is scheduled with Bob Parker, Eric Morin, and Ralph Penney to discuss the report.

### Fall River Water Test Results

- Special samples taken at Meter Pit at Fall River line and URR Blow Off (bleeder at top of North Main Street) came back below 80 PPM allowable level at 62 and 77 respectively.
- Line continues to be flushed/bled.

### Sewer Line Extension Feasibility Study

- Environmental Partners Group (EPG) had submitted a proposed Agreement and Town Counsel has reviewed it and sent back changes.
- Chandler sent marked document with changes to Ryan Trahan at EPG to have the Agreement updated and re-submitted to Town Administrator's office.

### MassDEP Order

- Bob Parker states the FW&SC is on schedule. Nothing urgent at the moment and will revisit once the results of the quarterly testing comes back.

### Town Auditor's Report

- The Commissioners were unaware of the audit and they were not contacted to provide information. Based on the findings in the report it is clear that Town Auditors were either provided misinformation from an undisclosed source or they came to conclusions based on assumptions. The first paragraph is misleading and there are several false statements within the auditor's report that need to be corrected.
- Auditors claim and response:

- A consultant should be hired to conduct a study to determine if the current water rate to customers can sustain the Enterprise Fund functioning independently from the Town. States that Water department received funding from Town General Fund too many times.
    - The FW&SC Enterprise Fund pays for all expenses associated with general operations annually.
    - 650 customers may not reasonably support necessary changes and growth to the Towns water system infrastructure.
    - General Funds were used for a by-pass valve project to better improve water pressure as needed by current and future businesses.
    - If MassDEP mandates the building of a new water filtration building in Assonet, the Enterprise Fund and the (422) Assonet customers cannot subsidize the \$3.5+ million cost.
  - Too many commitments were generated in a one year period but they never asked why.
    - Chandler will provide Commissioners with a breakdown of commitments generated and why.
  - There should be no old style meters. All older meters should be replaced as part of a modernization plan as many communities have switched to modern system beginning over two decades ago.
    - Chandler explains that meters are continuously being replaced. As Keven gets read errors customers are contacted to schedule an appointment for meter replacement.
    - Chandler will provide Commissioners with total number of meters replaced in FY2018.
  - Reads and billing cycles are not consistent.
    - Chandler explains that weather and broken read equipment has been a factor as well as realigning the read/billing schedule to match the Accounting department who operates on a FY and not a calendar year.
  - Commissioners to manage water department in a more active manner.
    - Paul Sadeck agrees saying as three elected Commissioners they should be taking a more active role in the daily details.
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- Chandler was asked to provide specific documents from FY2018 such as Commitments.
  - Paul Sadeck contacted Town Administrator, David DeManche, regarding information given to auditors and he didn't know who spoke to them. He also spoke to a selectman and they didn't know where auditors received information.
  - Three elected Commissioners are being held responsible for water quality and everything that goes along with the department and no one spoke to them, which is totally inappropriate and unacceptable.
  - Brad Paiva makes a motion to contact Town auditors and request a meeting to discuss the report. Paul Sadeck 2<sup>nd</sup> with stipulation that the meeting be between Commissioners and Auditors only. All in favor. Motion carried.

### **New Bedford Water Agreement**

- Bob Parker states he's called a couple times and will reach out to them again.

### **Regular Business**

- Approve minutes:
  - June 27, 2018
  - Paul Sadeck makes a motion to approve. Brad Paiva 2<sup>nd</sup>. Paul Sadeck abstain due to absence. Bob and Brad in favor. Motion carried.
- Abatements for Fire Stations 1 and 2
  - Brad Paiva makes a motion to approve. Paul Sadeck 2<sup>nd</sup>. All in favor. Motion carried.
- Signed bills
- Signed payroll
- Brad Paiva makes motion to adjourn at 7:24PM. Paul Sadeck 2<sup>nd</sup>. All in favor. Motion carried.



Steven Chandler  
Senior Clerk  
Freetown Water & Sewer Commission