



WATER & SEWER COMMISSION

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Minutes of the Water & Sewer Commission meeting 6.30.22

Meeting held at Town Hall, Assonet, MA

9:00AM Meeting called to order by Bob Parker
Members present: Bob Parker; Paul Sadeck
Staff present: Steven Chandler; David Thibodeau
Member not present: Keven Desmarais
Guests: John Aprea, WhiteWater; Brian Dunning, Independence Harbor

Meeting being audio recorded by Paul Sadeck

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WhiteWater

- Discussion with John Aprea about the operational services WhiteWater provides, and WhiteWater follows all safety protocols.
- Paul Sadeck gives John the background on the Freetown water system and how water came to be supplied to East Freetown and Assonet residents within the system layout. All residents not within the system layouts has well water.
- David Thibodeau lets John Aprea know about a meter at Excel Recycling that was installed in in a pit with a backflow device.
 - After sharing photos of the meter and backflow device in the pit (which is corroded) with Kurt Lavertue of WhiteWater, David learned from Kurt that the meter and backflow device should have never been installed in a pit. Kurt was not aware of the meter pit until David made him aware of it. It should be installed inside the building. John Aprea agrees.
 - John stated the backflow tests should be done twice a year. He will ask Kurt if there has been an entire Town Cross Connection Survey of all backflow devices. Chandler stated that backflow testing has been done recently but does not know if all have been completed. Bob Parker does not know if there has been a whole Town survey.
- John Aprea stated that when the technicians come to Freetown for their daily rounds should be calling [David] when they arrive.
 - David does not receive a call from Liz Greenleaf, WhiteWater technician, when she comes to town but does speak with her if he happens to run into her at Town Hall or in the field, which is sufficient.
 - David will call Liz when needed. John said David can always call him too.
- Emergency Response Plan (ERP) ~ David isn't certain if Freetown has a current plan.
 - John Aprea will assist in putting one together if needed.
 - Chandler stated there is an Emergency Response Contact list.

- John will email the new MassDEP plan to David and water department.
- Paul Sadeck requests that John always send emails to both David and the office.
- There is a yearly class for emergency responses and David take that class.
- David should contact Jonathan Preissler, the WhiteWater supervisor for Freetown, for any needs such as the ERP. John Aprea is Jonathan's boss.
- Paul Sadeck asks John if all businesses should have a backflow device installed at their meter and John said yes, it is beneficial to insure protection.
- Discussion of the upcoming August lead and copper sampling procedure with John Aprea. Sampling/testing is performed every three years. Sample bottles and instructions will be dropped off at the 10 customer locations by a WhiteWater technician and picked up the following day. Samples collected will be sent out for testing. In 2019 lead and copper was not present in any samples.

Independence Harbor

- Brian Dunning came in to discuss his recent bill.
 - Due to the electronic component of the meter not sending a signal, and the meter being in a deep pit, water bills have been estimated since 2015.
 - Chandler explained that Keven Desmarais would give him reads that were estimated because he is not allowed to go into a meter pit due to confined space and safety.
 - Brian asks about having meter testing and Chandler explains the process.
 - Commissioners inform Brian that all meters will be replaced system wide in future.
 - Brian says they were not open in 2020 but was charged \$4,000. Chandler reviews the billing in 2020 with Brian and he was not charged \$4,000 after they closed in April.
 - Brian doesn't want to pay the bill [even though the water has been used]. He is considering speaking with an attorney.
 - Discussion of payment plan and Chandler explains that interest will accrue until the balance is paid in full. Brian is not happy about the interest portion and will determine how he wants to move forward.
 - Paul Sadeck confirmed with Kim Fales, Town Accountant, that interest cannot be waived, and, to create an abatement there has to be a legitimate reason to do so and there is none. Independence Harbor used the water and is being charged for it.

Bleeders . Permanent Installation

- The project is on hold at the moment.
- David Thibodeau checks each bleeder daily and states that someone turned off a temporary bleeder on Cove Lane. He does not know who shut it off.

Hydrant Replacement

- There are three hydrants that needs to be repaired or replaced.
 - South Main Street hydrant has been repaired by KRR.
 - County Road hydrant was replaced by KRR.
 - Chipaway Road needs to be replaced.
 - David Thibodeau suggests that some concrete posts be installed adjacent to hydrants that keep getting hit by vehicles, i.e. Ridge Hill Road.
 - Paul Sadeck makes a motion to fix the hydrant at Ridge Hill Road. Bob Parker 2nd. All in favor. Motion carried.

Hydrant Meters

- The meters at Excel have been installed and are now in operation.
 - David will be getting weekly reads to determine a weekly average of how much water they had been using for their sprayers prior to hydrant meters being installed.
 - Charge for water used will go back to when they began using water for sprayers. Paul Sadeck thinks it was when they opened for business.
- Meters for permanent bleeders in pits.
 - David provided meters to Jim Rezendes but because they all do not work, Jim states he does not have enough meters for the project.

ARPA Funding

- Deb Pettey has information to create bid package for meter replacement project and will be posting that soon.
- Chandler to send Commissioners a list of all meter sizes and how many of each size in the field needed for meter replacement project.
- Deb would like to use ARPA funding for hydrants since they are part of the water infrastructure.
- Bob Parker wants to add the two needed hydrant meters to the list for ARPA.

Budget FY2022

- Today is the final day for FY2022 funds.

Sign Bills

- Bob Parker and Paul Sadeck signed bills.

Other business that properly came before the Board that was not anticipated:

- Walter Sewicki inquired about water line in Grey Oaks because the site was a former chicken farm and the acid in the soil from chicken manure is compromising the copper pipes into homes.
 - If this project is applicable for ARPA funding, discussion can take place at a future meeting.
- David Thibodeau states that DWWhite and Middlesex Corp are drawing water from hydrants for use on their MBTA projects.
 - When Chandler receives a billing address for DWWhite he will create and send bill. He got address for Middlesex yesterday and will create and send bill.
- Excel meter in pit needs to be moved above ground and into building.
- David Thibodeau needs some tools and a weed trimmer.

- Chandler states that Thom Tighe of Fall River asked if Freetown wants Neon Gas Station as a customer or if the Commissioners want Fall River to bill them.
 - Commissioners said that if Neon in in Freetown they should be a Freetown customer.

Paul Sadeck motion to adjourn at 11:05AM. Bob Parker 2nd. All in favor. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'S. Chandler', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Steven Chandler
Senior Clerk
Freetown Water & Sewer Commission