

1 **FINAL APPROVED**

2
3 **MINUTES OF THE WATER & SEWER COMMISSION MEETING THURSDAY,**
4 **December 21, 2023 ,2023**
5 **TOWN HALL CONFERENCE ROOM, 1:00 P.M.**

6 **Members Present:** Richard White, Chairman, Pam Cullen, SB Liaison, Carl Roediger, Scott
7 Stringham, Lorn Buxton, Alternate, Stephen Johnson, Alternate, Jim Rini, Alternate, Chris
8 Robillard, Director of Public Works.

9 **Members Absent:** Larry Doyle, Alternate.

10 **Also Present:** Bette Jane Riordan, Recording Secretary.

11 Noting a quorum, Chair White opened the meeting at 1:02 PM. Voting members are Chair
12 White, Select Board Member, Pam Cullen, Carl Roediger, Scott Stringham. The Chair proceeded
13 to the Agenda

14 **1. Public Questions.** None

15 **2. Individual Applications/Petitions:** None

16 **3. Approve Minutes of the November 16, 2023 Meeting .**

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18 After review of Revised Draft Minutes, Chair White called for a motion.

19 .
20 MOTION: To Approve the Minutes of the November 16,2023 Meeting of the Water and Sewer
21 Commission as amended.

22
23 MOTION: L.BUXTON

24 SECOND: J.RINI

25 UNANIMOUS

26
27 **4. Financials.**

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29 **a. Review, approve and sign checks.**

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31 **Water:** After review, Chair White called for a motion.

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33 MOTION: To Approve the water utility checks as read and presented.

34
35 MOTION: LBUXTON

36 SECOND: C. ROEDIGER

37 UNANIMOUS

1 **Sewer:** After review, Chair White called for a motion.

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3 MOTION: To approve the sewer utility checks as read and presented.

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5 MOTION: C.ROEDIGER

6 SECOND: L.BUXTON

7 UNANIMOUS

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9 **b. Accountant's Report.**

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11 Chair White related the following figures from the Financial Administrator:

12 **Water**

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14 Checking Acct. \$229,584.14

15 Trust Balance: (Select Board) \$53,874.16

16 Cap. Reserve Balance: (W&S) \$107,707.13

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18 **Sewer**

19
20 Checking Acct. \$305,993.65

21 Trust Balance (Select Board) \$.08

22 Cap. Reserve Balance (W&S) \$204,518.26

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24 **5. Select Board Member's Report.**

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26 Select Board Member Cullen reported on the recent hiring of a new part time Town
27 Administrator, Mike Tully, who is job sharing as he is also the TA for the Town of North
28 Hampton. At present he will be working in New Castle 2 days per week. She encouraged
29 members to introduce themselves to him and welcome him to the Town.

30
31 **6. Superintendent's Report.**

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33 Director Robillard reported that 3 sewer wet wells readings were done earlier in December.
34 There will be some check valve work to be done. He will notify the Wentworth that the invoice
35 is coming as requested by Chair White.

36
37 **a. 2023 Big Ticket items: No changes.**

38
39 **b. Water/Sewer Software Enhancements, Credit Card Payments, (No changes)**
40 He noted that this will be resolved in February.

41
42 **c. Sewer Smoke Testing and Draft Letter to homeowners.**

43 Director Robillard reported he has completed the draft letter and will forward to Chair White.
44 The letter outlines the responsibilities of the homeowners to correct the identified problems.

1 **d. Sewer Manhole Remediation Phase 1. 2023 CWSRF Project.**

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3 Director Robillard reported on the need for a Warrant Article for approximately \$65,000 net, as
4 it is an SRF loan. Construction will begin in the Summer of 2024. He noted they have reached a
5 resolution on the engineering wetland permits. Chair White stated Underwood Engineering has
6 suggested the walk through of the subject areas (Lavengers Creek) which he asked Director
7 Robillard to go with him. Director Robillard wants to also view the Bosen's Hill area. The
8 Building Inspector had stated that a wetlands permit was needed to change out sewer manhole
9 covers; however after further explanation of the process this is no longer necessary, according to
10 Underwood, who got its information directly from the NHDES rules and regulations. Chair
11 White will communicate with the Building Inspector to see if there is a need for a town wetlands
12 permit.

13
14 Chair White noted the next step is to prepare a bid, because federal money is involved it must go
15 out to bid. The Commission also has a purchasing policy which must be followed. Because the
16 federal government is involved there must also be wage compliance with the Davis Bacon Act
17 and Buy American. The Town will buy the equipment and then bid out the labor costs portion.

18
19 Chair White next addressed the smoke testing. 2024 is about chasing the infiltration into our
20 sewer system. This is due to our co-permittee status with the waste water treatment plant. Each
21 move we make gets us more into compliance. Mr. Johnson asked if there was documentation
22 from Underwood to show their opinion on the wetlands, and Chair White assured that Director
23 Robillard had the documentation. Mr. Roediger reminded the Commission that with respect to
24 co-permittee status there is a timeline which needs to be adhered to.

25
26 **e. Portsmouth Avenue Sewer Air Release Valve Replacement Update.&**

27 **f. Camera Piscataqua Street Sewer Main Spring 2024**

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29 Director Robillard reported that he is waiting on availability of MAC Construction. He also
30 reported he intends to "camera" the Piscataqua Street Sewer Main in the Spring of 2024. He
31 outlined a schedule for sewer pipe inspection. Usually 5 years is the standard time for
32 completing all inspections.

33
34 **g. NHDES: Water System Sanitary Survey.**

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36 Every three years NHDES and does a survey to note compliance with rules and regulation to
37 assure everyone is getting safe, clean drinking water. At the end of the survey they make
38 recommendations. This survey took place two weeks ago. Right now, there is a new lead and
39 copper rule which the Town needs to come into compliance. He pointed out a few instances of
40 problems(galvanization) in the service lines. The Town will also need to a mitigation plan. It
41 has 10 months right now to identify and inventory the problem areas. There is a lot of work to
42 do. Approximately 30 houses in town which may have issues. Chair White thanked Director
43 Robillard for his hard work and meeting preparation. Chair White noted that the water system is
44 in pretty good shape. Our efforts are now more focused on sewer.

45
46 **7. New Business.**

1 **a. Master Plan.**

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3 Chair White noted that he was contacted by former member and Chair Norm Houle who had
4 read a draft of the Town's Master Plan and there was nothing in it from the Water Sewer
5 Commission. Chair White, Mr. Roediger and Mr. Houle went to the public information hearing,
6 and as a result Mr. Houle has offered to do a draft, which once received, Chair White will
7 distribute to the Commission for review.

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9 **8. Continuing Business.**

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11 **a. Ordinance Change needed for Water/Sewer Billing Cycles.**

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13 Director Robillard will work with the Finance Administrator on late fees issues,(30 days) and
14 also work with Administrative Assistant Barnes on a notice to be posted on the website. Mr.
15 Roediger will work on draft changes in the Ordinance.

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17 **b. FYI 2025 Budget Schedule**

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19 **1st draft due 1/18/24**

20 **Final due 3/21/2024**

21
22 Mr. Robillard will meet with Ms. Ruest, Finance Administrator and Chair White to get a lot of
23 the work done (salaries, insurances, etc). In the end there are about 6 line items which will be
24 scrutinized at the Commission. Chair White explained how the spread sheet process works in
25 helping to determine what the water and sewer rates will be set.

26
27 Chair White also explained the history and importance of building up capital reserves, and
28 former member Houle's attention to detail in this area. There will be questions and decisions to
29 be made. Mr. Stringham commented that the spread sheet should be edited to include the actual
30 amounts spent to better reflect the status.

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32 **c. Irons In the Fire**

33 Chair White had no particular report on these items at this time, but will be working on an
34 update. He did note the kickoff meeting with Underwood on December 14 regarding the force
35 main replacement on the Sawtelle Bridge. He gave a history of the two breaks. He noted there is
36 a drip going on, and there are decisions to be made about replacement, and what is the best
37 course of action. Should we get off the bridge and go underwater to Pierce Island. It will be
38 expensive, but with today's directional drilling, it may the better route to go. The Town is also
39 dealing with NHDOT on the bridge, and their position that New Castle not increase the weight
40 put upon the bridge by whatever direction the Town decides to go. Another question is when the
41 bridge will be replaced. Mr. Johnson mentioned factors to consider financially in the planning of
42 what course of action the Town will adopt to replace the sewer line.

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44 Chair White briefly mentioned the Asset Management Plan finalization dates, and referred the
45 members to the notes Mr. Robillard compiled. Mr. Robillard noted the sewer drip has stopped on
46 the Sawtelle Bridge, but he is monitoring the situation.

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2 **9. Any Other Business for the Board.**
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4 There being no other business to come before the Commission, Chair White called for a motion.
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6 MOTION: To Adjourn
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8 MOTION: L.BUXTON

9 SECOND : J.RINI

10 UNANIMOUS
11

12 Meeting Adjourned at 2:20 PM
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14 Respectively submitted,
15

16 Bette Jane Riordan

17 Recording Secretary.
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19 **Next Meeting: January 18,2024 at 1:00 PM.**
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