

FINAL APPROVED

Water & Sewer Commission Minutes Wednesday, April 10, 2019 - 3:00 PM

Members Present: Normand Houle, Chair, John Ireland Vice Chair, Walter Liff, Richard White, Steve Tabbutt DPW.

Also in attendance: Ben Jankowski, DPW, Christiane McAllister, Accountant, Bette Jane Riordan, Recording Secretary, Dave McGuckin, Anne Miller, Douglas LaRosa, Ambit Engineering, Mr. Shippe.

Chair Houle opened the meeting at 3:00, noting the presence of a quorum.

1. Public Questions.

Anne Miller of 410 Wentworth Road questioned the status of the opening of the valve between the New Castle system and the Portsmouth system at Wentworth and Main. She referred to Brian Goetz's representations (City of Portsmouth) at last year's Town Meeting regarding this issue. Chair Houle stated all he knew was that the redesign of that particular valve was supposed to be part of the water improvement project. This was confirmed by Steve Tabbutt. Nothing has changed. Chair Houle noted that 10 years ago the Water and Sewer Commission had CMA Engineering do an evaluation of it and do a design to do bi-directional flow and at the time, Portsmouth decided they did not want to go ahead with that. So all was stopped. Chair Houle provided that information to Underwood Engineering to use however they saw fit in designing whatever they were going to put into that pit. Nothing has changed. It is part of the water improvement project.

Dick White stated that he believed there was an option to do away with the meter pits, to save costs for the project. The other option on the table is to eliminate the water line under the Sawtelle bridge. In response to Anne's question about improved water flows discussed at the prior Town Meeting by Mr. Goetz, Chair Houle noted there is no water coming in presently from the Wentworth side. There had been a few units, but now all of the water for the north part of town is coming in through the Shapleigh meter. He noted that having no meters might improve the flows a little bit. Christiane noted that she understood there were to be no meters, based on discussions with Portsmouth concerning future billing. Ben noted that there are no meter pits on the 90% drawings. Anne asked about the water quality status and questioned the testing for TTHMS. Steve Tabbutt reported on testing on various sites last summer. He said Pam Cullen has that information. She asked if any testing was done at the end of the Portsmouth line in her area and Steve replied that the furthest the testing went was Town Hall. She feels there should be a testing done in that area. He stated three years ago there was testing done down at the Wentworth, and at the end of Little Harbor Road. Anne reiterated her request to

have testing done. She understands it may be a better question for Portsmouth or the Select Board. Dick White feels this is a way for Portsmouth to kick the can down the road. Anne responded that regardless, getting an improved flow is an improved flow, but she still wants the test done. Chair Houle directed her to go to Portsmouth's Department of Public Works with this request. Dave McGuckin suggested Anne speak with Selectman Stewart first.

Dick asked Anne what her primary concerns are. She stated a lot is being done but not for her side of the Island. She feels that some of the promises made are not going to happen. If the 1-B Main is over budget, she assumes they will take money out of the looping money. Chair Houle tried to explain the different warrant articles, one for the main project and the looping and the other is for private roads (\$450,000). Chair Houle stated that it is frustrating but in his opinion nothing will be done on Wentworth Road until the Wentworth Bridge is resolved. Dick took issue with the bridge matter and reiterated the continued stalling of Portsmouth in terms of addressing the problems on Wentworth Road.

2. Individual Applications and Petitions.

a. John Chagnon, Ambit Engineering. 152 Portsmouth Avenue sewer hook up.

Mr. Shippe, property owner (Former Tarbell property) and Doug LaRosa of Ambit Engineering were present to discuss the application.

Chair Houle noted that they will be needing State approval to cut into Rte. 1B. The property owner is the process of finalizing his general and excavating contractors. The application came in, but there is missing information. Chair Houle noted he has seen the plans, and there is money owed Chair Houle questioned what the two were expecting from the Board today, given the incomplete status of the application.

Mr. La Rosa responded by stating he expects a water and sewer permit to construct water to a single family residence and connect a 2" force main to an existing 8" sewer main. The general contractor will apply for the State permit. They would like the permit to connect today, and will provide the name of the contractors once finalized. Mr. La Rosa went on to describe the property, which is a newly created lot totaling 36,849 square feet, Subdivision Lot #2. This is a new single family residence. After review of plans, Steve and Ben stated their agreement with the plans as presented. After discussion, Walter Liff made a Motion to provisionally accept and approve the application and plans as presented, conditioned upon receipt of the application fee and submission of the names of the general and excavating contractors. John Ireland seconded, and the Motion carried. Dick White requested that that the applicant provide the Town a copy of the State permit. This became part of the provisionally approved motion.

3. Approve minutes of the March 13, 2019 meeting.

After review and editing, Walter Liff made a Motion to Approve the minutes as amended. Dick White seconded, and the Motion carried.

4. Financials

a. Review and Approve, and Sign Checks.

After review, Dick White made a Motion to Accept the checks as presented and read. John Ireland seconded, and the Motion carried.

b. Accountant's Report.

Checking Account and Trusts Funds balances:

Water:

Checking: \$177,250.50

Trust Fund: \$144,036.06 – Select Board is Agent to expend.

Sewer:

Checking: \$248,872.89.

Trust Fund: \$39,584.71 - Select Board is Agent to expend.

The two new trusts, where the Water and Sewer Commission is the agent to expend, are in process of being set up with the trustees of the Trust Fund. John Ireland would like new names for these trusts. Christiane is meeting with them to assure the trusts are accurately set up. She also explained which monies would be eligible for transfer into the new trust funds, as long as the cash flow is not adversely impacted.

Christiane read the draft Notice for Billing Cycle which will go out in the next billing mailing.

The Town of New Castle Water and Sewer Commission will be modifying the trimester schedule of water and/or sewer billing so that the three combined billing cycles will fall within the Town's fiscal year.

To implement this change, your next bill (the last period of service for FY 19 will be shortened to three months of usage, namely April, May and June 2019.

For customers receiving water and/or sewer services from the Town:

Billing for usage between:

*April 1 through June 30 will be billed in **July***

*July 1 through October 31 will be billed in **November***

*November 1 through February 28/29 will be billed in **March***

For customers receiving water service bills from the City of Portsmouth. New Castle sewer usage will be calculated over the same periods but invoiced one month later, i.e. **August, December and April.**

5. Selectmen's Report: None

6. Continuing Business:

a. Underwood ESR 13.

Chair Houle reported that the Commission's comments and Dick White's emailed comments on this document were incorporated into the ESP. The Selectmen are in favor of expending the \$8400 from the trust fund to fund this.

b. Status of River Road Bulkhead Installation.

Ben said the bulkhead will be delivered in two days. Steve reported they still need to get an electrician in place. This will be an additional charge over and above what has been paid to Shea.

7. New Business.

a. 4 Quarterdeck Lane update:

Christiane reported that the property has been sold, so the former agreement not to be billed for sewer is gone, and she will set up a new account for the property for billing purposes.

b. Introductory discussions regarding capital reserve formulation.

Chair Houle stated this is just a continuing of the discussion begun with the formulation of the 17 projects, and referred to two handouts he distributed. His intention is to formalize the process and to lay down policy on what we would be doing and how we would be doing it. The end goal is to bump up the funds we have in capital reserves. To do this work needs to be done on the front end. Also, there has to be an Asset Management Plan for the money the State has given us from the SRF (State Revolving Fund).

John Ireland suggested we begin with the highest priority item, and deal with that first. Christiane stated that our auditors removed all of the capital assets of the Town and the utility capital assets because the Town had not historically kept accurate records. They are expecting the Town to develop a full and accurate inventory of fixed assets. In the next year and a half the Town needs to put together an accurate asset inventory. That will be the basis for what Water and Sewer

Commission needs to do. Chair Houle spoke about the possibility of having to hire someone to establish a particular asset's value. This could impact future budgets. Walter Liff asked for Steve Tabbutt and Ben's main concern. The sewer line on the bridge is of primary concern and it has already broken twice. If it breaks again on the bridge itself and not on the land, we can't fix it. Ben feels that DES's insistence that we have a plan in place on how to deal with this is of paramount concern to him.

Dick White gave examples of asset management. It is important to get a good history on the asset. There is software available to do asset management. What was the asset worth when we put it in, what is it worth now? There is user-friendly software. Keep it simple. Christiane pointed out that the software we procure should be set up to meet both accounting needs as well as the Commission's as both needs are very similar, based upon what our auditors have stated.

Chair Houle stated he doesn't have a recommendation at this time as to what to do next, but encouraged the members to review the handouts and think about how best to go about developing an asset management process, and prioritize the most critical projects. Look at the forms that Dick White put together. In the meantime Christiane is starting to put together an inventory in order to arrive at true depreciation figures. Chair Houle asked when the State might be expected to ask for the asset management plan? At this point there is no information on the answer to that question. The Commission has begun the process as evidenced by its minutes.

There being no further business to come before the Commission, Dick White made a Motion to Adjourn, which was seconded by John Ireland. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 4:47 PM>

Respectfully submitted,

Bette Jane Riordan, Secretary.