

**FINAL APROVED**  
**Water & Sewer Commission Minutes**  
**Wednesday, December 11, 2019**

**Members Present:** Normand Houle, Chair, Damon Frampton (Selectman Officio), John Ireland, Walter Liff, Richard White, Steve Tabbutt (PW Supr.)

**Also in attendance:** Ben Jankowski, DPW Dave McGuckin.

Chair Houle opened the meeting at 3:00 PM.

**1. Public Questions: None.**

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

**3. Approve Minutes of November 13, 2019.**

After review and edits, Richard White made a Motion to Approve the November 13, 2019 minutes of the Water and Sewer Commission as amended. John Ireland seconded, and the Motion carried.

**4. Financials.**

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

After review, Walter Liff made a Motion to Approve the checks as read. John Ireland seconded, and the Motion carried.

**b. Accountant's Report**

**i. Balances:**

Christiane reported as follows:

**Water:** Checking Account: \$165,675.07 as of end of November  
Trust: \$146,179.17 as of end of October  
Capital Res: \$15,144.87 as of end of October

**Sewer:** Checking Account: \$194,758.42 as of end of November  
Trust: \$39,786.91 as of end of October  
Cap Res: \$30,289.73

**ii. Commitment Report**

The total commitment for November billing is \$157,194.96, which covers the time period: July, August, September, and October, 2019. Christiane reported that Pam Cullen reviewed the figures of last month's report as submitted to assure the numbers correlated. This meets the auditor's recommendations for an independent authentication.

Christiane reviewed the internal proposed process for creating, verifying and approving Water and Sewer bills, noting that John Ireland has been of great

assistance to her in developing the documents needed for the process. The Commission agreed with the proposed plan, and thanked John for his work on this process.

One of the Commissioners asked about the status of the assistant for the accountant position. She reported the position has been posted on NHMA ( NH Municipal Association) website., as well as college board sites. To date there has been no response. Ben Jankowski is working with her on posting on other sites.

Christiane reported on Richard Whites' previous concern about whether or not Commissioners were covered by the Town's insurance carrier, Primex. She explained that Primex provides a blanket bond and read the actual provisions of the policy.

Christiane next addressed billing issues with Portsmouth as a result of the newly executed Water Agreement with Portsmouth, and issues that needed to be clarified with respect to billings. She asked about the status of the check valves, namely if they were being taken out or not?

There will be a bulk water bill four times per year, which is a positive for New Castle. Discussion ensued about all of the billing issues including the effect of how the readings are taken and their verification. Chair Houle stressed that New Castle will provide Portsmouth with the best accurate information regarding the amount of water consumed by the Town. Dick White had a number of questions for Christiane regarding billing and our current software. He wants to assure that these figures are an accurate reflection of the usage. He went on to explain the difference between a primary and a subtract meter. Primaries and the adds equal the water consumed. Chair Houle would like to continue this discussion regarding billing in order to ensure that all are in agreement as to how the billing process should be finalized in order to assure the best interests of the town are met.

Dave McGuckin asked if the 15% rate agreed upon with Portsmouth is reviewable at some point. Chair Houle pointed out that there is an annual meeting spelled out in the agreement to review the provisions of the water agreement. Based on this information, Dave McGuckin stated that he did not believe removal of the master meter is not a good idea. However, Chair Houle felt that the 15% is beneficial. Steve Tabbutt said that 17% is the average, so the agreement for 15% is positive. Chair Houle noted this could be a topic for further discussion based on terms of the water agreement.

##### **5. Selectman's report.**

Damon Frampton noted there are no new issues. Dick White noted that to have Andy Sharpe from Underwood come to a meeting for a report to the Commission would result in additional costs, so be sure that there is a compelling reason to have him come in person to the Commission.

**6. Continuing Business.**

Ben Jankowski reported that the water project contractor Granese, has measured for the spools, (essentially the piece of straight pipe with flanges which replaces the check valve) remove check valves and replace with spools.

**7. New Business:**

**a. Changing Meeting Date for Monthly Meeting**

Chair Houle discussed various options and preferences for changing the date in order to accommodate the addition of a new member. Thursdays are the preferred day. Discussion ensued and Chair Houle believes the first Thursday of the month would work best. Chair Houle called for a Motion. Dick White made the Motion to move the date to the first Thursday of the month, which was seconded by John Ireland. Motion carried. The next meeting is January 2, 2019 at 3:00 PM.

**b. Backflow prevention test issues.**

Chair Houle had asked Ben Jankowski to draft language for the ordinance. After discussion it was agreed upon that the ordinance would read as follows:

*"g. Commercial Buildings: Backflow prevention devices for commercial buildings shall be subject to semi-annual testing by a New England Water Works Association certified backflow prevention device inspector. Inspection, testing, and repair of backflow prevention devices shall be at the Customer's expense and in accordance with utility specifications. Test results shall be submitted to the Department of Public Works."*

Ben will draft a sample letter to the Customer to be sent two times per year specifying the dates. After discussion, Dick White made a Motion to Amend the Ordinance to include the recommended changes regarding backflow prevention requirements for commercial buildings. Damon Frampton seconded and the Motion carried. The change will take effect as of today.

**c. Initiation of 2021 Budget development review of FY 20 to date.**

Christiane provided the Commission with various figures on FY issues for budget development. There was also discussion regarding billing software issues, mainly the difference between annual fees versus subscription costs, and what would work best for the Town.

**8. Any other business for the Board. : None**

**9. Adjourn.**

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

Meeting Adjourned at 4:20 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Bette Jane Riordan, Recording Secretary