

Official and Approved by the Commission
Town of New Castle Water & Sewer Commission Meeting
Public Session: 3:00 p.m.
October 15, 2020

Commission Members Present:

Mr. Normand Houle, Chair
John Ireland, Vice Chair
Richard White
Dave McGuckin, Select Commission Liaison
Walter Liff
Carl Roediger (alternate)

Commission Members Absent:

None

Others:

Steve Tabbutt, Public Works Director
Ms. Christiane McAllister, Town Accountant
Ms. Amelia Trapp, Recording Secretary

Chair Houle called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. 5 members were present, and a quorum was established.

Approval of Minutes:

September 17, 2020 – The Chair brought changes to the secretary's attention. **Mr. Ireland made a motion to accept the minutes as amended and was seconded by Mr. White. Motion passed unanimously.**

Financials:

- ≠ **Review, Approve, & Sign Checks** – Chair Houle read and reviewed each check with its associated invoice. **Mr. Roediger made a motion to accept the checks as read and was seconded by Mr. White. Motion passed unanimously.**
- ≠ **Accountant's Report** – Ms. McAllister gave her report on the trust funds for both water and sewer. **Mr. White made a motion to accept the contract as read and was seconded by Selectman McGuckin. Mr. Ireland made a motion to accept the commitment as read and was seconded by Mr. White.**

SEPTEMBER 31, 2020 FINANCIAL REPORT	
Water Checking: \$216,076.17	Sewer Checking: \$247,282.15
Water SB Trust Balance: \$147,327.75	Sewer SB Trust Balance: \$16,492.75

Water WSC Trust Balance: \$27,774.59	Sewer WSC Trust Balance: \$45,546.13
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Report of Selectman Dave McGuckin: They are still receiving resumes for the open position of public works superintendent. The initial screening will be conducted by Tom Maher. Mr. White will sit in on interviews and the candidate information will be shared with the committee beforehand. The NHMA ad will be run again for 2 weeks. They will post an ad on the Maine site as well. Chair Houle said he had discussed drought notification signs with Mr. Maher; there is one located near the causeway. and one in front of the recreation center.

Final Status of the River Rd. flow meter repair: Mr. Tabbutt said the flow meter was replaced. It is fully installed and working. He took a reading off it on the second of this month and will continue to do so monthly to ensure the sewer bill from Portsmouth is accurate. Chair Houle then brought up the issue of quarterly SCADA maintenance. It was performed in March, but was not done in July. It is not clear if it has been done in October.

Selectman McGuckin questioned whether we automatically renew the contract and further, that we have NEI principal, Mr. Kimmel, come in to discuss the issue. Chair Houle said we had been invoiced \$6,000 in early June for the fiscal year 2021. For the calendar year, we have had 1 quarterly evaluation where there should have been 2.

Mr. Tom Cravens – Backflow Prevention Survey Status:

PROPOSAL FOR THE SURVEY OF CROSS-CONNECTIONS
FOR THE NEW CASTLE, NH WATER AND SEWER COMMISSION
October 13, 2020

Submitted is this proposal for the survey for cross-connections in the New Castle Water System. The survey for cross-connections will be based on the list of possible locations that was developed by the Portsmouth Water Division.

This list contains 7 commercial/institutional/industrial services and 35 residential services. A Cross-connection is a connection between the drinking water and anything that could contaminate or pollute it if the direction of flow were ever to reverse. This reversal of flow is called back-siphonage or back-pressure. Back-siphonage is usually caused by a loss of pressure in the water system piping caused by a broken water main or a large sudden use of water such as drawing water out of a fire hydrant for fire-fighting, and flushing mains to name a few. Back pressure is when the water pressure on the customer's side increases due to a booster pump system or any reason for creating higher water pressure than what is delivered to the premises from the water system.

A high hazard cross-connection is a water use such as a commercial dishwasher with soap and other chemical additives being introduced into the plumbing system, a dock water supply where a hose could be submerged in the salt water in the river. Irrigation systems are always a high hazard because the sprinkler heads are below grade and are subject to contamination being introduced to the heads (due to back-siphonage) by what is found on the lawns such as herbicides, insecticides, fertilizer, and animal feces. In short, a high-hazard contaminant introduced into the drinking water could cause sickness.

A low hazard cross connection is anything that can pollute the water and make it aesthetically unpleasing such as a coffee machine or a juice machine in a restaurant. It would not necessarily make anyone sick. We propose to offer several options for the survey for cross-connections in your water system.

OPTION 1 - *Survey will be made of all addresses on the list. The 35 residential addresses would take approximately ½ hour each for a total of 17.5 hours.*

The Commercial/institutional/industrial address would be approximately 6 hours total. Administration Time – Phone calls, making appointments for access, completing field reports, and generating a master final report etc., would be about 12 hours.

Total time Option 1 would be 35.5 hours at \$75.00/hour = \$2,662.50

OPTION 2 - *You could hire me as a temporary employee for all work outlined in Option 1 at the rate of \$30.00/hour for 35.5 hours = \$1,065.00*

OPTION 3 - *My certification from NEWWA requires me to perform at least 10 surveys within my three-year renewal cycle to maintain my certification. I would be willing to perform complete surveys on only the 7 commercial/industrial/institutional addresses and give you copies of the field report forms showing my findings and recommendations. There is no cost for this option. I would be available to discuss this with you further should you have any questions.*

Sincerely,

Thomas V. Cravens, CET

Mr. White said he had discussed the options with Mr. Cravens. Option 1 was hiring Mr. Cravens' personal business (LLC). Mr. White wanted to be clear that Mr. Craven's current liability insurance would only cover a survey and no hands-on repairs. Option 2 proposes to hire him as a temporary employee of the town. Option 3 was 7 commercial surveys done "for free" in order for him to maintain his three-year NEWWA certification. However, Option 3 cannot be elected as a stand alone option; it is effectively "incorporated" into Options 1 and 2.

Selectman McGuckin asked if we could choose Option 3 to only do the 7 most critical/serious surveys. Answer: no, all backflow preventers must be surveyed/inspected. Ms. McAllister said they could not hire him as a temporary employee without assuming full liability, workers' compensation, and FICA/Medicare. She recommended that they hire him as an independent contractor due to the inability to control his working hours and outcome. She recommended that we consult the town insurer, Primex, to clarify any issues relative to Mr. Craven's liability insurance coverage. The Commission discussed their options and decided to consult Primex.

Results of Sawtelle Bridge Hoop Inspection: Chair Houle discussed the Summit Engineering report. He asked if anyone had additional comments to make to the report. Hearing none, he gave additional comments that would be submitted to Underwood Engineering.

New Business:

- **Processing of meeting minutes: Right to Know Law** – Chair Houle said the recording secretary had had concerns about how the minutes were processed before the public meeting. Ms. McAllister had spoken with the NH Municipal Association and received clarification on how the minutes should be processed and carried through to public view. Chair Houle reviewed the changes and how they related to the Right to Know Law.
- **Sawtelle Bridge Water Line Repair** –The Chair cited the Underwood request for proposals. We are awaiting the results .

Additional Business for the Board:

Mr. Roediger brought up the issue of water conservation. Especially during this drought, he is concerned about excessive water use by some customers just to keep lawns green. Mr. Tabbutt said when he had read the meters this last period, he found one customer using over 100 units mostly used for irrigation. That is almost 75,000 gallons of water. The Board discussed their options to incentivize less irrigation usage. Ms. McAllister was asked if the new accounting/billing software could apply a separate rate to second, outside irrigation meters.

Chair Houle indicated that now that the water project has been completed, 36 town hydrants, down to the vicinity of Sprint Hill Rd, would be flow tested.

Meeting Adjourned:

Mr. White made a motion to adjourn and was seconded by Mr. Ireland. Motion passed unanimously. The Water & Sewer Commission Meeting on October 15, 2020 was adjourned at 4:45 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Ms. Amelia Trapp
W&S Commission Recording Secretary