

FINAL APPROVED
MINUTES OF THE WATER & SEWER COMMISSION MEETING
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2021
MACOMBER ROOM, 2:00 P.M.

Members Present: Normand Houle, Chairman, Walter Liff, Dave McGuckin, Select Board, Chris Robillard, Department of Public Works Supv., John Ireland

Members Absent: Richard White, Carl Roediger

Also Present: Mr. Brenton Cole, Granite Engineering

Chair Normand Houle opened the meeting at 2:02 p.m. A quorum was present and Mr. Ireland would be a voting member.

1. Public Questions

None.

2. Individual Applications/Petitions

Mr. Brenton Cole of Granite Engineering, representing the Urbanek project at 49 Laurel Ln., was present to request an initial “sense of the commission” regarding the Urbanek’s plans to establish an accessory dwelling unit (ADU) above a garage. The Planning Board had requested Granite Engineering seek this evaluation for the plans to proceed through their review process. Mr. Cole’s presentation was viewed as a preliminary assessment about whether the ADU would pose a significant load on the Town’s water and sewer infrastructure. The members of the commission were polled and, while no one foresaw any problem, Mr. Cole was advised that Granite Engineering/the Urbaneks would have to formally apply for a water and sewer permit with all its attendant supporting documentation. Chair Houle indicated he would send an email to the chair of the Planning Board with a positive response.

3. Approve Minutes of the September 16, 2021 Meeting

Mr. McGuckin moved, and Mr. Ireland seconded, to approve the minutes as amended. The motion carried unanimously.

4. Financials

A. Review, approve, and sign checks

Chair Houle read the checks as presented. Mr. Liff moved to approve the checks as read, Mr. Ireland seconded. The motion was carried unanimously.

B. Accountant’s report

1. Balances as of September 30, 2021

Water:

Checking Account:	\$231,932.80
Trust Fund (Select Board)	\$147,344.77
Trust Fund (WSC)	\$ 57,778.53

Sewer:

Checking Account	\$232,080.21
Trust Fund (WSC)	\$ 58,766.53

The October commitments for Authority 1 (northside) and Authority 4 (USCG) were read. Motion to approve the commitments was made by Mr. Ireland, seconded by Mr. McGuckin. The motion carried unanimously.

5. Selectman's Report

Mr. McGuckin reported that the Town does not have a formal, written septage (effluence from private septic systems) agreement as required by NH RSA 485 A:5-b and NHDES. The state requirement provides for a receiving processor "of last resort." The reasonable receiver for New Castle would be the City of Portsmouth waste water treatment facility. Mr. McGuckin will reach out to Mr. Brian Goetz, Portsmouth's deputy director of public works, to resolve this deficiency. Also highlighted during this discussion was the lack of a formal sewer agreement with Portsmouth. The last agreement was consummated in 1978, expired in 2008, with no record that it was ever renewed. Mr. Goetz confirmed the last agreement was back in 1978 and that Portsmouth legal staff was investigating on their end. Chair Houle will provide Mr. McGuckin data he has developed that could potentially provide justification to negotiate a reduced wholesale sewer rate for the Town.

6. New Business

a. Code Enforcement Officer Role.

At the heart of this issue is the extent to which the building inspector/plumbing inspector/code enforcement officer should play a role in matters which heretofore had been understood to be under the exclusive purview of the commission and/or the superintendent of public works. This was prompted by what was a failure over the years to pull a plumbing permit for the installation of a second water meter (usually for irrigation purposes), which is a legitimate plumbing permit requirement.

There ensued a discussion of the broader purview. The general consensus among the commissioners and superintendent of public works is that the plumbing inspector/code enforcement officer's area of responsibility should not extend (much) beyond a building's foundation. Resolution of this issue is being deferred to a future meeting.

b. Bollards for Steamboat Lane Emergency Generator.

The value of bollards was acknowledged, but any plan to install some is being deferred to when the generator will be replaced, hopefully in the near term. (See Item 6.D in the minutes of the 17 June 21 meeting which discusses a "Pre-app" to the state Clean Water State Revolving Fund for replacement of all generators.)

c. Northeast Integration (NEI) Quarterly Maintenance Report.

In its September report, NEI noted "evidence of water ingress in the outdoor enclosure panel as in the past " at the Bosn'Hill/Quarterdeck Lane pump station. Mr. Robillard indicated he would be reaching out to the manufacturer of the enclosure to see if there is a design flaw or if we have a defective enclosure.

NEI also noted "water in the dry well" at the Steamboat Lane pump station "which unfortunately is normal for this station." Mr. Robillard indicated this may be ameliorated through a sump pump float adjustment.

d. Island Items Article for November.

Chair Houle will be submitting an article which will address the high July sewer bill, the June backflow prevention testing and a vacancy announcement for the second alternate commissioner.

7. Continuing Business

a. Status of New England Backflow (NEB) Follow up to June Survey/Tests.

NEB continues to make progress. Chair Houle understands they have most recently submitted proposals to two property owners for installation of second meters (for irrigation).

b. Access to Air Relief Valves (ARV).

As of today's meeting, the "type A" manhole covers have been fabricated and are set to ship any day now. The commission has decided to defer installation to spring 2002.

c. July Sewer Consumption.

Chair Houle reported that he had touched base with Gary Rumph to discuss stormwater and sump pump issues in the Wentworth By The Sea Homeowners area. Mr. Rumph indicated he had no blueprints regarding the design of any stormwater systems and that, if they existed, the plans should have been filed with the Town at the time the project was being developed. Regarding sump pumps, one can never be certain of their proper plumbing without actual inspection, which is problematic. However, Mr. Rumph believes most of the homes have external drain tiles (around their foundations) which, if they are performing correctly, would obviate the need for a sump pump. The sump pump issue will be discussed in the commission's *Island Items* submission.

d. Sawtelle Bridge Water Line Re-Wrapping.

At the 4 October Select Board meeting, Chair Houle presented the commission's argument supporting its contention that re-wrapping the water line at the 74 locations the pipe was now exposed was a legitimate expense to be charged against the water line project. Selectman Stewart indicated he would discuss this with Underwood Engineering (UE). He subsequently tasked Underwood to assess the need for re-wrapping.

Mr. Andy Sharpe of Underwood investigated and pursuant to discussions with a TempTite pipe company representative and study of original water line plans, he concluded, "A rubber membrane is not specified at any location other than at the joints [between sections of pipe.] While it is unlikely that a joint would occur at a bracket/hanger location, Chair Houle will review UE photos taken of the exposed pipe in November 2020 to see if any show a joint between pipe sections. [Chair Houle reviewed 65 photos at the UE portal and found none showing a joint; cannot vouch for the complete 74.]

Mr. Sharpe has recommended that the water main be inspected "up close" should there be a re-painting of the bridge where old brackets were removed. Otherwise, the recommendation is to periodically inspect, with a suggestion that this be done at the same time the sewer line is inspected, tentatively scheduled for early 2025. The commission concurs in these recommendations.

e. **Ordinance Update.**

There are two separate elements occurring in tandem:

1. The creation of an appendix, based on a NHDES template, outlining in detail the requirement of a cross-connection program. Mr. Roediger has provided members with a first rough draft.
2. Overall update of the 2018 edition.

The goal is to issue an updated ordinance early 2022.

8. Any Other Business for the Board.

None.

9. Adjourn.

Mr. Liff motioned to adjourn. Mr. Ireland seconded. Motion carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 4:00 PM.