

FINAL APPROVED

MINUTES OF THE WATER & SEWER COMMISSION MEETING

**THURSDAY JULY 20, 2023,
TOWN HALL CONFERENCE ROOM, 1:00 P.M.**

Members Present: Richard White, Chairman, Pam Cullen, SB Liaison, Carol Roediger, Scott Stringham, Chris Robillard, Superintendent of Public Works.

Also Present: Bette Jane Riordan, Recording Secretary

Chair White opened the meeting at 1:00 p.m., noting a quorum.

1. Public Questions. None

2. Individual Applications/Petitions.

a. Normand Houle, 52 Quarterdeck Lane.

Mr. Houle is requesting a rebate or abatement of 6 units of his sewer bill for a total of \$124.80 because of a leak which took place during the time he was out of state. Upon his return he immediately was confronted with the problem and is seeking assistance from the Commission. Chair White led the discussion explaining the formula that is used to calculate how the Commission can come to a resolution. The same time period from last year was used as the base. After discussion, Chair White called for a motion.

MOTION: To reduce the sewer bill of Normand Houle, 52 Quarterdeck Lane by \$124.80, representing an abatement of 6 units.

MOTION: S. STRINGHAM
SECOND: C. ROEDIGER
UNANIMOUS

3. Approve Minutes of the June 15, 2023, Meeting.

After review, Chair White called for a motion.

MOTION: To Approve the Minutes of the June 15th meeting of the Water and Sewer Commission as amended.

MOTION: C. ROEDIGER
SECOND: S. STRINGHAM
UNANIMOUS

The Commission members discussed issues involved with the review of draft minutes. After discussion, Chair White asked that draft minutes be sent to all members, as well as the Secretary and the Administrative Assistant to the Select Board. Any edits or amendments or changes will be discussed at the subsequent Water and Sewer Commission Meeting.

4. Financials

a. Review, approve, and sign checks.

Commitments:

Chair White presented the following for consideration and vote:

Authority 1: (North Side for three months)	\$97,035.84
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Authority 4: (Coast Guard)	\$1,518.24
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MOTION: To approve the Authorities as presented.

MOTION: C. ROEDIGER

SECOND: S. STRINGHAM

UNANIMOUS

b. Accountant's Report.

Checking Account Balances.

WATER:

Checking Acct.:	\$254,959.36
Trust Balance: (Select Board)	\$53,138.16
Cap. Reserve Balance: (W&S)	\$78,812.41

SEWER:

Checking Acct:	\$305,681.28
Trust Balance (Select Board)	\$0.8
Cap Reserve Balance (W&S)	\$92,026.94

Chair White noted that \$27,500 in additional capital reserve funds will be transferred over from the operating balance to capital reserves. (End of FY year). The final year-end figures will be presented at the next meeting.

Chair White read the checks presented for the Water side. After review Chair White called for a motion.

MOTION: To Approve the checks as read and presented for the Water billings.

MOTION: S. STRINGHAM
SECOND: C. ROEDIGER
UNANIMOUS

Chair White read the checks for the Sewer billings and called for a Motion. He noted that the sewer billing for the City of Portsmouth was \$46,866.60 and confirmed with Mr. Robillard that amount was for the usage in the month of May. Mr. Roediger commented that he will be interested in June's billing to see the effects of infiltration.

MOTION: To Approve the checks as read and presented for the Sewer billings.

MOTION: C. ROEDIGER
SECOND: S. STRINGHAM
UNANIMOUS

5. Selectman's Report

Selectwoman Cullen reported that the Town has signed the contract with Underwood Engineering for work relating to the Sewer Asset Management Plan Project. Chair White explained this is a \$30,000 grant. No field work is required. A kickoff meeting for this project will be in approximately two weeks.

6. Superintendent's Report

a. Water Asset Management Plan.

Mr. Robillard noted there is a meeting scheduled for next Tuesday to review all assets in the GIS system. There are certain forms and checklists which can be accessed after they are entered into GIS.

b. Sewer Smoke Testing Update.

Mr. Robillard reported that the testing went well, with the exception of an accident incurred by one of the workers, but it was reported, and the worker was treated. All residences and relevant properties were tested, with approximately 6 or 7 showing leakages from broken pipes. He presented photographic evidence of the leaks and pointed out he will be sending letters to the homeowners involved who will have to remedy the issues presented. Overall, he stated the testing was successful. He stated the Wentworth Hotel's manhole covers were vented, so smoke pored through them during testing. He will be following up on the matter. The company that assisted the Town with testing is providing a detailed report, and Mr. Robillard will submit a report as well subsequently. Commissioner Stringham participated in the testing as well and described the process. Chair White asked if next steps in this matter possible use of a camera on the subject homes will be. Mr. Robillard pointed out that these are private homes and it will be up to the homeowner to fix the problem. He will be sending out letters to the affected residences. Chair White explained to Selectwoman Cullen about the effects this past year of the unexpected

rains and the Town's ongoing efforts to find any leaks. He noted that the State of NH DES is paying close attention as to how the Town is proactive in rectifying the leakages. Ms. Cullen agreed, along with Commissioners, that the smoke testing was beneficial to the Town and the homeowners. Mr. Robillard stated that one concern from the testing results was the fact that the Fire Station (Public Safety Building) filled with smoke. He is investigating this and will be doing a site visit and will be reviewing the plans for when the building was built. He will report back to the Commission. Chair White indicated that this report will be of interest to NHDES.

c. 2023 "Big Ticket Purchases-Update.

Mr. Robillard reported that of the items authorized by the Commission, he has purchased the Trailer and the manhole cover lifter apparatus.

d. Pre-treatment of Industrial Waste – Update.

Mr. Robillard reported he has been working with the recently hired City of Portsmouth worker who is solely devoted to the new permitting process (grease trap permitting). New Castle plans to replicate the Portsmouth system and plans to do site visits to all food establishments on the Island for a total of 8 sites. Included are the Coast Guard, the school, Portsmouth Yacht Club, Wentworth Hotel and nearby food establishments, and the Islander. He also noted that the Ordinance will need to be changed to reflect the new permitting process.

e. Watertight men hole frames & covers installation- Update.

Mr. Robillard stated he is waiting for a quote and will report back. This will be work on 2 located on Piscataqua Street, near the Yacht Club.

f. NHDES Leak Detection Survey Grant due 7/31/2023- Update

This application has not yet been completed but will be submitted shortly. He will report back.

g. Water/Sewer Software Enhancements.

Mr. Robillard reported that credit card payments for the Water and Sewer billing are functional. They have tested the process. As soon as he completes the instructions for the customers on how to utilize the process to pay their bills, he will see its included in the next billing, and is posted both on the website and in various locations. He hopes to have a large button on the website which states, "Pay Water Sewer Bill".

7. NEW BUSINESS.

a. New Members.

Mr. Stringham presented a draft recruitment document he put together to encourage volunteer participation by applying for open spots on the Water Sewer Commission. There is a critical need for residents to serve on the Commission. The Commission reviewed the draft and made

some changes to include phone numbers for the current residents in addition to the Emails listed. Members also will speak with the Administrative Assistant to the Select Board and provide her number as a central contact, after which one of the members will call back and interview or meet with the interested applicants. Chair White thanked Mr. Stringham for his work and stressed the need to get this information on the Town website. A copy of this Notice will be attached to the final minutes.

8. CONTINUING BUSINESS.

a. Sewer Asset Management Project Contract with Underwood Engineering

Chair White noted the contract is signed and will be forwarded to Underwood, who in turn will send to DES. There will be a kickoff meeting shortly, and the City of Portsmouth has been invited to attend the Water Asset Management Plan.

b. June 2023 Backflow Device testing. Update.

As of July 10, 2023, only two devices remain to be tested, according to the company NE Backflow.

c. Sewer Pump Station Electrical Upgrades-Sea Level Rise.

Chair White explained that at the prior meeting when Andy Sharpe of UE gave a presentation on effects of Sea Level Rise, the Commission agreed to raise the level of two of the pump stations 2 feet to help stem any flooding and protect the electrics.

9. Any Other Business.

a. Meeting Date.

The Commission agreed to hold its next meeting on Thursday, August 24, 2023, at 1:00 PM in the Town Hall.

b. DES Request.

Chair White stated the Commission has received a letter from DES requesting required information on the sewer use ordinance including an inventory of outfalls. Mr. Robillard noted that this must be done every five years and he will follow up and report back.

c. Article for Island Items.

Chair White asked members for suggestions on articles that could be submitted by the Commission. Items listed were the need for new members, the “how-to’s” for paying by credit card, and the successful results of the smoke testing. Selectwoman Cullen added that she would like to invite potential candidates to our meetings.

10. Adjourn.

There being no further business to come before the Commission, Mr. Stringham made a Motion to Adjourn, which was seconded by Mr. Roediger. Motion carried unanimously. Meeting Adjourned at 2:10PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Bette Jane Riordan

Recording Secretary.