

APPROVED

**MINUTES OF THE WATER & SEWER COMMISSION MEETING THURSDAY,
October 19 ,2023
TOWN HALL CONFERENCE ROOM, 1:00 P.M.**

Members Present: Richard White, Chairman, Pam Cullen, SB Liaison, Stephen Johnson, Alternate, Chris Robillard, Superintendent of Public Works

Members Absent: Carl Roediger, Scott Stringham, Lorn Buxton, Alternates, Larry Doyle, Jim Rini.

Also Present: Bette Jane Riordan, Recording Secretary.

Noting a quorum, Chair White opened the meeting at 1:01 PM. Voting members are Chair White, Pam Cullen and Steve Johnson. The Chair proceeded to the agenda.

1. Public Questions. None

2. Individual Applications/Petitions: None

3. Approve Minutes of the September 21, 2023, Meeting .

After reviewing Revised Draft Minutes, Chair White called for a motion.

MOTION: To Approve the Minutes of the September 21,2023 Meeting of the Water and Sewer Commission as amended.

MOTION: P. CULLEN

SECOND: S. JOHNSON

UNANIMOUS

4. Financials.

a. Review, approve and sign checks.

Water: After review, Chair White called for a motion. Mr. Robillard briefly explained about backflow meters, noting that issues with irrigation and fire suppression.

MOTION: To Approve the water utility checks as read and presented.

MOTION: P.CULLEN

SECOND: S.JOHNSON

UNANIMOUS

Sewer: After review, Chair White called for a motion.

MOTION: To approve the sewer utility checks as read and presented.

MOTION: P.CULLEN
SECOND: S.JOHNSON
UNANIMOUS

b. Commitments.

Chair White read the following for approval:

Authority #4: \$1569.20 Coast Guard

Authority #1 \$111,267.04 Includes water and sewer usage and water meter replacement charges.

In response to questions from the Commission, Chair White noted Authority 2 encompasses the areas of Lavengers Lane, Abigail Lane, Spring Hill Road; Authority 3 is the Master Association (WBTS), Marina, Latitudes. Both Authorities 2 and 3 are sewer only.

c. Accountants Report.

Chair White related the following figures from the Financial Administrator:

Water

Checking Acct.	\$218,925.13
Trust Balance: (Select Board)	\$53,442.29
Cap. Reserve Balance: (W&S)	\$106,843.71

Sewer

Checking Acct.	\$179,569.20
Trust Balance (Select Board)	\$.08
Cap. Reserve Balance (W&S)	\$202,878.78

4. Selectwoman's Report.

Selectwoman Cullen reported that she and Mr. Robillard went on a tour of the Coast Guard property. The heat is being kept at 50 degrees, (Baseboard heating) and the furnace will be serviced. The water will not be shut off. There will also be and an alarm(light) or process wherein DPW will be notified of any heat concerns. DPW will plow the property.

Selectwoman Cullen noted that the Select Board have drafted a letter to go out to the public regarding the Coast Guard Property, which will be in Island Items, as well as the website for the Town. (www.newcastlenh.org). She noted that it goes into details about decisions to go with bonds, and projected effects on taxes for the next five years. She commended Chair Stewart for his presentation of information. Mr. Johnson asked if the use of the property is included, and she

responded that the Board is in the process of developing an advisory committee to assist and make recommendations to the Select Board. She indicated that a survey may be in the works to get input from all residents. This has not been determined.

6. Superintendent's Report.

a. Presentation of an overview of Asset Management Software on Meeting Room large screen.

Mr. Robillard presented the program detailing the 5-pronged model from NH DES of what an "asset management plan" consists of, which actually is a strategic, well thought out methodology for accounting for all assets. It is a complete system including software that assists the Town in identifying, managing, and maintaining levels of service, life cycle costs, critical assets, and continuous updating of geographical information through its GIS system mapping functions.

b. Sewer Smoke Testing – PDF Format

Mr. Robillard noted that he still needs to put the test results into a PDF format, so it can be shared with the public. More importantly, Chair White stated there are homeowners who are in violation and need to begin necessary repairs. We need the documentation for EPA that we have begun this process.

c. 2023 "Big Ticket" purchases- 2 items left to purchase.

Mr. Robillard reported the Rammer compactor has been purchased, but the Tripod harness (fire safety) still needs to be purchased.

d. Watertight manhole frames & covers installation.

i. Piscataqua Street 3 manholes – update

Mr. Robillard reported that paving is planned for Piscataqua Street and will be coordinated with installation. They will last through the winter, so he does not want to pave twice. He plans to clean out the lines.

e. NHDES Leak Detection Survey Grant – Applied and Waiting for Response

f. Water/Sewer Software Enhancements, Credit Card Payments 98% complete.

There is an issue with the AccuFund software which is being worked on. Chair White noted that there is a 3% charge on the utility bills, and some people are backing off and paying by check. Mr. Robillard indicated that there are others who are signing back up to use the website for payment.

g. Portsmouth Avenue Sewer Air Release Valve Replacement Update, awaiting MAC Construction.

Mr. Robillard will be speaking with a representative from MAC in the next couple of weeks to determine a beginning date.

h. Wentworth.

Mr. Robillard indicated there are issues with Wentworth regarding maintenance and spoke about the pump station and wet well work. He will report back. Chair White stressed the importance of quantifying the amount of grease entering our system. Mr. Robillard indicated that more research needs to be done regarding the ownership of the lines and easements in the Wentworth area. While discussing this topic, Chair White received confirmation from Mr. Robillard that the Wentworth and surroundings were smoke tested and paid for by the Town.

7. New Business

a. Revised Water Sewer Ordinance to add Pre-treatment of Industrial Waste/Grease Trap. (Requirement in the Wholesale Sewer Agreement with the City of Portsmouth). See attachment.

Chair White indicated we need to start drafting, and Mr. Robillard indicated we can look at Portsmouth's ordinance, however; ours will be more cut and dried.

b. Revised Water Sewer Ordinance to add New/Modified/Re-Developed or Expanded Sewer Services (Requirement I the Wholesale Bulk Rate Sewer Agreement with the City of Portsmouth)

Any new sewer service, including anything that is modified or expanded more than 30% will require an application to the City of Portsmouth. The Town of New Castle residents are being treated like any resident of Portsmouth.

c. Peirce Island Wastewater Treatment Facility-New Castle is Co-Permittee under US. EPA Rules -National Pollution Discharge Elimination System. NHPDES No. NH100234 (Portsmouth) and NHCO 010234 New Castle) -See attachment Permit Dates and New Castle's Sewer O&M Plan

Chair White indicated the need for a timeline, and asked whether we may need outside assistance for the O&M Plan. We have three years to produce an O&M Plan, but there are some 6-month requirements. Mr. Johnson suggested looking to similar towns' O&M Plans for guidance. Mr. Robillard is already researching this process and working with EPA.

There was a brief discussion about where and how the filing for all of these permits and documents should be organized, stored, and still be available to the public.

8. Continuing Business.

a. Review late fee assessments (Tabled at the 9/21/2023 meeting)

Ordinance, pages 4&19; and Software capabilities)

After review and discussion, it was the sense of the Commission to not go forward with any ordinance revision for late fee issues.

**b. Underwood Engineering Status updates:
Status report on two pump stations electrical project; (See Emails.)**

Chair White stated we should get out to bid on the generators only.

On October 4, 2023, the Executive Council approved the Sawtelle Bridge Project. The next step is to have a contract and Selectwoman Cullen will sign on behalf of the Town. It is a loan(\$100,000) with 100% forgiveness. 3-line items in the budget will be required, which includes a separate one for interest. It probably will go into 2025, but this will be determined.

- **Water asset management plan (Discussed)**
- **Sewer asset management plan (Discussed)**
- **Sewer rate study proposal (See Emails)** Discussed need for outside assistance.
- **Sawtelle Bridge force sewer main replacement design.**

c. Wetlands Permits for River Road & Steamboat Lane -10-03-2023 Conservation Commission Meeting

New Castle's Conditional Use Permits. are all set. This is New Castle's version of the Wetland permits. There are 2 CUPs for River Road and Quarterdeck Lane, but we need a third for Steamboat Lane. Underwood Engineering is putting together what is needed for the third one.

9. Any Other Business for the Board.

There being no further business to come before the Board, Chair White called for a motion.

MOTION: To Adjourn

MOTION: P.CULLEN
SECOND : S. JOHNSON
UNANIMOUS

Meeting Adjourned at 2:30 PM

Respectively submitted,

Bette Jane Riordan

Recording Secretary.

a. November Meeting: 11/16/2023 @1:00 PM