



Town of Wilbraham

Board of Water Commissioners
240 Springfield Street
Wilbraham, Massachusetts 01095

Wilbraham Board of Water Commissioners

Minutes of Meeting
April 8, 2021

Present by phone: Commissioners James Dunbar and Douglas Hutcheson, Water Superintendent, Vinnie Pafumi and Guest, Jim Murphy.

Physically Present: Tonya Basch, DPW Director; Donna Daviau, Administrative Assistant and Annette Grasso, Engineering Clerk.

This meeting is conducted in compliance with Massachusetts Governor Charles D. Baker's Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c 30A §20 (attached) signed March 12, 2020.

Announcement Per MGL c.36(a), 2020

The DPW Director stated the following: In accordance with Mass. General Law Chapter 30(a), section 20, I announce that this meeting of the Wilbraham Board of Water Commissioners is being recorded by the Engineering/DPW Office; and asked if there is anyone present who is also recording this meeting. No one was recording and the minutes reflect that one indicated that they are recording this meeting.

The DPW Director announced that this meeting is conducted in Compliance with Massachusetts Governor Charles D. Baker's Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law G.L. c. 30A, §20 signed March 12, 2020. Most participants of this meeting are attending electronically.

CALLED MEETING TO ORDER:

*Meeting was called to order at 8:48 a.m.

MINUTES:

Motion was made and unanimously voted to accept the Minutes of the March 4, 2021 meeting.

BUDGET:

There are no changes. The budget was approved there shall be no rate increase. We are waiting for the final number from the MWRA. What we estimated is still within the window of what we anticipate from the MWRA's bill.

MWRA:

The flows are right in line with the previous years. We will see a change in May, as sprinkler systems will be turned on.

WATER DEPARTMENT BUSINESS:

Meter Reading Status. Meter readings have been completed. Currently changing meters, along with a few rereads.

Review of Abatement. Motion was made and unanimously voted to approve the Abatement. Commissioners Dunbar and Hutcheson will sign the document.

Discussion took place relative to estimated bills. Once the Water Department gains access to the property and it is noted that the resident has been overestimated for several billing cycles/years, how far back are we going to Abate? It was the opinion of the Board that all overestimated should be abated back to the resident. Motion was made and unanimously voted to not have a time cap on the number of years and to abate all overestimated..

The outstanding balance is \$30,294.92. This figure is through April 7, 2021 and does not include Friendly's bankruptcy.

Rescind Additional Commitment. Due to information from the Collector's Office, this matter will be addressed with uploading of the new bills.

Inspection of Water tank. We do this every five (5) years. We will inspect next year.

Glenn Drive. Chlorinated as we speak. We will be sending bacteria sample to Quabbin Analytical for evaluation. We will begin putting door hangers on the doors today to inform the residents that they may now connect to our water system.

Tank inspection. We will be contacting other vendors. It is believed that drone will do the inspection as opposed to a diver. Tank inspection to be place on the next meetings Agenda.

Water Regulations. Like to put some finality to the Regulations. Looking to hire a consultant to take a review of our regulations. Tonya to look into it. Tonya indicated that she would like the commissioners to set a date to discuss the regulations, other than at a Water Commissioners meeting. Tonya will get quotes from consultants by next meeting. She will look at Chicopee and South Hadley's Regulations.

Reevaluate entrance fees. Tonya would like to see Rules and Regulations separated from the entrance fees. Two separate components. Reevaluate in-law apartment. It is not a new service. It is proposed that it may be an additional dwelling unit, as we do with the sewer department. As an example Less than 3 bedrooms for flow rate. One (1) bedroom would be \$1,000.00 and each additional would be \$500.00. Some communities charge for the size of the water service and the flow. Tonya indicated that she would like to see a new proposed structure for an in-law apartment. Also, a new true entrance fee per size and flow. Tonya will pull it together for next meeting. Motion was made and unanimously voted to further discussion with Commissioner Rik Alvarez is in attendance.

Merge Water Commission with Sewer Commission. Reviewed letter from Steven Reilly, dated December 3, 2015. Relative to legislation to combine the Boards. The question arose who would draft the legislation. Tonya will reach out to Springfield. They would give us some advise.

It was noted that the Board of Selectmen appointed volunteers to the Sewer Advisory Board. This Sewer Advisory Board had the authority to sign Commitments and Abatements. The Sewer Advisory Board was in place up to August of 2009. Then the Board of Selectmen began signing Commitments and the Abatements, as the Advisory Board was defunct.

Backflow testing requirements. Received an e-mail from the MWWA. DEP is requiring testing of backflow devices. They are requesting that all commercial, industrial, institutional and residential devices be tested. The testing of residential would be an extreme hardship. It was pointed out on our irrigation meter policy that the residents must sign states "It is the owner's responsibility to have the high hazard backflow device tested annually by a licensed backflow tester. The purpose of the backflow device and its testing is to insure that there is no cross-contamination of our water system." We also have a cross-connection control program, was it discussed? Jamie will look into it.

Other Business:

Doug inquired as to the usage of water for firefighting. Wanted to know if we keep track of gallons. Vinnie indicated the gallons goes towards unaccounted water. Vinnie bills the General Fund \$4,000.00 per year. The billing for water for firefighting usage should not be taken off the table. Need to see the numbers. The Fire Department uses the hydrant in the front of their building to practice. They also have a meter on their truck. We need to take a look into the billing of the Fire Department and must fine tune it. Place this on the Agenda for next meeting.

Doug also indicated that he received an e-mail from HWRSD about lead and copper in the school drinking supply. Vinnie indicated that this is an infrastructure issue. Our system does not have lead. Doug to have statement ready for next meeting.

McIntosh pump station. Almost have final document out to bid. Vinnie is doing some flow testing. This is not for expansion and whereby not feasible. Just replacing for the same flow and same pressure. However, pressures may slightly increase.

Vulnerability Emergency Response Plan (Resiliency Plan). When we have a draft we will go into Executive Session.

NEXT MEETING:

The next meeting is scheduled for May 13, , 2021 at 8:45a.m.

Motion was made and seconded to adjourn at 10:05 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna E. Daviau
Administrative Asst.