

Town of Newton Utility Advisory Board  
June 19, 2012

The regular meeting of the Newton Utility Advisory Board was held on June 19, 2012, at 7:30 p.m. at the Newton Municipal Building, 39 Trinity Street, Newton. Chairman Lawler called the meeting to order and the following members were present: Ms. Unhoch, Mr. Caffrey, Mr. Pham and Chairman Lawler. Mr. Paul Baldwin, Water Sewer Supervisor, Mrs. Jacki Shackleton, Utility Collector, and Mr. David B. Simmons, Jr. were also in attendance. Mrs. Millikin was excused.

Chairman Lawler read the Open Public Meetings Act statement and then moved to approval of the minutes from the May 15, 2012 meeting. Ms. Unhoch made a motion to accept and was seconded by Mr. Caffrey. The minutes were unanimously approved by an "aye" vote.

The first order of business was for Michael Yanis of 46 Hillside Terrace. He requested assistance with his elevated second quarter bill. Mrs. Shackleton explained that the customer was basing his request on annual usage for the past two years. Mr. Baldwin suggested giving Mr. Yanis credit for the two minimum quarters while the meter appeared to be slowing down. Mr. Caffrey asked for clarification on the matter and Mr. Baldwin explained that it appeared the meter readout had been slowing down over time. Mr. Lawler inquired as to whether Mr. Baldwin was confident that the meter was indeed slowing down. Mr. Baldwin said that he was, and further explained that in cases where the outside reader is not reading the same as the actual meter inside, the meter is replaced with a radio remote meter.

Mr. Yanis was in attendance and explained his calculations of the previous two year totals. Mr. Baldwin explained to him that the readout had been slowing down, but it was impossible to tell for exactly what period of time. Mr. Yanis stated the he lives alone, has an energy efficient toilet, and does not use an excessive amount of water. Mr. Lawler explained that the minimum charges were for usage less than 4000 gallons and that the problem in this type of situation is that it is difficult to detect because there was some usage on the account, even though it had decreased. He further explained that it is impossible to quantify exactly how much the meter had been slowing down and for what duration, but the meter inside was working properly; therefore reflecting the high reading at the time the meter was changed. Mr. Yanis stated that he understood, but still did not agree with the elevated usage. Mr. Lawler said that because this was a unique situation, and because Mr. Yanis took the time to attend the

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meeting and explain his point of view, he motioned to credit the two quarters of minimum charges in the amount of \$150. Mr. Caffrey seconded the motion. Once the motion was clarified for Mr. Pham and Ms. Unhoch, it was unanimously approved by an "aye" vote. Mr. Lawler closed the matter with Mr. Yanis by suggesting that he monitor his meter readings monthly on his own to prevent any future issues.

There being no more new business, Chairman Lawler moved to old business. He explained that at the last meeting, the issue of Mr. Tomasula was tabled because Ms. Unhoch had excused herself and he felt there was not a sufficient quorum to vote. Mrs. Shackleton explained to him that following the meeting, Mrs. Millikin checked with the attorney who stated that the issue could have been voted upon without Ms. Unhoch's vote. Ms. Unhoch again excused herself from the issue.

Mr. Tomasula was requesting waiver of late penalties because he did not receive his fourth quarter 2011 bill in the mail. In order to be consistent with prior Utility Board decisions regarding inconsistencies by the U.S. Postal Service, Mr. Caffrey motioned to deny the request. Mr. Pham seconded the motion and it was unanimously denied with an "aye" vote.

There being no more old business, Chairman Lawler inquired about the Water Sewer Plant. Mr. Baldwin explained that everything was running smoothly. Chairman Lawler asked if the computers were up and running and Mr. Baldwin replied affirmatively.

Mr. Baldwin then stated that they were no longer installing the solar panels at the plant. Mr. Simmons said that solar panels are being installed in Hampton at Kittatinny Regional High School and Sussex County Community College. He further explained that a solar farm was approved in Augusta, just past Suburban. A little road in the area of Cerbo's Nursery had been denied. Mr. Baldwin said he thought that if anyone else backed out, the project was over. Mr. Simmons explained that these were different projects, and that the College now had canopies in the parking lots and up Plotts Road which were approved. He added that Kittatinny Regional High School also has them in the back parking lot. Mr. Baldwin inquired as to how they would handle snow and ice, and Mr. Simmons stated that on the lower edge of the canopies, there is a snow break similar to what is on a roof. Mr. Simmons speculated that there would be some future maintenance problems with said canopies. Mr. Caffrey added that pigeons may build

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nests inside and a brief discussion continued.

Mr. Simmons went on to explain that 500 feet of pipe was replaced on Moran Street, and all ten sections had repair clamps on them. It has all been replaced and the road has been repaved.

Mr. Simmons further stated that H.D. Water Works supplied shop drawings for the Maple Avenue job, and the D.O.T. approved digging for Thursday night. Mr. Simmons then said that regarding water allocation, the D.E.P. wants the Town to be able to measure the water flow diverted from the Pine Swamp Brook. In an attempt at cost effectiveness, they are trying to make a rectangular cross-section in order to measure width and depth, and measure the velocity of the diversion using a digital water velocity meter, thereby obtaining volume diverted.

Regarding Jersey Investors, Mr. Simmons reported that the area was inspected, but it was not dry enough to do inter connects. They are hoping to be able to do it next week. They will call on Friday and plan for Tuesday or Wednesday, but there is a chance of rain in the forecast. With the crew now working on Maple Avenue, the interconnects may have to wait until the Fall.

Mr. Simmons explained that FEMA said the Sparta Glen expenses may have to be claimed through Sparta. Technically, the main did not break, so the Town of Newton may not be able to collect. Sparta wanted the Glen to be open, so they made some repairs.

There being no other business to discuss, Mr. Lawler thanked Mr. Caffrey for his service to the Utility Board and wished him luck on his relocation. Ms. Unhoch then motioned to close the meeting which was seconded by Mr. Caffrey.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:23 p.m.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

Jacki Shackleton