

Town of Newton Utility Advisory Board
January 20, 2015

The regular meeting of the Newton Utility Advisory Board was held on January 20, 2015 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. Vrahnos, and Chairman Lawler. Mr. David Simmons, Engineer, Mr. Joseph Carr, Senior Water/Sewer repair, and Mrs. Jacki Shackleton, Utility Collector, were also in attendance.

Chairman Lawler read the Open Public Meetings Act statement and moved to approval of the minutes from the December 16, 2014 meeting. Chairman Lawler motioned to approve the minutes and was seconded by Ms. Unhoch. The minutes were approved with an "aye" vote.

Mr. Vrahnos initiated a conversation regarding filling the two vacancies on the Utility Advisory Board and there was a brief discussion on how to go about recruiting members. Chairman Lawler stated that he will attend the next Council Meeting and stress the need for new members.

Chairman Lawler then moved to the first order of new business which was for Chrissie & Timothy Kochanski at 32 New Hampshire Street. They were requesting waiver of penalty because they claim to have put payment in the lock box the last week of December. Chairman Lawler said that since there is no evidence of their check being cashed and the Water Department has no record of payment, if the Kochanski's can submit proof from the bank that a stop-payment was placed on the check, they will render a decision. Chairman Lawler then motioned to table the matter pending proof of stop payment from the bank. Ms. Unhoch said that something similar happened years ago and the Town Manager said that the lock box is completely secure. Chairman Lawler motioned to table the matter and Mr. Vrahnos seconded. The matter was tabled with an "aye" vote.

The next order of business was for Dennis Barker of 9 Barrett Avenue who was requesting waiver of penalty because he inadvertently mailed his water payment to the tenant at 9 Barrett Avenue instead of the Municipal Building. Mr. Vrahnos acknowledged that the customer made a mistake, but felt he should accept responsibility. Ms. Unhoch stated that the Board needs to set a precedent. Chairman Lawler stated that although he appreciates Mr. Barker's honesty, he motioned to deny the request. Mr. Vrahnos seconded and the appeal was denied with an "aye" vote.

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The final order of new business was for Bader Qarmout of 3 Jefferson Street who was requesting credit for minimum bills while the meter was stuck. Chairman Lawler said that it cannot be allowed because the meter was changed in May of 2014, so the minimum charges were from 2013 and 2014, and too much time had elapsed. He asked why the matter was not addressed sooner and Mrs. Shackleton stated that Mr. Qarmout indicated that he is not around much to read his mail. Chairman Lawler motioned to deny the request and Ms. Unhoch seconded. The appeal was denied with an "aye" vote.

There being no more new business, Chairman Lawler asked Mr. Carr about the water filtration plant. Mr. Carr stated that Morris Lake was 27 inches below the spillway. He continued to say that Mr. Grenille is now up at the lake and that Dustin, Eric and he go up there periodically as well.

Mr. Carr said that bids for drives came in \$8000 below what was budgeted. Chairman Lawler asked who won the bid and Mr. Carr stated that he was not sure of the name. Mr. Carr went on to say that the crew has been doing a great job with all the icing that has been taking place.

Mr. Simmons said that regarding ice and snow and the water allocation permit, it was suggested that they quantify the water out of Pine Swamp by noting the amount of rain to the amount of runoff from Pine Swamp. He said if they are able to gauge the amount of runoff, they can calculate what amount of snow equates to what amount of runoff.

Mr. Simmons went on to report that Route 206 is going to be resurfaced from Newton to Frankford. He had given drawings to Mr. Carr to mark up and send to the DOT. They also want to know where there are intersections with handicap ramps. They requested curb stops be marked for the whole length of Newton which is a big job. They agreed to send the plans to the DOT and the DOT can circle the areas they need marked.

Mr. Simmons stated that the blow off of Lower Glen Lake, Phase one as-built is completed and they obtained the construction completion certificate.

Regarding 85 Sparta Ave., Shell Station to 7-11, drawings were reviewed and they will go over fittings. It takes six weeks to get parts and they are hoping to begin between March and Memorial Day. Mr. Simmons stated that representatives from the

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Water Department will need to be present during the work. Mr. Vrahnos asked if they are mindful of our pipes and Mr. Carr said that the Water Department is constantly marking out the pipes for them. Mr. Vrahnos asked if they are bonded and Mr. Simmons stated that they are indeed. Mr. Vrahnos commented that they are moving quickly and Mr. Simmons said that once they finish, the gas pumps will go in more towards Sparta.

Mr. Vrahnos talked about Route 206 coming into Newton by Tuscanny Bistro and commented that there is no drainage in that area. Chairman Lawler asked about the apparent sinkhole in that area and Mr. Carr stated that a storm drain had collapsed. He said that the Water Department had to remain on scene because the storm drain is on the water main. Mr. Vrahnos then inquired about the Martorana project and Mr. Carr said that it is going well and they check on it periodically.

There being no further business to discuss, Chairman Lawler motioned to adjourn the meeting and was seconded by Mr. Vrahnos. The meeting was adjourned at 8:25 pm.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

Jacki Shackleton