

Town of Newton Utility Advisory Board
August 25, 2015

The regular meeting of the Newton Utility Advisory Board was held on August 25, 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: Mr. Lockwood, 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 March 17, 2015 meeting. Chairman Lawler motioned to approve the minutes and was seconded by Mr. Vrahnos. The minutes were unanimously approved with an "aye" vote.

Chairman Lawler then moved to the first order of new business which was for Hatzinas Spiridon of 39 Clinton Street who was requesting credit for sewer charges on a leak from a frozen pipe. The water did not go through the sewer. Mr. Vrahnos stated that they need to be flexible because so many customers were faced with the same misfortune. Mr. Lockwood stated that we need to be as fair as possible. Chairman Lawler motioned for a credit of \$500 and Mr. Lockwood seconded. The request was unanimously approved with an "aye" vote.

The second order of business was for John Kelly of 205 Main Street who was requesting credit for sewer charges on a leak from a frozen pipe. The water did not go through the sewer. Mr. Carr stated that the leak was over 100,000 gallons again. Chairman Lawler commented on the expense of these situations. Mr. Vrahnos asked how many gallons were in excess and Mr. Carr stated 133,000. Chairman Lawler asked how much money that equates to and Mrs. Shackleton stated \$665. Mr. Vrahnos stated that the Board needs to be consistent. Chairman Lawler motioned for a credit of \$665 and Mr. Lockwood seconded. The request was unanimously approved with an "aye" vote.

The third order of business was for Ryan Hudson of 33 Liberty Street who was requesting credit for sewer charges on a leak from a frozen pipe. The water did not go through the sewer. After a brief discussion regarding when the property had a change of ownership, Chairman Lawler motioned for a credit of \$250 and Mr. Lockwood seconded. The motion was unanimously approved with an "aye" vote.

The fourth order of business was for Michael Settembre of 7 Woodside Avenue for

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waiver of delinquent penalties due to an oversight with his remittance of payment. Mr. Vrahnos commented Mr. Settembre's admittance of delinquency. Mr. Lockwood stated the Town does allow 30 days to pay and motioned to deny the request. Chairman Lawler seconded the motion and it was unanimously denied with an "aye" vote.

The fifth order of business was the Samaritan Inn of 7 Sussex Street and 21 Union Place for waiver of both delinquent penalties because the person who pays the bills had been hospitalized. Chairman Lawler asked how much the fees were and Mrs. Shackleton stated that they were \$32.15 and \$29.43. Mr. Lockwood stated again that they did have 30 days to pay. Mr. Vrahnos stated that the Board needs to be consistent and Mr. Lockwood motioned to deny the request. It was seconded by Chairman Lawler. The request was denied with an "aye" vote.

The sixth order of business was for Thomas Butterfield of 58 Plainfield Avenue who was requesting waiver of late fees when the post office did not deliver his bill. After a brief discussion, Mr. Vrahnos motioned to deny the request and Chairman Lawler seconded. The request was unanimously denied with an "aye" vote.

The seventh order of business was for Rudy Delvecchio of 80 Madison Street who was requesting waiver of late fees when the post office did not deliver the bill. He concluded that the bill was lost between the office and the post office. Chairman Lawler motioned to deny his request and Mr. Vrahnos seconded. The request was denied with an "aye" vote.

The eighth order of business was for McGuire Newton Realty at 41-47 Main Street who was requesting credit for excess charges on a leak from a frozen pipe. The water did not go through the sewer. Mr. Carr stated that the reason for the pipes freezing was because the building is missing a window and it became too cold inside. Because they are allowing the Newton Fire Museum use of their building for storage, they requested waiver of both water and sewer charges. Chairman Lawler stated that he had no problem waiving the excess sewer charges of \$1820, but he was not comfortable waiving the entire bill. Mr. Vrahnos said he would be willing to waive the excess sewer charges. Mr. Lockwood suggested that the Governing body should decide whether the water charges should be waived. Mr. Lawler motioned to waive the sewer charges of \$1820 and Mr. Lockwood seconded with the suggestion that the Governing body

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rule on any additional charges.

The ninth order of business was for Bader Qarmout of 7 Main Street who was requesting credit for excess sewer charges on a leak from a frozen pipe, as well as the frozen meter charge. The water did not go through the sewer. Mr. Vrahnos stated that he did not agree with waiving the frozen meter charge. Chairman Lawler motioned to credit \$950 worth of sewer charges but not the frozen meter charge. Mr. Vrahnos seconded, and the request for excess sewer charge was unanimously approved with an "aye" vote.

The tenth order of business was for Rick Baron of 125 Sparta Avenue for unexplained elevated water usage. Mrs. Millikin prepared a memo regarding same. Chairman Lawler asked if this was because of the main being shut down from the Fox Hollow leak. Mr. Carr answered affirmatively and explained that they have been monitoring the usage weekly and 300 gallons seems to be the regular usage. He went on to explain that because he is at the end of the dead-end line, the line needs to be flushed. When it is opened and closed, the usage seems to spike. He said that it is only fair to recommend that he receive minimum bills until Fox Hollow is repaired. Mr. Carr also explained that when the meter was tested, it actually was reading slow. Chairman Lawler asked if the meter was changed. Mr. Carr replied that it now has a radio remote and that they check usage once a week. Mr. Vrahnos asked if he was the last account on the line. Mr. Carr said that the racquetball and church are the last on the line. Chairman Lawler asked why he has the water on if he is not open yet, and Mrs. Shackleton stated that he has a great deal of landscaping. Mr. Lockwood agreed that he should be charged the minimum until the work is completed. Chairman Lawler suggested that the meter be changed again after all the work is complete so they can start from scratch. Chairman Lawler stated that at the recommendation of Mrs. Millikin, Mr. Simmons and Mr. Carr, he motioned for a minimum bill until the 10' main and Fox Hollow are completed. The motion was seconded by Mr. Vrahnos and unanimously approved 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 18 inches below the spillway. Mr. Vrahnos asked if there was a water restriction and Mr. Carr stated there was not. He said that things were going well and they would be working on the roof next week.

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In his engineers report, Mr. Simmons said that they have been doing a lot of work with regard to the Shell Station in Sparta. They have been updating the map and trying to ascertain where things used to be. They had to complete relocation of the mains before Memorial Day. Mr. Simmons re-explained the history and how locations of valves were unknown. Newton had gone on Sparta water and cut the lines a little at a time. There was great discussion regarding procedure. Mr Vrahnos stated that when this began, Mr. Simmons said that the changes took care of a great deal of things. Mr. Simmons explained that the Mohawk House had a 4" line. When the valve was shut off, Mohawk House had no water. Mr. Simmons brought a water truck and changes were then made to ensure that they would continue to have water. A new easement has been drawn up but will not be filed before the as builts. Once as builts were done, the easement had to be tweaked. There never was a map, but now everything is marked out so there is a record of all lines. They are working on a map to get it all straight. He continued on to say that Mr. Lockwood helped put the map together from memories of his younger years having grown up in the area near Drake Pond. They had to widen the easement and are cleaning things up.

Mr. Simmons explained that he recommended to Mrs. Millikin to send a field crew out. The updated map is a work in progress. He said that the water department worked very hard to get a better understanding of locations. The crew found valves and did a great deal of work for the new easement. Now everyone is on the same page getting it all down.

He stated that the next project involved meeting with the county engineers about replacing a bridge in Sparta. It is Bridge Q6 from the post office towards Ogdensburg to the STS Tire on the left. He said that the Town has mains through the center of the bridge, 100 feet in each direction. They wanted the Town's 16" main marked out. Mr. Vrahnos asked when the project would begin and Mr. Simmons stated in 2017 or 2018, but they would like the as built done.

He continued on to say that Morris Lake and Pine Swamp allocation was dependent on snow melt. They plotted the points and the 30" pipe would be 7" deep for two months when snow melt was plotted. All of the data will be compiled and sent to the State. They are fine tuning the numbers to maximize allocation. He stated that Mr. Smalley found logs from 1960 which were a big asset. A model was developed

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based on the data and the allocation increased.

Mr. Simmons said they are still waiting for permits from DEP. The DEP wanted more information and has a great deal of restrictions. There are many agencies involved. Mr. Vrahnos asked if the pipe was still down and Mr. Simmons replied that it was. Mr. Vrahnos said that he thought it would be done and Charman Lawler said they had a small window of time. Mr. Simmons said that the goal is this fall and they are at the mercy of the DEP and the weather. Chairman Lawler asked if there was a drop-dead date. Mr. Simmons said that if they work past November, they have to deal with freezing, so it may get pushed to the spring of 2016.

Regarding the Martorana project, Mr. Simmons praised the members of the Water Department. Mr. Carr stated that the meters for that project have been purchased and are waiting to be installed. Chairman Lawler asked what happened on Liberty Street and Mr. Simmons told him they would like to resurface Route 94. If budget allows, they are going to place water lines on the other side of 94 before the paving moratorium. Regarding Lower Glen Lake, Mr. Simmons stated that they cut over 10 feet of pipe and capped it. Phase One is complete.

There being no other business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 9:06 p.m.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

Jacki Shackleton