

Town of Newton Utility Advisory Board
December 15, 2015

The regular meeting of the Newton Utility Advisory Board was held on December 15, 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. Ervin Lasso, Water Foreman, Mrs. Jacki Shackleton, Utility Collector. Wayne McCabe, Planner for the Kweselait matter, Maricia Wilson, Newton resident, and her tenant Charlie were also in attendance.

Chairman Lawler read the Open Public Meetings Act statement and moved to approval of the minutes from the November 17, 2015 meeting. Mr. Lockwood 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 Maricia Wilson of 75 Trinity Street for her elevated water/sewer bill. Ms. Wilson stated that there are no washing machines or dishwashers at the property and it is stated in the lease that no cars are to be washed and no pools are to be filled. She went on to say that she has had high water bills in the past from unfavorable tenants wasting water. Chairman Lawler stated that the meter was tested and found to be accurate, indicating that the usage must have been from a leak in the ground. Ms. Wilson asked where the leak could have been and Chairman Lawler stated that he did not know. Ms. Wilson stated that the next door neighbor has a pool as well as a washer and dryer, but no visible sewer lines. Mr. Simmons stated that people often think that water leaks will surface, but a lot of times it doesn't surface, especially in areas where the terrain is rocky. Ms. Wilson replied that there are no storm drains in the area. Mr. Simmons stated that pipes sometimes have small areas of corrosion through which the water will seep. Ms. Wilson replied that a leak makes the meter go around and you will hear the water. Mr. Simmons replied that Ms. Wilson stated she did hear water running. Ms. Wilson asked why she used 130,000 the following quarter and why the ground is not damp. Mrs. Millikin stated that the meter test came back accurate and Danny Youngs made the repair. Ms. Wilson went on to speak about rain water runoff and her rising taxes and the condition of her dwellings on the outside. Mr. Vrahnos explained to her that all of the Board Members are residents of Newton and pay the same taxes. He explained that the Board is there to assist her. Chairman Lawler stated to Ms. Wilson

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they will consider the facts and render a decision. Mrs. Millikin informed her that she is now equipped with a radio remote meter that can be checked weekly. Ms. Wilson asked how much she will have to pay and Chairman Lawler stated that the Board will decide and she will be notified in writing and Ms. Wilson exited.

The Board then moved to the Old Business of the proposed tap for 178-180 Spring Street. Mr. McCabe stated that his clients' have changed their proposal to eight apartments and two commercial units, both retail and no coffee shop. A brief discussion regarding the commercial units ensued. Mr. Simmons stated that the second and third floors will consist of six one-bedroom apartments and two studio apartments totaling \$14060 plus labor and materials. The first floor will have two commercial units, one 884 square feet and one 2035 square feet at a flat fee of \$5200, resulting in a total of \$19,260 plus labor and materials to install the line. Mr. McCabe asked if the \$5200 fee was by ordinance and Mrs. Millikin stated that it was and that she would send him a copy of same. Chairman Lawler motioned to approve the request and was seconded by Mr. Vrahnos. The request was unanimously approved with an "aye" vote.

The second order of new business was for Robert and Nancy Woods of 37 Linwood Avenue. They were requesting waiver of sewer charges due to a leak. After a brief discussion, Chairman Lawler motioned to credit sewer charges in the amount of \$150. The motion was seconded by Mr. Vrahnos and unanimously approved with an "aye" vote.

The discussion then went back to Ms. Wilson at 75 Trinity Street. Chairman Lawler stated that although he feels for her, she refuses to admit that there was a leak. He suggested waiving her excess sewer charges and the fee to test the meter. She would be credited sewer fees for the three quarters in question for the usage over 25,000 gallons, totaling \$2097. In addition, the Board agreed not to bill Ms. Wilson for both the meter test and the 32,500 gallons that was registered on the inside meter but not on the readout. Mr. Vrahnos motioned to approve this credit and was seconded by Chairman Lawler. The credit was unanimously approved with an "aye" vote.

There being no more new business to discuss, Mr. Lasso stated that McGuire repaired the broken window. Mrs. Millikin stated that the lake is 40" below the spillway and that Bill Grenille will be leaving at the end of the month. She went on to say that there have been many calls about the unfavorable taste of the water. She stated that

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it is believed to be from the lake turnover and that extra chlorine is being added to the water. Mr. Vrahnos asked if an aerator would help and Mrs. Millikin stated that it is being caused by the warm fall weather and the low water level of the lake. She stated that the roof at the wastewater treatment plant is almost done. The flashing is up and they are waiting for the rails. She continued on to say there was a sewer break last month. The main has been replaced and the manholes would be done by day's end. Chairman Lawler asked if the manholes were raised and Mrs. Millikin replied that they were not. Chairman Lawler asked her to extend thanks to Bill Grennille for his service.

In his engineer's report Mr. Simmons stated that the 7-11 and Shell station are open and that a revised as-built was sent. A few surveyor errors need to be corrected and they are very close to completion. He stated that inspections of dam sites have been sent in to DEP. Mr. Vrahnos inquired about Fox Hollow and Mr. Simmons stated that a few additional trees need to be planted. Mrs. Millikin stated that they are all in agreement and that specs and plans will be sent to USDA by year end.

Mr. Simmons stated that the Town Square Garden project is coming back to the Planning Board and there was a brief discussion regarding Liberty Towers.

There being no other business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 9:35 p.m.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

Jacki Shackleton