

Town of Newton Utility Advisory Board
January 19, 2016

The regular meeting of the Newton Utility Advisory Board was held on January 19, 2016 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. Vrahnos, Mr. Carchia and Chairman Lawler. Mr. David Simmons, Engineer, Mrs. Jacki Shackleton, Utility Collector, and Mrs. Maureen Snellen, Newton Water customer, were also present.

Chairman Lawler read the Open Public Meetings Act statement and moved to approval of the minutes from the December 15, 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 Maureen Snellen of 30 Plainfield Avenue, who was questioning her elevated usage. Mrs. Snellen explained that she has resided at 30 Plainfield Avenue for 30 years and never had a water bill this high. Chairman Lawler asked her if she had a leak and she replied that she did not. She added that she has been checking her usage and has not seen a problem. She said that she was told by the water department that the outside readout turns one for every hundred gallons used on the inside meter. Mrs. Shackleton stated that Eric reported that her readout was indeed operating correctly. Mr. Carchia asked her if she had a dishwasher and washing machine, how many bathrooms, and if the toilets were working properly. Mrs. Snellen said that she had all the appliances as well as two bathrooms in which the toilets were working properly. Chairman Lawler asked her if she has had any repairs lately and Mrs. Snellen said that she did not. She added that she was also away for a couple of weeks during that quarter. Mr. Carchia asked how she fills her pool and she replied that she uses a hose. He then asked if she had a sprinkler system and she said that she did not. Chairman Lawler stated that since the inside meter and the outside readout are in sync, there would be no answer unless the meter was tested. He explained that if the meter is bad, the Town pays for the test and if the meter is accurate, she would be responsible. Mrs. Snellen agreed to have the meter tested.

Town of Newton Utility Advisory Board
January 19, 2016

The second order of business was for Mara Miller of 77 High Street who was requesting that her returned check fee and delinquent penalty be waived. Mrs. Shackleton explained that when making a payment online, if the customer enters their checking account information incorrectly, the bank returns the payment and the Town handles it like a returned check. Chairman Lawler stated that even when Utility Board Members make a mistake, they pay penalties. Mr. Carchia stated that if everyone else pays a penalty, she should be required to pay. Chairman Lawler motioned to deny the motion and it was seconded by Mr. Vrahnos. It was unanimously denied with an "aye" vote.

The third order of business was for Neil & Barbara Morris of 4 Franklin Street. They were requesting waiver of a delinquent penalty because of a death in the family. Mr. Vrahnos motioned to waive the penalty under the circumstances and Mr. Carchia seconded the motion. It was unanimously approved with an "aye" vote.

There being no more new business to discuss, a brief discussion of protocol took place in order to enlighten the new member of the Utility Advisory Board. No report was given on the Wastewater Treatment Plant and Water Treatment Plant.

In his engineer's report, Mr. Simmons reported that the Shell and Seven Eleven are operating and 99% complete. He stated that Bill Grennille's tenure as licensed operator ended on December 31, 2015, and someone has been hired to fill the position. Fox Hollow is almost done with the designated area for the trees. The dam reports have been filed and Dam 2 on Swartswood Road needs to be raised two feet. Chairman Lawler asked why it would be raised and Mr. Simmons reported that it was adequate years ago, but now the DEP standards now require it to be raised. Mr. Simmons stated that they are looking for the most efficient and cost effective way to proceed.

Chairman Lawler asked if there has been any movement on the Martin Property and Mr. Simmons stated that it is ongoing. Mr. Simmons said that he has not heard any more on the allocation and that Jack is monitoring it. Chairman Lawler asked how far down the lake is and Mr. Simmons stated 40 inches. Chairman Lawler stated that the water restriction has to remain in place.

Town of Newton Utility Advisory Board
January 19, 2016

Mr. Carchia stated the importance of leak detection and Mr. Simmons stated that the Fox Hollow leak used 2 or 3 hundred thousand gallons per day. Mr. Simmons went on to say that Liberty Towers did not have enough water to pass a flow test and a discussion regarding same took place.

There being no other business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

Jacki Shackleton