

Town of Newton Utility Advisory Board  
February 16, 2016

The regular meeting of the Newton Utility Advisory Board was held on February 16, 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, Mr. Joe Carr, Senior Water Repair, 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 January 19, 2016 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, whose meter test showed that it was running fast. A brief discussion regarding usage took place prior to Mrs. Snellen entering the room, and Mr. Vrahnos stated that her usual benchmark appeared to be about 12,000 gallons per quarter. Mr. Carchia agreed that 12,000 gallons was a reasonable average. When Mrs. Snellen entered the room, Chairman Lawler told her that she would be credited for 25,700 gallons amounting to \$436.90. Since she had the faulty meter for two-thirds of the first quarter of 2016, Mrs. Snellen wanted to know if her first quarter bill would be credited as well. Chairman Lawler asked Mrs. Shackleton if she had the figures for the first quarter bill. Mrs. Shackleton stated that she did not have the figures in her possession at that time. Mrs. Snellen stated that if her next bill was also high, she would be back. Chairman Lawler told her that would be fine. She stated further that if her bills are now significantly lower with the new meter, she will be back to the Board. Chairman Lawler told her that would be fine also. Chairman Lawler motioned to credit her \$436.90 for the faulty meter and was seconded by Mr. Vrahnos. It was unanimously approved with an "aye" vote.

The second order of business was applied for by the Town of Newton on behalf of Mitchell Insurance Agency at 29 Trinity Street. Mr. Mitchell stated that when the Town's contractor was installing the traffic light in front of his property, the contractor broke his sprinkler system, creating a leak and elevated usage. The Town was requesting that the Board waive a portion of the bill. Mr. Vrahnos asked why the contractor was not paying for the excess usage. Chairman Lawler also asked if the

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Town received money from the contractor. Mr. Carchia asked why the Town would waive a fee if the contractor was at fault. Mr. Simmons commented that the repair was made within 24 hours. Mr. Vrahnos stated that he had no problem crediting Mr. Mitchell, but the contractor should pay the difference. Chairman Lawler motioned to table the matter until they were able to speak to Mrs. Millikin from the Town and get more information. Mr. Vrahnos seconded and it was unanimously tabled with an "aye" vote.

The third order of business was Michael Moughrabie of 43 Fox Hollow Road. Mr. Moughrabie was requesting waiver of a delinquent penalty due to an oversight on his part. Mr. Carchia stated that the bill was paid late and there was not much to talk about. Chairman Lawler motioned to deny the request and was seconded by Mr. Vrahnos. It was unanimously denied with an "aye" vote.

The fourth order of business was for Eric Kalugin of 5 Ashford Street who was requesting waiver of sewer charges for a leak that did not go through the sewer. Mrs. Shackleton stated that his bill would be in excess of \$1600, and Mr. Vrahnos suggested they credit him for the sewer charge. It was seconded by Chairman Lawler and unanimously approved with an aye vote.

The fifth order of business was for the Moose Lodge at 4 Diller Avenue. The Moose Lodge was requesting waiver of sewer charges for a ruptured pipe which leaked water into the basement for approximately three weeks. A brief discussion took place about the importance of owner's checking their property and being aware of any incidents taking place. It was further discussed that the Moose Lodge property had been sold and had a closing earlier in the day. Chairman Lawler suggested taking the average usage from the four bills prior to the excessive bill and crediting them for the excess. It was seconded by Mr. Vrahnos and unanimously approved with an "aye" vote.

The final order of new business was for Sussex County Community College who was requesting waiver of sewer charges due to an underground leak. The College maintained that the last three bills were excessive, so it must have been leaking for three quarters. After looking at the photographs, Chairman Lawler stated that they put a band aid on to repair the leak. He further stated that he was pleased that they used a reputable leak detection company. Mr. Carr asked if they were requesting credit for

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three quarters and Mrs. Shackleton stated that he was correct. Mr. Carchia asked if the Town uses master meters where one big meter monitors a property and the owner monitors and maintains private meters which feed into the master meter. Mrs. Shackleton stated that she only knew of one property owner who had a master meter. He further stated that band aid repairs are common. Mr. Carr stated that the Town also uses band aids. Mr. Simmons gave an explanation of the layout of the college based on his memory and explained that they have their own pressure zone. Mr. Vrahnos asked if anyone knew how it broke and Mr. Carr stated that no one knows. Chairman Lawler motioned to take the average of the four quarters prior to the three quarters of excessive usage and credit them for the sewer charges in excess of the average. Mr. Carchia seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved with an "aye" vote.

There being no more new business to discuss, Chairman Lawler asked Mr. Carr about the Water Treatment Plant. Mr. Carr stated that Mr. Smalley had surgery and that he and Eric have been taking care of the plant. He stated that they have been assisted by Steve Lyons, the new licensed operator. Joe takes care of the procedures and Steve signs off on everything.

Chairman Lawler asked about the Wastewater Treatment Plant and Mr. Carr stated that there were a few days of freezing. He has been in touch with the D.E.P. Mr. Simmons asked about the level of the lake and Mr. Carr stated that it is 31 inches below the spillway.

In his engineer's report, Mr. Simmons reported that the Shell and Seven Eleven went around the maintenance bond and that it is in progress. He stated that in the eleventh hour there was an agreement that the maintenance and performance bonds would be given simultaneously.

Regarding Dam #2 by Swartswood Road, it was determined that it was higher than anticipated. A structural sill is still required but it may not have to be raised.

Regarding Fox Hollow, Mr. Simmons again went over the trees and the time frame regarding the bats. He stated that Einhorn will be doing the diving for the job. He reviewed the agreement of where the pipe would be laid and went on to say that it will not all fit there at one time. They will bring it in as needed, and attach it and send it out into the lake with floats. It will then be released and lowered so that it will not hinder the use of the beach.

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He went on to say that he is in the process of getting information for the water allocation and also that there are no meter specifications in the UCC code. He also stated that the proposed senior housing will be coming to the Board soon for water allocation.

There being nothing further to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

Jacki Shackleton