

Town of Newton Utility Advisory Board  
October 19, 2010

The regular meeting of the Newton Utility Advisory Board was held on October 19, 2010 at 7:30 pm at the Newton Municipal Building, 39 Trinity Street, Newton. Chairman Lawler called the meeting to order and the following members were present: Mr. Caffrey, Mr. Pham, Ms. Unhoch and Chairman Lawler. Mr. Paul Baldwin, Water & Sewer Supervisor, Mrs. Amanda Tomasello, Utility Collector and Mr. David B. Simmons, Jr. were also in attendance. Mr. Vrahnos and Mrs. Debra Milikin were excused.

Mr. Lawler read the Open Public Meetings Act statement and then moved to the approval of minutes from the August 17, 2010 meeting. There being no issues Mr. Lawler made a motion to accept the minutes and was seconded by Mr. Caffrey. The minutes were unanimously approved by an "aye" vote.

Chairman Lawler moved to New Business under request for utility customers. The first application on the agenda was for Michael & Mary Decker requesting waiver of penalty fee of \$44.65 and disputing a high 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter bill of \$746.50. Mr. Decker was in attendance. Mr. Baldwin explained that it seems as though the meter was read incorrectly for the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter, and the combined 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter would be correct based on prior usage. Ms. Unhoch made a motion to waive the penalty and was seconded by Mr. Caffrey. Mr. Lawler called the roll: Mr. Lawler – yes and Mr. Pham – yes.

The next application on the agenda was for Joseph Broesler disputing a high 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter bill of \$508.50. Ms. Tomasello explained that a representative from the Water Department went to the location on September 2, 2010 and checked the meter and there was no error in the reading and at that time they had used an additional 5,000 gallons. Ms. Unhoch made a motion to deny the request and was seconded by Mr. Lawler. Mr. Lawler called the roll: Mr. Caffrey – yes and Mr. Pham – yes.

The next application on the agenda was for Roger Sharp disputing a high 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter bill. Mrs. Tomasello explained that there was a leak on the property

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and Mr. Sharp hired a leak detection company to find it and also had it fixed on May 28, 2010, which was one month into the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter billing. There was a credit given by the Board at the July 20, 2010 meeting for the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter amount affected by the leak. Chairman Lawler made a motion to credit the account an amount to be determined by Ms. Tomasello, based on the previous credit given and was seconded by Ms. Unhoch. Mr. Lawler called the roll: Mr. Caffrey – yes and Mr. Pham – yes.

The next application on the agenda was for Sak Associates requesting water tap and 4" service install. Mr. Mooney was in attendance. Mr. Mooney gave the plans for the site to Mr. Simmons. Mr. Simmons advised Mr. Mooney that he needs to meet with Joe Inga and Paul Baldwin for approval on this. Mr. Simmons suggested to the Board that approval should be contingent on the Fire Official's approval. Chairman Lawler made a motion to tentatively approval the request based on the approval from Mr. Inga, the Fire Official and was seconded by Ms. Unhoch. Mr. Lawler called the roll: Mr. Caffrey – yes and Mr. Pham – yes.

The next application on the agenda was for Bianca Hernandez disputing a high 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter bill. Ms. Hernandez is the tenant and claimed that her bill was high because there was a bad leak that the landlord did not fix for two weeks. Chairman Lawler stated that this is the landlord's responsibility and made a motion to deny the request and was seconded by Ms. Unhoch. Mr. Lawler called the roll: Mr. Caffrey – yes and Mr. Pham – yes.

The next application on the agenda was for Newton Board of Education requesting waiver of penalty fee of \$770.41. Chairman Lawler made a motion to deny request and was seconded by Mr. Caffrey. Mr. Lawler called the roll: Mr. Pham – yes and Ms. Unhoch – no.

The next application on the agenda was for David Silverstein requesting waiver of penalty fee of \$24.50. Mr. Caffrey made a motion to deny request and was seconded by Mr. Lawler. Mr. Lawler called the roll: Mr. Pham – yes and

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Ms. Unhoch – yes.

The final application on the agenda was for Stephen Forte requesting a reduction of the anticipated 4<sup>th</sup> quarter bill. Mr. Forte was in attendance. Mr. Forte explained that his outside meter was stuck for the last five years, but the Water Department was unable to change the meter because it was in the crawl space and no one could fit in it. Mr. Baldwin agreed that it was too small for most people to fit in, but he had been able to fit and exchanged the meter. Mr. Baldwin also stated that he checked the meter again on October 18, 2010 and it was working properly and had used 2,200 gallons of water since the meter was exchanged on September 20, 2010. Mr. Pham calculated that the amount to be charged as averaging approximately 7,000 gallons per month, which seems reasonable. Mr. Forte stated that it did not make sense that his mother, who lives in the house, would use that much water. Mr. Lawler stated that based on the history of the account, he agreed with Mr. Pham's assessment. Chairman Lawler made a motion to credit the 21 minimum charges that have been paid while the meter was stuck and was seconded by Mr. Caffrey. Mr. Lawler called the roll: Mr. Pham – yes and Ms. Unhoch – yes.

Chairman Lawler moved to Old Business on the agenda. Mr. Baldwin indicated that the Water Filtration Plant and Waste Water Treatment Plant are running smoothly. Mr. Baldwin stated that all hydrants are working properly with the exception of Home Depot, and the Water Department is working with Ken Martin on that issue. Ms. Tomasello stated that 92 shut off letters were mailed on October 14, 2010 to homeowners over 90 days past due.

Chairman Lawler moved to the Engineer's Report. Mr. Simmons indicated that they are sending the plans to the DEP for the spring 2011 construction of the Merriam Avenue & Thorlabs project for the new water main. Mr. Simmons stated that DEP had issued the permit for Thorlabs, who now needs less allocation per day. Mr. Simmons stated that some hydrant work will be done when the streets are being resurfaced. Mr. Simmons indicated that if the unaccounted for water

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had not been found by the Water Department, the lake would have been down another foot.

There being no other business to discuss upon motion of Mr. Lawler and seconded by Mr. Caffrey, the meeting was adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

Amanda Tomasello