



Town of Wilbraham
Board of Water Commissioners
240 Springfield Street
Wilbraham, Massachusetts 01095
(413) 596-2800 ext. 208

Wilbraham Board of Water Commissioners
Minutes of Meeting
April 7, 2023

Physically Present: Chairman James Dunbar, Commissioners Rik Alvarez, Douglas Hutcheson, DPW Director Tonya Capparello, Water Superintendent Vinnie Pafumi, Administrative Assistants Annette Grasso, Deborah Walch and one Wilbraham Resident.

CALLED MEETING TO ORDER:

Meeting was called to order at 8:50 a.m.

MINUTES:

Motion was made and unanimously voted to accept the Minutes of the March 10, 2023 meeting.

MWRA:

WATER DEPARTMENT BUSINESS:

Daily Flows: Vinnie stated typical flows. No irrigation use as of yet.

Outstanding Balance on Water Bills: As of 04/03/2023 the outstanding balance is \$49,854.01.

Consecutive Water System Agreement. Final revision was reviewed by DEP and town council with minor changes made. Cedar Ridge is ready to sign. The agreement was reviewed and approved by the Water Commissioners pending minor revisions to fix typos.

Budget: Nothing to report. Tonya submitted the Lead Service Inventory Grant which will not be in the budget. A special grant account will be created by the Accounting Department. If the grant is used it will be reimbursed.

Water Conservation: MWRA and MADEP requires the town to monitor water consumption and address excessive usage that impacts the water system hydraulics and capacity. Tonya said the department will compare summer flows versus winter to better understand who is a high irrigation user. MWRA contract limits the Town's annual usage to 500 MGD. We used 440 MGD in 2022. We may need to increase rate of the second and third tier structure to raise aware and discourage excessive water use. Discussion took place about establishing a water restriction plan to be implemented when necessary during a drought.

Capital Projects-Rate Increase Methodology: Consider setting aside funds from rate increase and entry fees for capital projects. Possible high user tier structure increase could pay for hydraulic capacity capital projects. An overall rate increase for everyone may be appropriate and should be reviewed as well.

Auto Read Update: Vinnie stated they are installing auto readers as they go. Vadar trial has not happened as of yet. We will try again next billing cycle.

Meter Reading: Meter reading went well. Now focusing on re-reads.

Estimating Methodology: To estimate a reading, we take the last three seasonal readings to get an average use for meters that do not read correctly and or need maintenance. DPW leaves door hangers and letters are sent to comply with meter maintenance. For residents that don't respond back, estimation could be three times higher or shut off notices could be sent. Chairman would like more notification to residents to pay attention to their usage to avoid multi year discrepancies.

Shut off notices: Will be mailed out on Tuesday April 11, 2023.

Golden Nozzle Water Usage: Tonya and Vinnie met with Golden Nozzle representatives. The car wash went over their requested and department approved usage. They will be paying a higher entrance fee if they use more than approved. Both Vinnie and the representatives have been monitoring the daily flows. If we can't supply them with the water they need, they will have to make modifications to cut back or get a storage tank. More review will be done after the summer reading. We may need to enter into a separate agreement to restrict flow.

Entry Fee Calculation: 6 Burt Lane is in the process of being developed. Water Department Regulations and Title V are used to calculate estimated water demand (gallons per day). Initial projected flows were based on building code max capacity. Tonya will be meeting with developer to determine if they are going to pay the water entry fee based on the building code or submit another method. Water Commissioners will need to approve their proposal.

SEWER DEPARTMENT BUSINESS:

Rate increase update: Rates increase will be reflected on the November billing cycle. All usage after April 1st 2023 is subject to rate increase

Regulations and Entry fees: Bylaw Study Committee is forming to strengthen pathways for projects in town. As it stands now, there is nothing in writing regarding water and sewer availability before approving a project. Tonya wants to add to sire plan approval requirements that water and sewer must be approved by DPW before a ZBA/Planning/Building permit is given.

Other Business: Sunnyside hydrant replacement will be on Monday.

NEXT MEETING:

The next meeting is scheduled for May 12, 2023 at 8:45 a.m.

Motion was made and seconded to adjourn at 10:10 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Deborah Walch
Administrative Assistant