



Town Of Webster Massachusetts

Est. 1832

Webster Water Sewer Commission

350 Main Street
Webster, MA 01570

Earl Gabor - Chairman
Dan Duteau - Vice Chairman
Rick Neeser
Tom Andrade

Doug Willardson - Town Administrator
Gregory Woods - Water & Sewer Superintendent

Meeting Minutes

July 18, 2019, 2:30 PM

Webster Town Hall, Irene Martel Meeting Room
350 Main Street, Webster, MA 01570

Attendees: Earl Gabor, Rick Neeser, Dan Duteau, Tom Andrade, Doug Willardson, and Greg Woods.

Chairman Gabor called the meeting to order at 2:30 PM.

Meeting Minutes

The Commissioners reviewed the draft minutes from the July 2nd meeting and voted unanimously to approve the minutes as amended.

1 - Existing Business

A – Water Shut-off – Mr. Woods stated that all but four of the original 20 accounts with outstanding balances had either paid their account in-full or submitted an appeal request. He stated that approximately \$154,000 in outstanding payments had been recovered since the Shut-off letters were mailed. Mr. Woods said that the Department had placed the 7-day door hanger notices on the four properties yesterday. He then provided the Board with two new appeals from the owners of 25 Mechanic Street and 11 Hartley Street. The Committee reviewed the appeals and agreed to provide the existing 90-day extension discussed at the last meeting to these two applicants. The Commission voted unanimously to provide Mr. Woods the authority to make appeal decisions until the next scheduled meeting.

B – Abatement Requests – Mr. Woods provided a copy of an abatement request from the owner of 74 Chase Avenue. He stated that the applicant wished to have the sewer portion of the bill abated because they ran their water outside to flush dirty water. The applicant also requested a \$350 credit for replacing their old water meter because it reportedly had a high lead concentration. Mr. Woods explained that the meter at this house was manufactured in 1985 and the lead concentration the owner reported was within the regulatory limits of that time. He stated that maximum lead concentrations were lowered in 2001 and 2014. The Board discussed the request and a motions was made, and seconded, to deny the abatement request because the criteria of the abatement policy was not met and to deny the meter credit because the meter met the existing regulatory lead concentration



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at the time and municipalities are not required to replace existing inventory when the standards change. By Roll Call vote: Gabor – aye, Neeser – aye, Duteau – aye, Andrade – aye

C - Municipal Water & Sewer Usage – Mr. Woods provided a spreadsheet of the municipal properties with water-only usage. The list included sewer department pump stations and athletic fields. The Board reviewed the data and requested that the Department investigate the high water use at Berthold athletic field. Commissioner Gabor stated that the goal would be determine the cost of providing water to municipal locations that taxpayers could be responsible for rather than rate payers. A suggestion was made that the municipal bills that are currently waived could be transitioned to billed accounts over a 4-5 year period to allow adjustments to the Town budget. Mr. Gabor said he would work on the information provided in the spreadsheet for a future meeting. The topic was tabled.

D – Units of Water Rates – Mr. Gabor asked if there was a benefit to billing the metered water usage in gallons versus cubic feet. Mr. Woods said that reading the meters in gallons would require the replacement of the meter registers, which cost approximately \$100 each. He stated that it might be possible to reconfigure the current meter reading system to read to the cubic foot, instead of the current 100 cubic foot interval, however he would need to confirm this with the meter supplier. The Board agreed that this isn't a necessary change and was more of an academic question.

E – Cost of Myrtle Avenue Project – Mr. Woods said that the cost of the relining project totaled \$571,425, with \$511,225 for the lining contractor and \$60,200 for construction engineering and oversight. He mentioned that the contractor provided an estimate to replace the main but the cost was approximately \$80,000 higher due to paving. Mr. Woods said relining of water mains is a cost effective way to rehabilitate the distribution system, however the costs increase in areas with many intersections or high groundwater than could enter the cleaned pipe.

F – Water Quality Testing – Mr. Woods informed the Board that the annual Consumer Confidence Report (CCR) for the 2018 calendar year had been completed. He briefly reviewed the MA. Department of Environmental Protection sampling requirements the water department must complete on a weekly, monthly or quarterly basis. The CCR is posted on the water department's website.

2 – Water Dept. Update: Mr. Gabor requested additional information regarding the delays at the treatment plant that were highlighted at the recent Selectmen's meeting. Mr. Woods said that five of the 10 motor control centers (MCC) were damaged during transport from the manufacturer and it was determined that all the units would be shipped back to the factory for repair and testing. He



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explained that the MCCs are a crucial component of the treatment plant because they are responsible for controlling the flow of water from the wells, through the plant, and ultimately into the distribution system. Reportedly the factory could take eight weeks to rebuild, test and return the units to the site. This delay will push the starting of the treatment plant back until the November time period.

3 – Sewer Dept. Update: Mr. Woods provided a map of the sewer collection system and explained the various components and flow direction of the sewage. Mr. Woods said that he had met with Tighe & Bond earlier in the week to go over the various projects they are assisting the Town with. Mr. Woods provided a brief overview of the NPDES permit process and the Infiltration & Inflow (I&I) project. He stated that the next phase of the I&I project, which will include smoke testing portions of the system, will likely start in September.

4 – New Business – No new business.

Adjournment

A motion was made, and unanimously approved, to adjourn the meeting at 4:00 PM. The next meeting is scheduled for August 8th at 2:30 PM in the Irene Martel Meeting Room to review Shut-off Policy Appeal applications.

Respectfully submitted,
Gregory Woods
Water Superintendent