

MEETING OF THE SPRAGUE WATER AND SEWER AUTHORITY

Date: October 16, 2013
Time: 4:00 PM
Place: Sprague Town Hall
Present: Tom Hannon, Christine Kurtz from Wright Pierce,, Todd Hastings,
Catherine Osten, First Selectman, Dennison Allen, Todd LaPointe, David
Trainor, Jack Malone, Darlene Patton and John Coffey
Absent: Manny Meneses

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 4:03 p.m. by Dennison Allen , Chairman.

Minutes and Disbursements:

Tom Hannon made a motion to approve the minutes of the regular meeting held on September 25, 2013 as presented and this motion was seconded by Todd LaPointe. No discussion and a vote was called and the motion passed by all members voting in favor.

Todd LaPointe made a motion to approve the disbursements for September in the amount of \$12,758.04. This motion was seconded by Tom Hannon. A vote was called and the motion passed by all members voting in favor.

Since Christine from Wright Pierce was running a little late the board chairman Dennison Allen asked for a motion to add an item to the agenda making it Item 9A.

Todd LaPointe made a motion to add Darlene Patton and John Coffey and their concerns with water bill at 112-114 Main Street to the agenda. This motion was seconded by Tom Hannon.

Discuss and possibly act on resident Darlene Patton and John Coffey concerns with water bill at 112-114 Main Street:

Darleen Patton and John Coffey spoke to the board regarding their September bill for water usage. They informed the board that they had had the water turned off in November of 2012 and they were wondering why they had a water bill of \$324.00 for 60,000 gallons used with the September 2013 billing. Discussion followed.

The water was turned off in November of 2012 and the following quarters bill showed this by having no water usage and then the next quarterly bill showed a huge amount due to pipes bursting and water leaking into house. They paid that bill but have not had anyone working at the property and are confused by this bill. There was more discussion on people they had working at the house turning on the water to do work. Todd

Hastings, Superintendent told them that the meter was an actual reading and was confirmed when they first questioned the usage by going out and doing a manual reading. He explained that if a meter was faulty it would never read in the Authority's favor but would go slower resulting in a lower reading in favor of the homeowner. The homeowner said that they paid the bill because they were in the process of changing ownership of the property and did not want an outstanding bill to prevent this change from going through. More discussion. The board was confused by the billing and decided to refund the water charge and have Todd meet the homeowner to change out the meter.

Tom Hannon made a motion to forgive the \$324.00 in billing for water usage for the September 2013 quarter. This motion was seconded by Dennison Allen. A vote was called and the motion passed by all members voting in favor.

Kathleen asked the homeowner how they wanted to handle the refund on this amount since they had already paid the bill. Darlene Patton and John Coffey told Kathleen that she should apply this as a credit to the account for future billings.

Todd will meet with the homeowner this week and change out the meter.

Wright Pierce:

Christine updated the board members on the various projects that they are currently working on.

The water main for the DOT project is going to the state for final review.

Pump Station #1 the final payment reconciliation has been sent to USDA but we will have to wait until they come back to work after the government shut down.

Cathy Osten, First Selectman asked Christine when will VMS be back to paint the lines. She indicated that the line painters were here on Monday the 14th but VMS was not so the work was not completed. Christine said she will check with Justin and get back to her.

Pump Station #2 is ready to go out to bid but has yet to be approved by the state or USDA. Christine said that she had asked Cathy Osten if she should get the notice in the paper for bids before it is approved. Cathy indicated that she thinks it would be wise to get approval first. Discussion followed. Christine said that she would go week by week and wait for the approval before putting in notice to bid but the bid date looks to be the 29th of October. Discussion followed on the force main located at this pump station.

Tom Hannon asked about the SCADA system. Christine explained the investigative prep work has been done and the cost of this will be included in the cost of the Pump Station #2 rehab project.

Christine updated the board on the Water Quality, Safe Yield and Emergency Action Plan

letters that she has sent to Jackie for the pre planning grants. Discussion followed. Cathy said that she would discuss during her report.

First Selectman Report:

Cathy Osten informed the board that they have paid bills for VMS for the I & I and should be up to date on this project.

Cathy asked that the board approve that the leftover money from the Pump Station #1 project be used for the projects at Pump Stations #3 and #4. Kathleen said that this was approved at the August 21, 2013 meeting. Discussion followed.

Cathy said that Jackie has been working on grants for the water quality, safe yield and emergency action plan. She said that they have money that was designated previously for studies that has not been used and will be used to cover some of the costs associated with these plans.

Cathy told the board that she feels that the a study by Wright Pierce concerning an evaluation on going to Norwich to discharge our sewer as opposed to joining up with Cascades or building a new sewer plant will enable the board members the information needed to make an informed decision based on facts. Discussion.

Cathy told the board members that she has had the town crew along with the water & sewer employees working on clearing the brush at the reservoir and to date it is about eighty-five percent complete. She indicated that she would like to keep the water level up as high as possible to avoid more growth of brush. They have planted several hundred trees at the reservoir and have more to do. She asked that if anyone has time she would appreciate help to get these remaining trees planted.

Status Report from Todd Hastings:

Todd told the board that he usually works with Jim Benjamin clearing snow in the morning and comes to work right after and he asked if that poses a problem to anyone if he continues to do so. Discussion. The board sees no reason why he cannot continue doing this since he has been doing this for several years and we have not had any problems to date.

Todd informed the board that he has signed David Trainor up for two classes for review to enable him to take his state tests for water treatment and distribution.

A discussion was held on the water problem at 208-210 High Street after Todd informed the board of the situation that occurred two weeks ago. He had received a call from the homeowner of 2 Maple Street that their tenant did not have any water. Since the house that houses the meter has been unoccupied the managing agency had come in to winterize the house and had turned off the water and copper pipes were cut and missing. This resulted in the house next door having no water. Discussion followed. We have put in

the budget for this year the costs for materials to take care of this problem but planned on doing it next fiscal year due to labor costs. More discussion. Todd will get three (3) estimates to do the scaled down work to fix this problem and hopefully it will be within the amount that was budgeted . He will report back at next meeting.

David Trainor addressed the board and gave the board four estimates for a 24 by 24 building at the sewer plant to house the generators and other various items. Discussion followed. Changes were requested.

Tom Hannon made a motion to have each vendor give us quotes on the new designs and to have a special meeting to review these quotes and make a decision. This motion was seconded by Todd LaPointe. A vote was called and the motion passed by all in favor.

Dennison said he had to leave to go to another meeting but asked that one or two of the board members attend a meeting on Monday, October 21, 2013 in Norwich for the Southeastern Connecticut Water Utility Coordinating Committee. Tom Hannon and Jack Malone will try to attend.

Discuss and possibly act on Capitol projects to present to Board of Finance:

Kathleen told the board that it was that time of year again when we have to submit our plans to the Board of Finance for Capitol Projects and what we are going to ask for from the Town. Discussion followed. It was decided that we would ask for \$25,000 for sewer upgrades.

Review bills for payment:

A list of all bills paid since the last meeting was handed out and reviewed. No one had any questions.

Review past due accounts:

A report was handed out to all board members. The amount of accounts past due is \$77,868.79 of that amount \$8,219.41 is with our Attorney, \$5,854.79 of that amount currently has payment plans in place, \$3,523.59 of that amount the water has been shut off and demand letters have been sent out on \$19,471.61 of that amount.

Versailles past due accounts total is \$2,197.92. Kathleen informed the board that the amount is high due to last month being a billing quarter and we have a lot of late payers.

Many people do not pay until they know that the next quarterly bill is due to come Out. Kathleen said that she is working with several landlords that do not live in town on getting their accounts up to date. The board members reviewed the report and asked questions and discussion followed. Tom Hannon applauded Kathleen for a job well done working on collecting the past due accounts.

Any other business to come before said meeting:

Kathleen told the board members that she has sent a letter to the state to request an extension on the annual PUCA report that is due October 31, 2013. She informed them that she need the completed audit report for the last fiscal year to complete this report and that the auditor has not even started the audit process.

Todd LaPointe made a motion to adjourn the meeting. This motion was seconded by Jack Malone. The meeting was adjourned at 5:10 p.m.