

Exeter Water & Sewer Advisory Committee

Final Meeting Minutes

January 11, 2017

1. Welcome and Introductions

Chairman Bob Kelly called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm in the Nowak Room of the Exeter Town Offices building. Other members present were Vice Chair Gene Lambert, David Michelsen, and Selectboard representative Nancy Belanger.

2. Approve meeting minutes

Mr. Kelly presented the draft November 9, 2016 meeting minutes for review. Mr. Lambert moved and Ms. Belanger seconded a motion to approve the November minutes as written. The minutes were approved 3-0.

3. Abatements

There were no abatement requests for this meeting.

4. Regular Business

a. Managing Engineer's Report

Mr. Jeffers' report of January 10 was distributed for review by the Committee. Updates on small DPW projects throughout the fall were discussed. Particular note was made of NHDES approval of the WWTP final design in December. It was anticipated that this project would be advertised sometime in January with bids due in February.

b. Financial Reports

Financial reports from Ms. Laura Zogopoulos of the Finance Dept. were distributed by email to the Committee members at an earlier date. Note was made of the Water Fund balance of \$582,000, almost to the emergency level of \$500K set by the Committee and Selectboard in the 1990s. The Sewer Fund balance at almost \$1.2M was considered acceptable in view of large capital expenditures in the next year.

5. Old Business

a. Update on Water and Sewer rates

As a follow up to the Committee Public Hearing on November 9, 2016 to discuss the general parameters of the study being conducted by Municipal Financial Services Group (MFSG), the Selectboard reviewed the WSAC recommendations at their December 5, 2016 meeting.

- i. Tier Structure. The Selectboard voted to accept the current 3 tier rate system that reasonably delineates residential (Tier 1), light commercial (Tier 2) and heavy commercial and industrial (Tier 3). A Tier 1 break of 21,000 gallons per quarter would get close to a 50/50 revenue split between Tiers 1 and Tiers 2/3.

- ii. Rate levels. The Board accepted a flat \$39.50/quarter service charge for each utility beginning immediately, to be reviewed every 3-5 years.

- iii. Implementation Schedule. Because of the current shortfall in the Water Fund and the prospective initiation of WWTP construction in early to mid 2017, the Committee recommended to implement the adjustments noted below with the January 1, 2017 (Quarter 1) bill to users. Although there was some discussion at the Board level as to the fairness of this implementation schedule, the Committee's timeframe was ultimately accepted.

The new rates were approved as follows:

Water and Sewer Service Charge:	\$39.50/quarter per utility
Proposed Water Rates:	Tier 1: \$7.19/1000 gallons
	Tier 2: \$8.99/1000 gallons
	Tier 3: \$10.79/1000 gallons
Proposed Sewer Rates:	Tier 1: \$5.25/1000 gallons
	Tier 2: \$6.56/1000 gallons
	Tier 3: \$7.88/1000 gallons

b. Disinfection Byproducts (TTHM) Update

Mike Jeffers reported in a December 21 email that consideration was being mulled for air strippers at the WTP. Also, a review of the relationship with our vendor SUEZ/USG versus using Wright Peirce for engineering design was being done. A \$1.5M warrant article for engineering and facilities was being put on the March ballot.

c. WWTP Update

- i. DPW was requesting hiring a new WWTP operator in mid 2107 in order to get them on board *during* construction of the new plant. The town budget committee agreed with the concept but pushed the actual budgeting to later in the year, perhaps early 2018 and nothing but site work and concrete would be constructed during that timeframe.
- ii. As noted earlier, the design is complete and has been accepted by NHDES. The plans and specifications are due to be advertised in January and due in mid February.

6. New Business

Other or On-Going Business

Mr. Kelly noted that a Town-wide Master Plan visioning session to include infrastructure was being planned for early February. Utility impact fees were to be discussed.

7. Committee Calendar

The next regular meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, March 8, 2017 at 6:30 pm in the Nowak Room at the Town Offices. Ms. Belanger noted that the Town voting on the budget and warrant articles would occur the next week on March 14; Mr. Kelly said that the W&S schedule may be modified so that their meeting would be *after* the vote so the Committee could plot a direction after votes on critical facilities were tallied.

Mr. Kelly adjourned the meeting at 7:10 pm.

Respectively submitted,

Robert Kelly
Recording Secretary pro tem