

## **DRAFT Meeting Minutes**

For Meeting of December 8, 2021

### **1. Welcome and Introductions**

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Bob Kelly on Wednesday December 8, 2021 at 6:30 pm. Other Committee members present in-person included Mr. Carl Wikstrom, Mr. Mark Fabian and Selectboard representative Ms. Molly Cowan. Mr. Ben Mosher attended via Zoom video conference.

Representatives of the public were also in attendance via Zoom call to discuss applicable abatement requests.

### **2. Water and Sewer Bill Abatement Requests**

Six abatement requests were discussed by the Committee.

- a. 21 Bow Street. The customers, Ms. Delores and Mr. Jeffrey Quirk, who were both in attendance via Zoom video conference, were seeking an abatement on their water and sewer bill for increased usage from a leaking toilet in a rental unit which has now been repaired. Reportedly, the tenant was on vacation which extended the period of time between discovering the leak and being able to assess the repair requirements.

The Committee discussed the aspects of the request outlined in the application and assessed that some type of accidental usage had occurred, and the user should receive an 80% Water and Sewer bill abatement for usage in excess of their average annual quarterly usage. Mr. Wikstrom moved, and Mr. Kelly seconded, a motion to **recommend an ABATEMENT REQUEST** of \$343.75 based on DPW's calculations. The motion passed 5-0 by roll call vote.

- b. 3 Phinney Lane. The customer, Ms. Patricia MacDonald, who was in attendance via Zoom video conference, was seeking an abatement for an excessive sewer bill related to her flat fee billing arrangement. Reportedly, she is on a water supply well and her bill is based on estimated sewer usage from a 3-bedroom house. However, she currently lives alone in the house. She recently had a meter installed on her well to better determine her actual usage, and her recent usage is significantly less than the “3-bedroom home” estimates.

The Committee discussed the aspects of the request outlined in the application and assessed that the user should receive a Full Water and Sewer bill abatement for usage in excess of their average annual quarterly usage due to the fact that she has been billed at a higher rate for several years. Mr. Wikstrom moved, and Mr. Mosher seconded, a motion to **recommend an ABATEMENT REQUEST** of \$895.63 based on DPW’s calculations. The motion passed 5-0 by roll call vote.

- c. 8 Squire Way. The customer, Jason Jones, was in Zoom attendance. He was seeking an abatement for an excessive water and sewer bill for an irrigation system that developed a leak. Water to the irrigation system has been turned off and the customer has indicated they will be repairing it during system start up next Spring. The customer indicated that they had purchased the house in February and were unfamiliar with the irrigation system and were not told it had leaks.

The Committee discussed the aspects of the request outlined in the application and assessed that the user should receive an 50% Water and Full Sewer bill abatement for usage in excess of their average annual quarterly usage. Mr. Kelly moved, and Mr. Wikstrom seconded, a motion to **recommend an ABATEMENT REQUEST** of \$685.44 for usage based on DPW’s calculations. The motion passed 5-0 by roll call vote.

- d. 20 High Street. The customer was not in attendance and was seeking an abatement for an excessive water and sewer bill related to a malfunctioning toilet in a tenant space. After a two week delay, the landlord/customer was granted access and repaired the toilet in question within a week or so thereafter.

The Committee discussed the aspects of the request outlined in the application and assessed that the user should receive an 80% Water and Sewer bill

abatement for usage in excess of their average annual quarterly usage. Mr. Wikstrom moved, and Mr. Fabian seconded, a motion to **recommend an ABATEMENT REQUEST** of \$143.49 for the first period and \$1,074.36 for usage in the second period based on DPW's calculations for a total abatement of \$1,217.85. The motion passed 5-0 by roll call vote.

- e. 7 Stoneywater Road. The customer, Mr. Donald Thurston, who was not in attendance, was seeking an abatement for an excessive water and sewer bill related to a reported leaky pipe under his mobile home. The abatement request noted that a plumber had assessed a potential leak and conducted a repair to the system in question. This is a Water Only account.

The Committee discussed the aspects of the request outlined in the application and assessed that the user should receive an 80% Water bill abatement for usage in excess of their average annual quarterly usage. Mr. Mosher moved, and Mr. Kelly seconded, a motion to **recommend an ABATEMENT REQUEST** of \$168.39 based on DPW's calculations. The motion passed 5-0 by roll call vote.

- f. 175 High Street. The customer, Joanna Pellerin, was in Zoom attendance. She was seeking an abatement for an excessive water and sewer bill for a malfunctioning, seldom used, toilet in her home.

The Committee discussed the aspects of the request outlined in the application and assessed that the user should receive an 80% Water and Sewer bill abatement for usage in excess of their average annual quarterly usage. Mr. Kelly moved, and Mr. Wikstrom seconded, a motion to **recommend an ABATEMENT REQUEST** of \$374.33 for usage based on DPW's calculations. The motion passed 5-0 by roll call vote.

### 3. Regular Business

- a. Utility Operations

Mr. Kelly reported that general WWTP operational expenses are continuing to be fine-tuned as we are in our second year of operations. In general, costs are lower than the original Engineer's estimates.

- b. Utility Financial Reports

Mr. Kelly discussed reports that had been previously distributed to the Committee by the Town Finance Department. Continued note was made of a large Sewer bond payment at the end of 2021. Town Manager Russ Dean and Mr. Kelly are monitoring cash flow in the Sewer account to assess impacts on rates as the year progresses.

#### **4. New Business**

None

#### **5. Other Business**

##### **a. Summary of Town Budget Review.**

Mr. Kelly noted there were no large bond issues proposed by the DPW for the upcoming fiscal year (2022). However, ongoing Surface and Groundwater search efforts, analysis for a new DPW Garage, and beginning of the Westside Drive project were approved as Capital Outlay projects. In addition, new directives from NHDES and USEPA regarding water quality and nitrogen releases to the River have increased costs for monitoring, chemicals, lab testing, and overall management of these resources.

Support of a bond issue for the Webster Avenue Sewer Pump Station was also given.

#### **6. Committee Calendar**

The Committee tentatively scheduled their next meeting for mid Spring at some point, potentially in mid-March, due to members schedules over the next few months. The actual date will depend on abatement request volume and some members' time constraints.

Mr. Kelly adjourned the meeting at approximately 7:35 pm.

Respectively submitted,

Bob Kelly  
Chair and Recording Secretary  
December 10, 2021