



## TOWN OF WINCHESTER – CITY OF WINSTED

Town Hall – 338 Main Street

WINSTED, CONNECTICUT 06098

### *Minutes of Regular Meeting Water & Sewer Commission Probate Conference Room, Town Hall, 338 Main Street, Winsted July 9, 2019*

Chairman John Massicotte called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m. The following members were present: George Closson, Bill Hester, Joe Lemelin, John Massicotte and Tim Moran. Also present were Director of Public Works Jim Rollins, Superintendent of Water Works Marty Cormier and Selectman Steven Sedlack.

**Public Input** - none

**Approval of Minutes from June 11, 2019:** Motion by J. Lemelin to *approve* the minutes of June 11, 2019. Second by B. Hester. **Vote:** All in favor - *motion carried unanimously.*

**Sentinal Services Insurance Discussion on Support:** nothing new to report

*Finance Director Bruce Stratford joined the meeting.*

**Barkhamsted Line Extensions & Interlocal Agreement:** Mr. Rollins said have been dealing with the developer who wants it his way and thinks it will be twice as expensive to run it up the road. Discussion followed regarding not going up the hill even though it's what the developer wants. Mr. Rollins noted Torrington is in a similar situation and using their Town Attorney; forwarded the contact information to Attorney Nelligan; asked if he's up to making those amendments; meeting with Attorney Nelligan Wednesday to see how he wants to handle it. Chairman Massicotte briefly reviewed the terms of the last agreement. Mr. Rollins said they're proposing we only collect revenues – not responsible for anything else; verified Chairman Massicotte received the Harwinton and Litchfield agreements with Torrington; explained how those agreements work. Brief discussion followed regarding billing quarterly instead of annually. Mr. Rollins noted when going through a municipality, there's another layer of insurance between us and the problem; it's complicated; if we're dead-set against going up the hill, we'll have to dictate how they run those lines. Extensive discussion followed regarding water lines, engineering, specifications, Barkhamsted's position in the agreement, bringing the line up the road, selling the plan to the Barkhamsted community, etc.

**Election of Officers:** Call for election of officers was made. **Motion** by G. Closson to *appoint John Massicotte as Chairman*. Second by B. Hester. Call was made 2 additional times. **Vote:** All in favor - *motion carried unanimously.*

**Motion** by G. Closson to *appoint Joseph Lemelin as Vice-Chairman*. Second by B. Hester. Call was made 2 additional times. **Vote:** All in favor - *motion carried unanimously.*

**Motion** by G. Closson to *appoint Tim Moran as Secretary*. Second by B. Hester. Call was made 2 additional times. **Vote:** All in favor - *motion carried unanimously.*

**Response to State Sanitary Survey Report:** Mr. Rollins explained he sent in the response; the survey showed no major or minor deficiencies; they were concerned with an inventory of mains, connections, etc. – concern is lead; to do that inventory would be huge. Discussion followed regarding dates of work done, when meters were changed, etc.

**LEI Pump Station #8 out to Bid with 75-Day Completion; Start after Labor Day:** Mr. Rollins explained the bid was postponed due to the change in prevailing wage rates; it's now out to bid; pre-bid meeting was Monday.

**Report from Finance Director:**

*Water:* Mr. Stratford distributed checking and savings account statements as well as preliminary budget numbers through 6/30/2019; have not closed FY19. Revenues: 97% of revenues have been collected; noted capital recovery has not been allocated; \$1,966,809 includes encumbrances and is approximately \$56,000 more than revenues which is not bad since \$400,000 was unanticipated. Brief discussion followed regarding uncollected revenues. Mr. Stratford said water customers are generally more diligent in keeping up payment than sewer customers. Expenditures: Department 317 is at 79% of the budget - there will be some adjustments but not much - the lines with negative numbers are not a concern - recommended waiting another month to do transfers; Department 319 is at 87% of their budget – electric bill will be next month so expect it to be at 90%; Department 321 has only one employee to be paid for their sick time – operating at 85% of their budget; Department 322 has the Route 44 water main repair at \$409,000 which is why the line is at 192% but due to other departmental savings, it will be okay. Brief discussion followed regarding the pick-up truck to be delivered in September. Mr. Stratford said the water fund rates appear to be giving revenues enough to support expenditures; have \$292,738 in the checking account and \$565,555 in the savings account so in a strong position.

*Sewer:* Mr. Stratford distributed checking and savings account statements as well as preliminary budget numbers through 6/30/2019; have not closed FY19. Revenues: collections are \$63,000 behind; did collect \$3,000 from Russ' Septic (still owes \$18,000); a \$200,000 transfer in line item was set up to fund Pump Station 8; haven't spent a whole lot against it; total revenues are at 86% without the transfer in; there is a \$16,000 cash flow surplus which is why there's not an immediate need for a public hearing on a rate increase. Mr. Rollins explained in order to budget for maintenance, need to really understand the system; need to do inflow and infiltration (smoke test) to get the low-hanging fruit and then run the camera in the springtime; this will allow to forecast the needs in the budget; have been talking with the Tax Collector who recommends correcting meter issues - the codes need to be investigated to correctly charge people for their usage which may offset the increase or lessen the size of the increase. Chairman Massicotte asked if the budget will be approved today. Mr. Rollins said would like to get the water budget approved. Extensive discussion followed regarding numbers will only improve if false readings are corrected on the water meters, may just be a software fix, when meter issues were revealed, why the codes are not coming through, location of meters with issues, customers are paying the base rate but not usage, lifespan of the MIU and replacement schedule, number of customers impacted, etc. Additional discussion followed regarding having all billing go through Public Works, software is available to generate a work order, impact of usage during the winter, etc.

**Water & Sewer Rate Increase 2019-2020:** Mr. Stratford explained because the water fund is covering its costs, proposing a smaller 1% yearly increase rather than a large increase and increase capital recovery; the preliminary budget does not include an increase but does cover costs; can adopt the water budget with the current rates; added \$115,000 from the fund balance for projects plus using the money from debt service amount for capital projects; if you want a smaller annual increase, can do it at the same time as the

sewer increase and combine it with that public hearing. Chairman Massicotte questioned the \$115,000; supported the 1% increase. Mr. Stratford reminded attendees a public hearing is needed to implement an increase; do the sewer public hearing at the same time; rates will be implemented later in the fiscal year. Chairman Massicotte noted the new budget is approximately \$40,000 more than last year. Discussion followed regarding collections and expenditures, items to be addressed, etc. Chairman Massicotte suggested adopting the water increase at the same time as the sewer increase. Mr. Stratford suggested adopting the water budget as proposed by Jim Rollins. Chairman Massicotte verified the purchase of the bi-sulfate pumps and belt press air system will not affect the proposed budget.

**Motion** by B. Hester to *adopt the 2019-2020 water budget*. Second by G. Closson. *Discussion:* Mr. Stratford said revenues are \$2,074,625 and expenditures are \$2,074,821. **Vote:** All in favor except T. Moran (opposed) - *motion carried*.

**Motion** by G. Closson to *continue operating the sewer division under the 2018-2019 budget*. Second by J. Lemelin. **Vote:** All in favor - *motion carried unanimous*.

**Belt Press Air System \$22,000 to Air Compressor Engineering:** Mr. Rollins reminded attendees money was transferred at last month's meeting but no bid waiver was done. Discussion followed regarding waiver language, having documentation regarding why a bid waiver is needed, items would be from the 2018-2019 budget, belt system is critical - the air system has already failed, amount of time to do the bid specifications and bid process, etc. Mr. Rollins explained Air Compressor Engineering is the company the Town used for 20 years. **Motion** by B. Hester to *waive the bid in the amount of \$22,000 for a belt press air system to Air Compressor Engineering to replace the 30-year-old system*. Second by T. Moran. *Discussion:* Discussion followed regarding moving \$2,000 from 315-194-0000 and \$13,000 from 317-878-0068 to 317-878-0069 (Maintenance of Equipment). **Vote:** All in favor - *motion carried unanimous*.

**Bi-Sulfate Pumps (2) Replacement:** Mr. Stratford verified the amount needed; suggested moving \$14,000 from Engineering Services (315-851-0000) and moving it to Maintenance of Equipment (315-826-0000).; reiterated his recommendation that balance transfers not be done for other items until next month. **Motion** by J. Lemelin to *move \$14,000 from 315-851-0000 into 315-826-0000*. Second by G. Closson. **Vote:** All in favor - *motion carried unanimous*. **Motion** by J. Lemelin to *waive the bid to Bau-Hopkins for two (2) bi-sulfate pumps in an amount not to exceed \$14,000*. Second by G. Closson. *Discussion:* Discussion followed regarding this is an urgent matter and the equipment needs to match. **Vote:** All in favor - *motion carried unanimous*.

**Resurfacing Interior of Crystal Lake Water Tank:** Mr. Rollins explained the only vendor interested in helping resurface the interior of the Crystal Lake Water Tank is Shore Line Diving for \$22,000; originally budgeted \$100,000; Jeff Rines did his due diligence and got approval from the Department of Public Health to do it without draining the tank; this company is our only option. **Motion** by G. Closson to *waive the bid to Shore Line Diving in the amount of \$22,000 for tank spalling (322-878-0016)*. Second by J. Lemelin. *Discussion:* Discussion followed regarding this is the only vendor to do it. **Vote:** All in favor - *motion carried unanimous*.

**Tree Harvesting Discussion:** Mr. Rollins said the guy canceled for health reasons but referred a new person.

**Bill Adjustments:** None

**Director's Report:**

*The Town of Winchester is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender.*

- Invoice from GEMS: This is for software; verified it's okay to sign off. Mr. Stratford reviewed the account numbers. Brief discussion followed regarding this is the only vendor to support the current software system.

**Old Business:**

- Bridge Inspection at Sewer Plant Complete; Waiting for Report: Mr. Rollins said he's meeting about it later this week.
- Overlook Water Main: nothing to report
- Wallens Hill Water Tank: Mr. Rollins said preliminary applications for made and approved for 3 projects (Wallens Hill tank, Crystal Lake tank and SCADA). Discussion followed regarding grant money versus a low-interest loan, details of each project, getting more information for the next steps, etc.
- Crystal Lake Dam Historical Review Submitted: nothing new to report
- Whiting Street Pump Station: nothing new to report
- Update on Water Regulations to Accept Use of High-Density Polyethylene: Mr. Cormier said they are updating a lot of things in the regulations. Discussion followed regarding the specifications were just done 4 years ago, doing an addendum for the high-density polyethylene pipes then do the rest of the regulations, etc.
- Delivery of New Truck: due in September

**New Business**

B. Hester explained he met last month in Norfolk with a solar company; the company will be giving a proposal; will cost the District nothing; haven't made a decision yet; may be something that would help Winsted. Mr. Rollins noted the presentation was really simple and nicely done; you buy in now and keep that rate; no up-front costs – they own it, maintain the entire system, etc.; asked if the panels can be located off-site. Discussion followed regarding other areas/buildings that can be served, stabilize rates to customers, less than the amount Winsted is currently paying, company has been in business since 1991, they own the panels by Freud Farm, etc. Consensus is this is definitely worth looking into.

Mr. Stratford reminded attendees we have a new customer who will be using a lot of water. Brief discussion followed regarding this type of business could be a problem for a smaller sewer plant but our plant may easily handle it.

**Adjournment:** Meeting adjourned 8:37 p.m.

Minutes Respectfully Submitted,

/s/  
Laurie Bessette  
Minutes Secretary

<p><b>Next Regular Meeting:</b> Probate Room <b>Tuesday, August 13, 2019</b> 7:00 p.m.</p>
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