



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 June 11, 2019

Chairman John Massicotte called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. The following members were present: John Massicotte, Bill Hester, Joe Lemelin and Tim Moran. Also present were Finance Director Bruce Stratford, Budget Analyst Caroline Brayne, Director of Public Works Jim Rollins, Superintendent of Water Works Marty Cormier and Selectman Steven Sedlack. George Closson was absent excused.

Public Input - none

Approval of Minutes from May 14, 2019: Motion by T. Moran to *approve* the minutes of May 14, 2019. Second by J. Lemelin. **Vote:** All in favor - *motion carried unanimously*.

Report from Finance Director:

Sewer: Financial, checking and savings account statements were distributed; Mr. Stratford proceeded to review same; have one month left of the fiscal year; collected 91% of current rents (last year collected 93%) – about \$25,000 behind; \$20,000 behind on past due rents; Tax Collector is sending delinquent notices to customers; intent to lien notices will be sent out next week; received \$3,000 from Russ' Septic with a pledge to continue paying the \$21,000 balance. Expenditures are well within the budget; highlighted several line items to watch. Brief discussion followed regarding bills received Tuesday should be coded to engineering services. Mr. Stratford reviewed total expenditures. Brief discussion followed regarding re-paying the general fund. Mr. Stratford said the checking account has \$250,000 – noted a \$169,000 payment was made at the end of May to debt administration.

Water: Financial, checking and savings account statements were distributed; Mr. Stratford proceeded to review same; have \$362,000 in the checking account at the end of May; \$564,000 in the savings account for water and sewer each through the end of May. Brief discussion followed regarding interest. Mr. Stratford noted revenues are a little behind; collected \$73,000 in past due rents compared to \$81,000 last year; total revenues at \$1,798,000 (91%) this year compared to \$1,834,000 last year. Expenditures: All departments are under budget. Brief discussion followed regarding sick time payout for tenured employees. Mr. Stratford explained total expenditures are \$1,821,890 compared to \$1,660,000 last year; noted it's encouraging to know that \$429,000 for the Route 44 water main project was not included in the budget but was almost absorbed.

Sentinal Services Insurance Discussion on Support: Mr. Rollins said he forwarded agreement language to Attorney Nelligan today; next will be to observe the process of Sentinal contacting

vendors, making sure they are local, etc. Discussion followed regarding if they will include fliers in the billing statements.

Discussion on Barkhamsted Line Extensions & Interlocal Agreement: Mr. Rollins said he has nothing really new to report; reached out to Torrington because they are negotiating a similar agreement with Woodridge Lake; Torrington is reluctant to share language but willing to share the early drafts. Discussion followed regarding costs to hook-up, adding language to the previous agreement, sharing capital costs, etc. Mr. Stratford said he found information from 2002 on the sewer plant; replacement value was \$5.6 million; a new plant with the bridge was estimated to be \$7.1 million. Discussion followed regarding rebuilding at today's rates.

Update on Water Regulations to Accept Use of High-Density Polyethylene: Mr. Rollins said haven't done anything yet. Mr. Cormier said the regulations need to be updated.

Update on Truck Purchase Due Mid-July. Look into Methane and Gas Cost: Mr. Rollins noted the truck is due in mid-July; can't do anything with alternate fuel options on this truck but looked into methane; the sewer plant doesn't produce methane year-round; need to research more. Brief discussion followed regarding updating equipment.

LEI Pump Station #8 out to Bid with 75-Day Completion; Start after Labor Day: Mr. Rollins said there are no changes. Discussion followed regarding the bid date.

Sewer Rate Increase 2019-2020: Mr. Stratford rates are not covering all costs; distributed a worksheet with a 9% increase; reviewed suggested increases; provides \$150,000 in revenue, resolves the depreciation deficit and comes to the break-even point; \$200,000 operating cost loss last year. Chairman Massicotte asked about the capital recovery fee. Discussion followed regarding the capital recovery account, capital projects, etc. Chairman Massicotte verified 9% is sufficient. Mr. Stratford said he would like to re-cast the increase against only the operating costs. Chairman Massicotte noted the departments skimmed and scrimped - did a great job. Mr. Rollins asked if the capital should be a separate budget. Mr. Stratford explained how he will re-cast the budget. Discussion followed regarding asset management, budgeting, equipment replacement should be under the operating budget, major capital items, etc. Mr. Stratford said he has been evaluating smaller increases over several years versus one large increase; distributed a water spread sheet indicating a 1% increase. Mr. Rollins said the Department of Public Health recommends small yearly increases. Discussion followed regarding budget surplus, depreciation and the purpose of depreciation, going to the public for yearly increases, showing customers the value of their assets, Town is not pro-active on the sewer side, Sewer Department has been diligent, investing in the sewer system, upgrading the equipment, providing comparables, etc.

Tree Harvesting Discussion: Mr. Rollins said he has a site walk with the forester Friday.

Water & Sewer Budget 2019-2020:

Sewer: Mr. Stratford distributed a draft 2019-2020 budget for the Sewer Department; noted this budget is pretty much balanced. Mr. Rollins said he is concerned the inflow infiltration study was not included with the budget; noted it's critical for capital planning. Extensive discussion followed regarding an ionized study, grants, vacuum truck, truck options, projected 9% increase, numerous line items including vehicle - oil and gas, maintenance of structures, maintenance of equipment, contracted equipment, computer software, etc.

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Water: Mr. Stratford distributed a draft 2019-2020 budget for the Water Department; noted revenues are pretty much the same; explained expenditures; noted he added capital projects in lieu of debt service; defined contribution is based on actuarial recommendations. Mr. Rollins distributed the Sanitary Survey Report. Mr. Cormier said a lot of the projects are being done in-house. Chairman Massicotte questioned several line items. Mr. Stratford said can start July based on the current budget or have a special meeting but would like to re-cast the proposed budget. The Commission proceeded to address Commissioner Closson's written concerns (submitted prior to the meeting).

Mr. Stratford said he will re-send the budget and if it looks right, will move the numbers to the "Selectmen's Proposed" column for approval at the July meeting. Discussion followed regarding the need for a public hearing on the increase, voting on the budget, etc.

Bill Adjustments: Mr. Stratford explained the meter was repaired at 13 Greenwoods Avenue; the bill was adjusted after the owner paid it. **Motion** by T. Moran **to refund the water and sewer bill for 13 Greenwoods Avenue.** Second by J. Massicotte. **Vote:** All in favor - *motion carried unanimous.*

Director's Report:

- Housatonic Valley Association has a grant for watershed and land protection
- Capital Projects: Requested a bid waiver for a compressor belt press system; would like to take the money budgeted for the primary tank collection; suggested a motion be made 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. Mr. Stratford noted other unspent funds. Mr. Rollins also requested to replace two bi-sulfate pumps; these are priorities. Mr. Stratford recommended take \$13,000 from the primary tank and \$7,000 from the compressor then take the balance from general labor (315-194); verified the bi-sulfate should be charged to maintenance of equipment. **Motion** by B. Hester **to move the funds.** Second by J. Lemelin. **Vote:** All in favor except T. Moran (opposed) - *motion carried.*
- Inspection Camera: Mr. Cormier noted the current inspection camera is 15-20 years old; explained the functions of the camera; it needs significant repair; replacement would be \$9,750. Mr. Rollins added it works with our existing locator. Discussion followed regarding cost to repair. Mr. Rollins explained the new camera records; currently taking a video of the camera on cell phones and then downloading it. Mr. Stratford said there is money in the labor line (317-194). T. Moran asked why it wasn't included with the budget. Mr. Cormier said it's only just recently been acting up. **Motion** by T. Moran **to transfer the \$9,750+ fees.** Second by B. Hester. *Discussion:* Account 317-194, transferring money into supplies and materials, etc. **Vote:** All in favor - *motion carried unanimous.*
- Refund: Mr. Cormier explained Peggy Neal, 674 East Wakefield Boulevard, called a plumber to snake a sewer back up; found out the alarm breaker was off causing the pump to fail; requested \$195 refund. **Motion** by J. Lemelin **to refund the \$195.** Second by B. Hester. **Vote:** All in favor - *motion carried unanimous.*

Old Business:

- Bridge Inspection at Sewer Plant Complete; Waiting for Report: nothing new to report
- Overlook Water Main: included in the budget
- Wallens Hill Water Tank: included in the budget
- Crystal Lake Dam Historical Review Submitted: nothing new to report
- Water Leak Repairs Underway (1): **take off the agenda**

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- Holmes Drive and Carey Avenue – Interest in Water or Sewer: no action yet; **take Carey Avenue off agenda**
- Hydrant Repairs on Main Street: **take off the agenda**
- Whiting Street Pump Station: Mr. Rollins explained he is putting in an electrical connection to fix the issue.

New Business – none

Adjournment: Meeting adjourned 9:30 p.m.

Minutes Respectfully Submitted,

/s/

Laurie Bessette

Minutes Secretary

Next Regular Meeting:

Probate Room

Tuesday, July 9, 2019

7:00 p.m.