



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 January 8, 2019

Chairman John Massicotte called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The following members were present: John Massicotte, George Closson, Bill Hester and Tim Moran. Also present were Finance Director Bruce Stratford, Director of Public Works Jim Rollins and Superintendent of Water Works Marty Cormier. Joe Lemelin was absent excused

Public Input- none

Approval of Minutes from December 11, 2018: Motion by G. Closson to *approve the minutes of December 11, 2018*. Second by T. Moran. **Vote:** All in favor - *motion carried unanimous*.

Report from Finance Director:

Sewer: Mr. Stratford distributed the sewer budget and bank statements; at halfway through the year have collected 47% (compared to 46% last year); septic dumping is at 76% (none collected from Russ' Septic); move money from sewer rents to the capital recovery reserve. Brief discussion followed. Mr. Stratford said revenue is at 43% compared to 44% last year; expenditures: sanitation plant is at 39% for the year, pumping station is at 35%; highlighted a few line items to watch; WPCA is at 36%; debt administration is at 25%; overall budget expenditures is at 36% compared to 40% last year; no major issues on the sewer side. Chairman Massicotte questioned the fleet improvements and aggregate materials line items. Discussion followed regarding fund transfers. Mr. Rollins questioned Highland Lake Pumps line item. Discussion followed regarding Customer Funded Upgrades offset by Income from Customer. Mr. Stratford reviewed the bank statements noting the checking account has \$456,000 as of 12/31/2018; this amount does not include expenditures or collections; the account does have enough to fund operations; savings is up to \$560,000.

Water: Mr. Stratford distributed the water budget and bank statements; revenues are at 48% (compared to 47% last year); past due collection rate is 71%; water is usually better than sewer collections (77% last year); capital recovery collected \$46,000 (45% compared to 50% last year); collected 49% of budgeted revenues (compared to 45% last year). Brief discussion followed regarding budgeted amounts. Mr. Stratford suggested moving funds from 316 to 317 for the Vehicles, Gas, Oil & Grease line as most charges have been applied to 317. Brief discussion followed regarding doing fund transfers. Mr. Stratford noted Water Works is at 41% of their budget, Crystal Lake is at 38% of their budget. Discussion followed regarding when money gets moved into the bank accounts; numbers in expense reports are actual, etc. Mr. Stratford explained Administration is at 46%; the recommendation from the Actuary is a \$75,000 pension payment so will need to increase that budget line. Chairman Massicotte said he thought this was done for this year. Discussion followed regarding past recommendations

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from the Actuary have come in late whereas these recommendations came in November. T. Moran suggested waiting until the end of the year. Mr. Stratford said can send the \$50,000 as budgeted and then see where we're at by the end of the fiscal year (put on the June agenda); briefly reviewed issues including: one bill from P&G Pepper in the amount of \$4,000 for Willow Street, one open purchase order for South Main, etc.; reminded attendees this project was well above the budget but was expected; \$320,000 ahead of spending primarily due to the South Main project but will capitalize the assets. G. Closson questioned the contingency line. Brief discussion followed regarding Oakdale Generator. Mr. Stratford said, otherwise, expenditures are following the plan. Chairman Massicotte questioned the overtime line. Mr. Stratford said it's probably from the South Main project. Brief discussion followed regarding breaking it down to know the cost for South Main Street. Chairman Massicotte questioned Crystal Lake Service Contracts line at 79%. Mr. Rollins said he will get the information for next month's meeting. Chairman Massicotte noted the budget is at 50% with the big project behind us. Discussion followed regarding electricity cost savings due to fixing distribution repairs. Mr. Stratford said the checking account has \$287,000 (dropped due to the payment for the South Main project); savings has \$559,926.

Mr. Stratford distributed the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR); noted pages 25–27 are Water Works and Sewer for fiscal year 2018; offered to have Chris King of King, King and Associates come in; this is an unmodified/clean opinion which are the same numbers reported to the Commission all year; explained the information; noted depreciation expenses; indicated \$600,000 should be put away to replace those assets; suggested looking at sewer rates; explained information garnered from a recent rate webinar; recommended the Commission consider more frequent small changes based on cost of living than a bigger bump. Discussion followed regarding the most recent increases. Mr. Stratford reiterated looking at the sewer rates; said the water fund is doing quite well whereas sewer went down \$200,000; the sewer system is based on estimated useful life; noted Mr. Cormier submitted an extensive list of future projects; the Department of Public Health offers a Revolving Loan Fund with attractive rates for capital projects to repair/refurbish infrastructure serving less than 10,000 customers. Mr. Cormier said the population served is 7,000. Mr. Stratford noted they have \$15 million available at half the market rate. Discussion followed regarding depreciation, minor infrastructure improvements, rates should cover operation costs and upgrades, how the Board should approach this, King, King and Associates presentation, etc. Mr. Stratford commented both funds have improved.

Mr. Stratford said there is a customer selling their property on West Wakefield Boulevard; they paid off the assessment but the lien didn't get released; asked the Commission for approval to release the lien. **Motion** by G. Closson **to approve the request to release the lien for Amy and Richard Horowitz**. Second by B. Hester. **Vote:** All in favor - *motion carried unanimous*.

Mr. Rollins presented a bill for the audit. Mr. Stratford said 50% comes from water and 50% comes from sewer. Discussion followed regarding this is the first time in 11 years the audit is filed on time.

Sentinal Services Insurance Discussion on Support: Mr. Rollins said he and Mr. Cormier wondered if their rates are the same for commercial as they are for residential. Brief discussion followed. Mr. Rollins asked what's in it for us. As customer service, they could be a go-to as a buffer; would not be okay with this unless local contractor(s) are involved. Brief discussion followed regarding insisting on local contractors, number of customers, getting the Town Attorney opinion, local utilities utilizing service, recent incident involving a commercial property, does this involve

sprinkler lines, fat/oil/water separators in garages, restaurants, etc. Mr. Rollins said they will look into those answers.

Pump Station 8 – Bids Go Out: Mr. Rollins explained the next step is to sit with Todd Parsons and review the bid documents, site work, etc. for the package; will let the contractor deal with the ground water. Discussion followed regarding the pump package bids are in; price came in at approximately \$38,000. Mr. Rollins said Lenard will take that information and do the site work bid; the generator will be smaller so need less everything else. G. Closson asked when the site work bid will be out. Mr. Rollins said before the next meeting. Chairman Massicotte verified the fencing and planting will be included. Mr. Rollins said he will work with the neighbors to design something aesthetically pleasing. Discussion followed regarding fencing versus vegetation, propane tank will be buried, etc.

Oakdale Generator Delivery Date: Mr. Rollins said the propane tank is underground; delivery of the generator is scheduled for January 10th. Brief discussion followed regarding the propane tank has been filled.

New Hires: Mr. Rollins said Alex Combes is very happy with Wade Curtis; Greg Rein is working with Marty Cormier and John Rhoades starts Monday as an operator. Chairman Massicotte suggested increasing the education budget for next year.

Purchase of Small Items on Overview of Projects for 2019: Mr. Cormier distributed lists with information for a Long-Term Plan; suggested purchasing a 30” road saw (\$20,000), Jumping Jack Clay Compactor (\$2,600) and Auto-Flushers (12 @ \$6,000 each). Chairman Massicotte asked about putting an auto-flusher at DMV. Discussion followed regarding auto-flushers allow for fine-tuning the amount of water flushed, MIU’s replaced, get 2 auto-flushers this year and budget for a few per year, useful life since they are permanently installed in-line, battery-powered, etc. Mr. Cormier also suggested replacing truck #9 at a cost of \$27,500; noted #9 is a 1994 F350 being run daily. Discussion followed regarding the equipment list. Mr. Stratford offered to separate the list into bondable projects, items which qualify under the Revolving Loan Fund, etc. Discussion followed regarding the State Project, State giving the Town time to do their projects, scope of the State projects, gas main replacement plans, etc. **Motion** by J. Massicotte **to authorize purchase of the road saw and Jumping Jack.** Second by B. Hester. *Discussion:* Discussion followed regarding funds should come from the Water Department Contingency Fund and then transfer 50% from the water savings account and 50% from the sewer savings account, advise next month if the auto-flusher is discounted, condition of existing Holabird Avenue infrastructure, etc. **Vote:** All in favor - *motion carried unanimous.* Discussion followed regarding ordering the F150 pick-up truck with consideration of order lead time or checking in-stock vehicles, truck would be used for water and sewer, truck specifications, etc. **Motion** by T. Moran **to purchase an F150 not to exceed \$27,500.** Second by B. Hester. *Discussion:* Discussion followed regarding funds should come from 50% from the Water Department retained earnings and 50% from the Sewer Department retained earnings and then transfer to contingency. Mr. Stratford noted he will create the line item. **Vote:** All in favor - *motion carried unanimous.*

Extensive discussion followed regarding prioritizing and logistics of larger projects including Main Street, Wallens Hill Tank, Crystal Lake Tank, re-lining mains to alleviate breaks, etc. Mr. Rollins said he is going to rely on the new Project Administrator who is really smart on this; \$2-\$3 million was just water or water and sewer. Mr. Stratford said the water side can service that level of debt but sewer doesn’t have the rate structure – still paying bonds for another 3-4 years (\$250,000 per year on

a \$6 million bond). *Consensus is to work on water projects then sewer projects.* Mr. Stratford reminded the Commission to keep in mind the Sewer Plant – capital needs, rate structure capacity, etc. Brief discussion followed regarding neither dam work or Carey Avenue were included on this list. *Consensus is Mr. Cormier, Mr. Rollins and Mr. Stratford will meet to prioritize the projects for funding.*

Mr. Rollins noted he has a draft for the Carey Avenue survey; expect the number of people interested will be very little for water and a few for sewer. Discussion followed regarding the Long-Term List for sewer, possibly purchasing a vac truck with other towns and dividing the cost 3 ways between the town, water and sewer. Mr. Rollins said we know the water system better than the sewer system; suggested doing smoke tests to catch low-hanging fruit then do a complete cleaning and camera of the system – estimate of \$10,000 per mile; we have 40 miles; need to plan for it but a new vac truck could handle the complete cleaning but the old vac truck won't. Discussion followed regarding major infiltration issues, possible suspects, budgeting payments on a vac truck, having a trade in versus selling the old one outright, etc.

Discussion followed regarding Pump Station #8. Mr. Cormier added Moore Avenue has a lot of problems. Mr. Rollins said he wants to look at Moore Avenue the way we're looking at Pump Station #8; going to get water flows from Whiting Street before the work is done for less expensive options.

Bill Adjustments: none

Director's Report: Mr. Rollins gave updates through the meeting.

Old Business:

- Barkhamsted Interlocal Agreement Update: Mr. Rollins said a meeting is scheduled next week; looking for a definite scope of the project to be included in the agreement.
- Wallens Hill Water Tank: addressed earlier
- Crystal Lake Dam Historical Review: Mr. Rollins said nibbling away at this; the last thing was PAL submitted the final; it's now in the hands of PAL; USDA funding process is next.
- Bid for Bridge Inspection at Sewer plant: nothing new to report
- Water Leak Repairs Underway: John Street is pending; the hydrant by the Torte Museum is shut off; Gay Street is done.
- Overview of Major Projects for Water & Sewer for 2019: addressed earlier
- Holmes Drive: Mr. Rollins said need to get Eric of FR Mahoney involved; \$80,000 per house is not even a realm of possibility; think the E-1's may be a solution.
- Carey Avenue - Interest in Water or Sewer: discussed earlier
- Hydrant Repairs on Main Street: Mr. Rollins said he did measure the distances surrounding the hydrant by the library and it is ADA compliant.

New Business- none

Adjournment: Meeting adjourned 9:09 p.m.

Minutes Respectfully Submitted,
Laurie Bessette
Minutes Secretary

Next Regular Meeting:
Probate Room
Tuesday, February 12, 2019
7:00 p.m.