



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 December 11, 2018

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

Public Input- none

Approval of Minutes from November 13, 2018: Motion by J. Lemelin to *approve the minutes of November 13, 2018*. Second by B. Hester. **Vote:** All in favor - *motion carried unanimous*.

Sentinal Services Insurance: Nick LaChance and Travis Helming of New England Service Company presented information on Sentinal Services Insurance. Mr. LaChance explained they are a water and/or sewer line service company; distributed informational packets; Mr. LaChance is on the administrative side and Mr. Helming is in the field side; the Sentinal Service program is offered to residents; allows up to \$5,000 annually for water or sewer line issues; covers from the property line to the meter/valve; provides 24/7 customer support; there are multiple plan options based on need; proceeded to review the information including benefits to customers, headquartered in Plainville, will coordinate work with the Town and affected utilities, serve as the project manager until the problem is fixed, no deductible – this is a warranty service not an insurance. G. Closson questioned the rate. Mr. LaChance explained the rate and renewal notifications. G. Closson verified this covers from the curb stop to the house. J. Rollins verified these are gravity sewers only. Mr. Helming said he hasn't had any issues; noted this would not cover pumps or electricals. Mr. LaChance reviewed the benefits to the Town – local presence, over 15 years' experience, 15% commission to the Town paid quarterly, reports will be provided showing how the program is being received by the residents; do ask for an endorsement letter and customer list from the Town; offer goes out with utility bills to get a successful launch; explained who Northeast Service Company is, gave background, noted various locations, currently have 9,500 water and/or sewer customers; explained other services they offer; have 24 employees; they are a publicly traded company and regulated utility. G. Closson asked their response policy. Mr. Helming said it depends on the call; try to use local contractors for the heavy lifting but have in-house technicians/plumbers. G. Closson asked if they pre-qualify contractors. Mr. Helming said one of their employees would oversee the work. G. Closson verified the entire line would be replaced. Mr. Helming said lawns, asphalt, concrete would be restored but we're not landscapers but do try to avoid disturbance. G. Closson verified have customer feedback and referrals. T. Moran asked about existing customers. Mr. LaChance said Egremont, Sheffield, Hazardville, Jewett City, etc. T. Moran asked if they work with insurance companies. Discussion followed regarding the process of notification when there is an incident. M. Cormier asked how the determination is made to repair or replace and what materials to use. Mr. Helming said usually do a

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repair; gave example; noted the economical route is repair but the repair doesn't fix it, will investigate and replace if necessary; usually use copper but will use plastic if dictated by the utility. Mr. Cormier asked if roots are covered. Mr. Helming said would snake it first; camera it to investigate – repair first then replace. Chairman Massicotte asked their response time. Mr. Helming said his company is not the first line of defense, the utility is; the utility would shut things off first - we're not allowed to touch valves but then it would vary; usually respond in an hour but it depends on the call. Mr. LaChance said they aim for 24-hour response. Chairman Massicotte asked about the \$5,000 limit – if the repair fails and replacement is required does it get counted against the \$5,000. Mr. Helming said do try to work with the contractors if close to the \$5,000. T. Moran verified it is an annual limit. Brief discussion followed regarding possible scenario involving iron pipe and possible cost variances. Mr. Rollins asked if there is a waiting period. Mr. LaChance said 30-days. Mr. Cormier asked if an initial inspection is done. Mr. Helming said we have in the plan they have the right to but generally no. Mr. LaChance said there is going to be legacy issues; will talk with the utility. Mr. Rollins asked if frozen pipes are covered. Mr. Helming said not covered as those are issues with the install; added low pressure is also not covered; this service is designed for breaks or line blockages or a similar issue. G. Closson asked about the \$5,000 limit. Mr. Helming said it's \$5,000 per house – water and/or sewer. Chairman Massicotte asked if there is a minimum number of customers in an area. Mr. LaChance said no minimum; gave the example of Egremont. Discussion followed regarding servicing Egremont for one year and owned Sheffield for 2 years (managed it for the 2 years prior to that). Mr. Helming and Mr. LaChance were thanked for their information and time.

Report from Finance Director:

Water: Mr. Stratford distributed the water budget and bank statements; noted billings and collections are analyzed every three months; revenues: compared FY2019 to FY2018 collections; noted billings are 53% of the budget; on target for similar results to 2018; noted received a \$10,000 check for the Barkhamsted Interlocal Agreement; collected \$853,000 this year compared to \$847,000 last year this time; expenditures: noted the Vehicles, Gas, Oil & Grease line; everything else is in line for expectations; Tower Generator and Supreme Plus are open purchase orders against the contingency line; the water tank purchase order was closed with no expenditures; don't expect anything more to come in for the Water Main on South Main Street Brief discussion followed regarding asphalt. Mr. Stratford added expenditures are running normal; noted the checking account had \$205,000 at the end of November – paid out for South Main repair; did collect \$340,000 in November which will be deposited in December; the investment account has \$559,000 – haven't needed to use the funds for repairs.

Sewer: Mr. Stratford distributed the sewer budget and bank statements; noted have billed \$806,000 (53%) on the revenue side; collected \$632,000 – similar to water; last year billed \$804,000 and collected \$622,000; have received \$3,300 from Russ' Septic; one customer paid for an upgrade in service – noted that amount in a new line item: “customer funded upgrades” in the revenues and expenditures. Mr. Cormier briefly explained the situation. Mr. Stratford highlighted the Barkhamsted Interlocal line; on the expenditures side, suggested watching the supplies and materials line; noted a purchase order was incorrectly assigned; added a Duke's Root Control expenditure is outstanding; Lenard Engineering was assigned to the sewer side but will apply \$2,500 to water; expenditures are only 1% different from last year; have \$325,000 in the checking account and \$559,000. Mr. Rollins asked if Mr. Stratford got a chance to look into money for capital projects. Mr. Stratford said it would be helpful to have a project list.

Mr. Stratford noted he is attending a Municipal Finance Advisory Committee (MFAC) meeting tomorrow; explained the Town has been before them since the financial issues; going to ask to be released from oversight.

Mr. Stratford said the auditors have been working and expect them for the January meeting – can arrange King, King & Associates to make a presentation. Brief discussion followed regarding the Board would prefer to review the reports first

Pump Station 8 pump and design update: Mr. Rollins explained the electric panel and bypass are in; need Eversource in before the pumps are in place; bid specifications are in the hands of Mark Douglass and ready to go out. Chairman Massicotte reminded attendees the Board approved additional costs to Lenard Engineering for specifications that weren't needed. Mr. Rollins said they haven't done additional engineering; will have an additional review for electrical and digging; will know after the bid results. Discussion followed regarding 2 separate parts: bid and design; there is no engineering. Chairman Massicotte suggested getting another purchase order and close out the previous purchase orders; verified the bid specifications are ready to go out for the module. Discussion followed regarding companies who can meet the specifications. Mr. Rollins said E1 is the company who provided the specifications; made the bid specifications generic but within the specifications. Brief discussion followed regarding 2 companies.

Oakdale Generator Delivery Date: Mr. Rollins said the concrete pad is in; the generator is scheduled for January 10, 2019; Superior Energy won't fill the tank until the generator is in.

Employee's Retirement: Mr. Rollins reminded attendees of recent retirements; a job offer went out to one person – waiting for the results of the pre-employment physical; still reviewing credentials for the other position; very happy with the testing; final interviews revealed very good talent – had 6 choices. Chairman Massicotte verified \$250 approved by the Board is okay. Mr. Stratford noted Rich Kemp's payout will be in January – will make a small impact on FICA.

Hydrant Repairs on Main Street: Brief discussion followed regarding the location of hydrants. Mr. Rollins noted he received a phone call regarding the location of the hydrant by the library. Discussion followed regarding possible reasons for the location, options for making it ADA compliant, etc.

Overview of Major Projects for Water & Sewer for 2019: Mr. Rollins distributed and reviewed a list divided into water, sewer and water and sewer; the higher priority projects include: Crystal Lake Dam and Water Tank repairs, Wallens Hill Tank replacement, Carey Avenue, Willow Street, MIU's, water line on Main Street, auto flushers, Whiting Street pump station, improvements on Morgan Drive and Holmes Drive, vac truck, inflow infiltration, Sewer Plant bridge, sewer tank component changeover, effluent pump, influent sampler, compressor replacement, road cutting saw, etc. Brief discussion was held on interest received from the Carey Avenue presentation (only received one call) and following up with a survey. Mr. Stratford suggested equipment replacements come from the savings account – don't wait for bonding. Brief discussion followed regarding replacing components and purchasing the saw.

Bill Adjustments: none

Director's Report: Mr. Rollins noted he will look into comparisons for lining versus repairing the linings. Mr. Cormier explained the costs; noted the advantages. Discussion followed regarding the disadvantages of different methods. Mr. Rollins said he received communication from the State regarding their timeline for work; talked with them regarding the Town's plans; they will put off the work until various utility work is completed. Brief discussion followed regarding the Town should be done by 2021, leaving Main Street as is and attack all the other projects. Discussion followed regarding running a camera down to inspect pipes, pricing, personnel, prioritizing projects, bonding versus accomplishing smaller items, etc. Selectman Sedlack said he appreciates Mr. Rollins' hard work each week; the Board of Selectmen is putting together a long-range plan; concerned with Carey Avenue - getting this done sooner rather than later would be helpful. Discussion followed regarding the scope and details of the project. Mr. Rollins verified the Board wants more specific information and costs on the project list. Chairman Massicotte suggested breaking apart bonding projects from what can be carried ourselves.

Old Business:

- Barkhamsted Interlocal Agreement Update: Chairman Massicotte said he was emailed drafts; still have a lot of work; Lenard said Barkhamsted's maps need to be specific. Brief discussion followed regarding liability coverage. Extensive discussion followed Barkhamsted's agreement proposal, sewer infrastructure will support Barkhamsted, water capacities, possible previous obligations and time limit restrictions to Barkhamsted, getting Town Attorney approval, etc.
- Wallens Hill Water Tank: discussed earlier
- Crystal Lake Dam Historical Review: discussed earlier
- Bid for Bridge Inspection at Sewer plant: discussed earlier
- Water Leak Repairs Underway: discussed earlier
- John Street Water Leaks Update: discussed earlier
- Holmes Drive & Carey Avenue - Interest in Water or Sewer: discussed earlier

New Business:

- T. Moran asked to discuss Sentinal Services Insurance next month. Discussion followed regarding a previous discussion on similar services, benefits of the service, etc.

Adjournment: Meeting adjourned 9:15 p.m.

Minutes Respectfully Submitted,

Laurie Bessette
Minutes Secretary

Next Regular Meeting:
Probate Room
Tuesday, January 8, 2019
7:00 p.m.