

Groton Water Commission
Regular Meeting
Of the
Board of Water Commissioners
Tuesday, December 19th, 2017
2nd Floor Lunch Room

Minutes

Present are Chairman Jack McCaffrey, Vice Chairman Greg Fishbone, Member James Gmeiner, Superintendent Thomas Orcutt and Business Manager Lauren Crory.

Mr. McCaffrey called the meeting to order at 7:35pm.

Whitney Well Meeting

Mr. Orcutt attended the Whitney Well progress meeting the previous week and reported that all parts and equipment are on site, aside from the MCC Panel which will arrive in February. Mr. McCaffrey asked if Whitney 1 & 2 will be disabled at some point and Mr. Orcutt confirmed that this would happen while the new transformer was being installed. A generator will be on site to keep the well running during this time. It should take about one day to get the new transformer installed and running. Mr. Fishbone asked why we needed new transformers and Mr. Orcutt replied that they will be able to handle different voltage.

Mr. Orcutt handed out an updated schedule and said not much has changed. The commissioners discussed the schedule and agreed to have a meeting at the end of January to make sure we are ready to shut down Whitney during the transformer installation. Mr. Orcutt will send the commissioners weekly updates.

Public Hearing: Water Rates, Fees, and Miscellaneous Charges

Mr. Gmeiner opened the continued public hearing on rater rates, fees, and miscellaneous charges. Mr. Orcutt said there were three items to continue discussion on:

- 1) The commissioners discussed increasing late fees from \$10.00 a month to \$15.00 a month. This will hopefully encourage customers to pay on time or to sign up for ACH auto debit. Also, the service charge for ACH auto debit customers would be reduced from \$13.00 to \$8.00 on quarterly bills. Mr. Orcutt noted that we would put a notice in upcoming bills to notify customers of these changes. Mr. Gmeiner noted that on the spreadsheet of rates, fees, and charges, the words processing fee should be changed to service charge.
- 2) The commissioners discussed the charges for testing backflow devices which currently are \$100.00 for the first test and \$50.00 for each additional test on the property. For example, Lawrence Academy would be charged \$100.00 followed by all other tests on their property multiplied by \$50.00. After discussing the costs associated with performing the backflow test and administrative costs for tracking and billing, the commissioners decided to clarify the wording of how these charges are billed. The wording will be changed to clarify that the properties that we perform backflow tests on will be billed \$100.00 for the first device in each building – and \$50.00 for each additional device in that building. In other words, each building will receive a \$100.00 charge rather than each property. Subsequent devices in the building will be charged \$50.00. Mr. Gmeiner said to change the spreadsheet to read 1st device in building \$100.00 and subsequent devices in building \$50.00 each.

The commissioners discussed adding a fee for service line flushing because it can be very time consuming for the technicians. Mr. Orcutt explained that in some cases, a resident may need the flush and it may be the town's responsibility to perform the service. However in other cases, residents call for repeated flushes or think they need a flush for various reasons. The water department will have the right to charge \$75.00 for a service line flush or

\$150.00 for a service line flush with the jelly bean machine, at the discretion of the superintendent. Mr. Gmeiner said to add wording to the spreadsheet that says the superintendent will have the authority to waive the fee.

Mr. Gmeiner made a motion to approve the changes to the rates, fees, and miscellaneous charges, Mr. McCaffrey seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Orcutt added that the changes will go into effect January 1st, 2018. He also said that we will put notices in the February, March and April invoices, to inform residents of changes.

Other Business

Mr. McCaffrey made a motion to approve the minutes of December 12th as amended, Mr. Fishbone seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

Invoices for Expense Warrant 13 were signed.

The next meetings will be 1/9, 1/23 and 1/30.

Mr. McCaffrey made a motion to adjourn at 9:35pm, Mr. Gmeiner seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lauren Croy
Business Manager