

Board of Water & Sewer Commissioners  
166 John Scott Blvd., Norton, MA 02766  
May 25, 2021

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NORTON TOWN CLERK  
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**Meeting called to order at 5:37pm**

**Attendance:** Assistant Superintendent John Harrop; Commissioner Steve Bishop, Commissioner James Jardin, Administrative Secretary Janice Roberge, Weston & Sampson's Tara McManus and Steve Pedersen via phone

**Pledge of Allegiance**

**Superintendent Updates**

**Discussion of flow testing fees:**

The Board is asked to discuss a new fee structure for flow testing which was recommended by the Superintendent, the new fee structure allows a potential cost savings to property owners with the smaller fire suppression systems. With the new water treatment facility online, we have been able to perform these flow operations during the daytime hours and avoid the after-hour costs.

The proposed fees will be:

- Fire Sprinkler Flow Testing (using a 2" sprinkler drain.) \$75.00 per flow.
- Fire Pump Flow Testing - \$250.00 per test.
- Fire Hydrant Flow Testing fee. \$250.00 for the first fire hydrant flowed, if additional hydrants are used during the same test event there will be an additional \$100.00 charged for each hydrant flowed.

These fees will apply if the water used to perform these test events is supplied from the municipal distribution system. In certain locations it may be possible to isolate buildings from the municipal system and use water from their privately owned fire suppression tanks to perform these tests. This will be allowed and fees will be waived if the fire suppression tank water service line is metered and has the correct backflow device in place as required in our rules and regulations. Department staff are required to be on site for all flow events and these flow events must be scheduled and approved through the water department office prior to testing.

These fees are necessary to cover the large volumes of water being flowed during these testing procedures. Department staff must be onsite to monitor the distribution system water quality and measure the volume of water used for Mass DEP reporting purposes

**Elm St Water Service Disruption:** Yesterday morning National Grid drilled through a water service on Elm St. Our Foreman & Superintendent quickly responded to the call. The drill operator had a dig safe ticket and thought he was cleared to proceed. Unfortunately, that was not entirely accurate, whoever called in the mark out requests didn't notify Norton Water & Sewer. We are not part of dig safe so we must be called directly by those who are digging. When you call the dig safe line, they mention exactly who they will notify and say there are non-member utilities in the area and you must

notify them directly. We are some of those non-member utilities, unfortunately the leak was severe enough that we did have to shut down the water main for the service line repair.

**Scheduled Flow testing:**

We have 2 Fire Pump tests scheduled, May 27, 2021 on East Main St. Their notices were posted on the Town Websites and in the Sun Chronicle.

We also have a Sprinkler flow tests scheduled, one for Wednesday at 366 Old Colony Road & another on Friday on West Main St.

**Well 4:** After the 48-hour pumping test was performed at the new well 5A location we moved our well driller over to our existing well 4 location, as mentioned in previous meetings we are performing a quick cleaning here while we switch out the well pump & motor to achieve a high flow rate from this location.

**Meter Install – Howard St:** On May 26<sup>th</sup>, we have scheduled the install of a sewer flow meter in the Howard Street pit to measure flow entering the Wheaton P.S. from the town side, a police detail is set up for 8am at the end of Howard St & Taunton Ave, delays shouldn't be too bad.

**Water Ban:** Our electronic signs are out to remind residents to please conserve water as we enter into summer. Many people ask if we have a "water ban", essentially the answer is yes, what Norton has in place as part of its water management permit, is a restriction "that no automatic type sprinklers of any kind can be connected to the municipal water system". This does include underground irrigation systems and the sprinklers that attach to the end of a garden hose, anything that you can connect to the hose and leave unattended are all not allowed. What we do allow is hand held hose watering. This helps control how much water is being used. We understand people want nice looking lawns and gardens but our priority is drinking water and fire protection when needed.

We have had calls about the fines given, we do have the authority to hand out fines for those found in non-compliance of the town's rules & regulations. For the most part we prefer to educate residents on the importance of water conservation and will let someone off with a warning, we would rather work with them. The fines were discussed:

**Violation of this regulation will result in the following fines:**

**First Offense - \$150.00 Fine**

**Second Offense - \$300.00 Fine**

**Third Offense- \$300.00 Fine and Termination of Service**

If we do get a call that someone has sprinkler's on, we will check it out but if we know they have a private well we won't go bother them. It was noted that private wells do need to be registered with the Board of Health and a sign needs to be posted, so everyone can see it, stating there is a non-potable well in use. It was also asked what if the private well is connected to the same aquifer as the town. John was not sure what happens in that case. He did say that in an extreme drought we can limit the use of water from private wells. Thankfully we have not had to implement those types of restrictions, the initial focus would be controlling the outside irrigation systems used at all large commercial properties, golf courses, etc.

**MOA-from 195 Mansfield Ave & Authorization letter to file on behalf of the utility:** It was requested that the Board review and approve the draft of the MOA between the developer for 195 Mansfield Ave and the Norton Water Dept. We have been told that Mass DOT wants the state road opening permits to



be submitted by the utility owner. The explanation given was that in the event that a contractor leaves town within the one year that they own the excavation and road repair the utility would then be responsible for that repair. Frank would like the Board to review the MOA draft before he sends it to legal counsel.

The two documents seem to contradict each other. The letter was recommended from our Mass DOT district 5 rep. It states that this will allow the developer of 195 Mansfield Ave. to file for the Mass DOT permit with our approval. This takes a ton of work off the utility owner for the permitting process, which he's told can be a challenging task just to navigate the Mass DOT SHAPS program. Frank would like the Board to review the letter, if they agree with the document their approval will be represented by their signature. He would then have the document notarized and sent off to keep the projects moving along.

The Board did review the MOA & the letter, they noticed there are some contradictions and confusion in the document and agreed it should go to legal and have them review both documents, the letter suggested from Mass DOT & the MOA from the contractor before proceeding.

#### **Weston & Sampson updates:**

##### Steve Pedersen's updates:

- The state highway inspection for the paving on Route 123, West Main St does need to address a couple things that came up. There is a manhole near Fernandas Circle that needs to be made flush with the road; they are concerned that the plows will hit it. This should only take about a half hour and shouldn't cause too much interruption. They also need to straighten some of the striping at Mansfield Ave & West Main St.
- Sewer betterments-Steve & Rose worked the majority of the day putting together some documents, which are in the packets John handed out. Back in March the commission voted to assess the betterments to be \$16,000 per unit, that has already been voted on and approved.
  - We finalized the table, determined total number of units, based on frontage properties to be 100, so that's around \$1.6 million that will be assessed and collected as betterments on the project. The table on the excel spreadsheet shows how they fine-tuned the water base units used to date for the commercial properties. They looked at the two most recent years of data and took into account how the flows plummeted in 2020 based on the pandemic so they also looked at the 2018 & 2019 data for the last two years of continuous use, that's how they came up with the amount. This document will be attached to the actual order for the betterments.
- Rose will present to Assessors to confirm all the address and homeowners as of January of this year. The document is the order that will need to be recorded, once recorded that's when the lien will go on the property and will be flagged when they go to sell the property. John said I know that was a question Frank had in regards to the sale of properties, I know there are a couple of properties on Newland St that have already sold and the new owners were not aware of the requirements, the seller left them hanging, Frank was wondering what has happened in other towns as far as making sure the buyer is aware of the requirements to hook up to sewer. Steve responded: The first step is complete; the letters went out to the homeowners notifying them the sewers were in place and that they are required to tie-in and will be assessed betterments. The betterment letters would follow. The typical process is you will record this order of assessment will attach to the property owners deed until such time it is paid off so it will be part of any sale that is done on that property. John responded, so the current property owner couldn't sneak it by them. Steve's response: correct there would be a lien on their property going forward and that's basically how it works. The order you have in front of you that has some basic language that's been taken from the Town Meeting votes authorizing the

Water & Sewer Commission to assess betterments for a portion of the project, it defines at this point the total amount assessed through betterments the cost per unit of \$16,000.

Recommends that the commission vote to approve and issue this order so that we can sign it and Rose can move it through the proper channels, from the assessors to the tax collector and finally at the registry. If no other questions and you're comfortable with it, it's a simple motion to sign the order assessing final sewer betterments. Motion was moved, second and approved. Steve suggested signing it tonight so Rose has it and can start the process.

- Cobb Street Generator work done this summer is still on track to be done by year's end.

#### **Tara McManus' updates: Water Treatment Plant**

Had the Conservation Commission meeting last night, it was voted and approved all the signs that were put up on the trees, 30+ signs on Plain Street about 25' apart, only on one side. We do need to maintain them, keep them clean and visible.

WTP project is complete and we're working with MassDEP SRF loan staff on the final SRF reimbursement application to max out the full SRF loan in the amount of \$10.3 million. We also provided MassDEP with documentation certifying the project is complete.

Well 4 – Was cleaned and the new pump was installed. Everything went smoothly and things look good.

Well 6 – Screen has been delivered the contractor will handle the installation. Schedule the pumping test.

Testing – Water quality samples were taken; it will take a couple weeks to get the results. The water was running clear and things look good. Biggest concern is timing of everything.

#### **More updates:**

John Harrop created a department profile on Facebook to improve relations. Commissioner Bishop stated he was getting good feedback on it. All questions need to be polite and courteous, not attended to on a regular basis so be patient with our responses. FB policies did not allow us to create the profile name as the Norton Water Department so it is under John Harrop's name. John is learning how many misconceptions and misinformation is posted on the site so it is a great opportunity to get proper and correct information out.

Commissioner Bishop & Jardin both have email address with the town now and will have Charlene add them to the FB page & our website.

The Commissioners will post on FB and/or Town Website about the 3<sup>rd</sup> Commissioners position available to be filled.

End of fiscal year 2021-there will be a lot of time taken off-After discussion there shouldn't be an issue with tracking and keeping everyone in the loop with the work order schedule.

#### **Bills & Correspondences:**

All bills were reviewed, approved and signed

**Next Meeting:** Wednesday 6/9/21 at 5:30pm & 6/22 at 5:30pm

#### **Motions**

##### **Motion 1: Reduce Sprinkler Test from \$250 to \$75 per 2" drain**

Commissioner James Jardin makes motion to approve the 2" Sprinkler Test fees at \$75.00.

Commissioner Steve Bishop seconded the motion

All in Favor: Commissioner Bishop – Aye

Commissioner Jardin – Aye

Motion passes unanimously.



**Motion 2: Hydrant flow keep at \$250 for the first hydrant and \$100 for each additional hydrant**

Commissioner James Jardin makes motion to approve the Hydrant Flow fees at \$250/first and \$100 for each thereafter.

Commissioner Steve Bishop seconded the motion

All in Favor: Commissioner Bishop – Aye

Commissioner Jardin – Aye

Motion passes unanimously.

**Motion 3: Fire pump test of \$250 per test.**

Commissioner James Jardin makes motion to approve Fire Pump Test Fees at \$250 per pump.

Commissioner Steve Bishop seconded the motion

All in Favor: Commissioner Bishop – Aye

Commissioner Jardin – Aye

Motion passes unanimously.

**Motion 4: Sewer Betterments for West Main St Project.**

Commissioner James Jardin makes motion to approve betterments.

Commissioner Steve Bishop seconded the motion

All in Favor: Commissioner Bishop – Aye

Commissioner Jardin – Aye

Motion passes unanimously.

**Motion 5: Meeting Adjournment**

Commissioner James Jardin makes motion to adjourn the meeting.

Commissioner Bishop seconds the motions.

All in Favor: Commissioner Jardin – Aye

Commissioner Bishop – Aye

Motion passes unanimously.

**Next Meeting: June 9, 2021 @ 5:30pm**


**Meeting Adjourned at 6:55pm**

BOARD OF WATER/SEWER COMMISSIONERS

ACCEPTED AND APPROVED MINUTES FOR THE

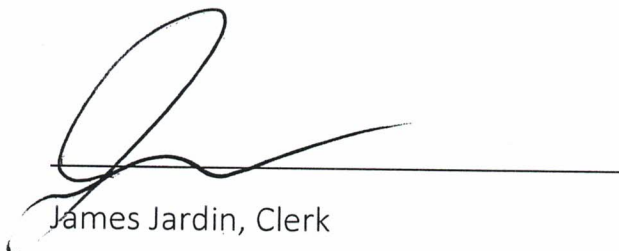
BOARD MEETING HELD: May 25<sup>th</sup> 2021

Respectfully submitted,

  
Janice Roberge

  
Steve Bishop, Chairman

6/9/21  
Date Approved

  
James Jardin, Clerk

6-9-21  
Date Approved