

Meeting of the Village Water/Sewer Commissioners

Monday, May 12th, 2014

43 S Main Street, Main Street Fire Station

Present: P.H. Flanders, C. Parks, R. Finucane, Commissioners; W. Shepeluk, Municipal Manager; Alec Tuscany, Public Works Director; B. Woodruff and C. Nelson, Staff

Flanders called the meeting of the Water and Sewer Commissioners to order at 4:33pm.

George Woodard Request: The staff discusses a request from George Woodard, Sweet Rd resident, to utilize part of the Sweet Well Field to pasture 10-15 young cows. Woodruff has contacted a hydrogeologist and has been informed that pasturing near well heads is not prohibited, though it is recommended that a 25-ft circumference around each well head be fenced and blocked off to the animals. A fence would also need to be installed around the pending solar array to protect the equipment. Woodard will provide the staff with a more detailed plan once the request is approved by the board.

Finucane moved to approve the requested use of the field, and to authorize the staff to meet with Mr. Woodard to finalize the details. Parks seconded the motion, a vote was held, and passed unanimously.

Base Charge Adjustments and Refund Requests: Nelson discussed the issue of addressing changes that need to be made to accounts based on the recent allocation capacity surveys. Around 500 surveys were received with 50 or so indicating that allocations, and subsequently base charges, should change. Nelson has contacted those property owners who are able to decrease their current allocations and lower their bills, and has made appropriate changes to the account for all future bills. Nelson presented a request from a customer on Randall Street who had been unknowingly paying for 2 residential units (the property is currently being utilized as a single family home) for several years. Changes have been made on the account going forward, but the customer requested that a refund or credit be issued for the extra base charges. Flanders said that a refund should be issued. Finucane argued that not only is extra allocation capacity an increase in property value, but that it is the homeowner's responsibility to be aware of and understand their bill and to notify the billing department if changes need to be made. Finucane also commented that if refunds were issued to all who were unaware of the number of base units they had been paying for, that money would need to be made up by other customers, and that is not fair to the customer base as a whole.

Nelson has not yet contacted those customers whose surveys indicated that the number of base units needed to increase, and asked for direction on how to make the appropriate increases. Shepeluk suggested that an approach of amnesty be granted to those who need increases in allocation – no refunds will be granted due to the survey and no allocation fees will be assessed for those projects that indicate an increase – however, those properties that indicate an increase is needed will be billed as such effective August 2014. Any decreases in base units will be made immediately for the May 2014 billing. **By consent, the board agreed to the Manager's proposed method of making base unit changes and asked Nelson to reach out to all affected on an individual basis.** Necessary increases will be made for the August 2014 billing, where the staff plans to implement new rates as well.

Monthly Reports: Tuscany discussed the April reports for the water, wastewater, and public works departments. Work is being done of the well field generator, the water treatment plant is being used for a sanitary survey training the week of 5/19, and there has so far been enough water coming from just the springs to meet current demand. The wastewater department is expecting Solar Bee installation the week of 5/19 with the hope that if the Solar Bees mix well enough, some aerators can be turned off. The WWTP Upgrade Project is still moving according to schedule, but with very little float time. Tuscany asked the board to consider a study of Thatcher Brook to predict the possible changes in direction that may occur in the future. Shepeluk agrees that the information would be very useful for the proposed cost of about \$7,000. **Finucane moved to authorize the manager to negotiate a study of Thatcher Brook with Malone and MacBroom to be completed for 2014. Parks seconded the motion, and vote was held, and the motion passed unanimously.**

Minutes: Parks moved to approve the minutes of the March 31 meeting. Finucane seconded the motion, a vote was held, and the motion passed unanimously.

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There being no further business, the meeting of the Water and Sewer Commissioners was adjourned at 6:15pm.

The next regular meeting is scheduled for Monday, June 23. There will be no meeting on the 4th Monday in May (May 26).

Respectfully submitted,
Courtney Nelson, Utilities Billing Clerk

Approved by: _____ Date: _____