

NEW SHOREHAM WATER COMMISSION & SEWER COMMISSION  
MONTHLY MEETING

February 24, 2010 Minutes

Present were WATER Commission members Chair Sandra Finizia, Wayne Battey, alternates Frank Leslie and Rally Migliaccio, and Clerk Janet Ziegler. Absent were members Robby Brown, Peter McNerney, Cliff McGinnes.

Present were SEWER Commission members Tom Doyle, Sandra Finizia, Alternates Frank Leslie and Rally Migliaccio and District Clerk Janet Ziegler. Absent were members Robby Brown, Peter McNerney, Cliff McGinnes.

Also present were Public Works Director Nancy Dodge, Finance Director Amy Lewis, Water Superintendent Dave Simmons, Sewer Superintendent Ray Boucher, and Attorney Elliot Taubman.

S. Finizia called the meeting to order at 4:35 P.M

**JOINT MEETING WATER AND SEWER DISTRICT.**

1. Director of Public Works and Engineering.

- STATUS OF ALARM SYSTEMS, REPORT FROM OMNI ELECTRIC ON HONEYWELL ALARMS COSTS.

R. Boucher stated that a purchase order for \$10K (an estimated) had been written for the six Honeywell Alarms; a written proposal has not yet been received from Howell Conant. The Commission commented that from previous discussions, the six alarms were to cost \$3K (at \$500 each) and asked for an explanation for the difference. Boucher stated that one alarm (a test unit) had been installed at the Boat Basin for \$1,495 and he expected the costs of the other alarms to be of the same order. Besides the cost of the physical boxes, there's associated electrical installation, set-up and testing expenses. Conant (Omni Electric) projected that monitoring costs would run ~\$30 per month per alarm/location. N. Dodge requested approval for the test alarm expenses since this was installed before the alarm work was authorized.

**MOTION:** by Sewer Commissioner S. Finizia to approve the purchase order of \$1,495 for the test alarm installed at the Block Island Boat Basin. The motion was seconded a quorum was present and the vote to approve was:

AYE: 4 (Leslie, Doyle, Finizia, Migliaccio). NAY: Ø. ABSTAIN: Ø.

The motion carried.

E. Taubman was concerned that any purchase with a life of more than one year should be capitalized and depreciated. The Commission commented that they would have preferred having been alerted to the entire Omni project costs from the beginning; Boucher will tabulate the auxiliary expenses and annual monitoring costs for the next meeting.

- SEAWINDS UPDATE.

N. Dodge reported that the affordable unit at Seawinds closed last Friday and that the municipal lien against the one unit had been satisfied. The Sewer and Water District have unpaid invoices since 2006 with the Seawinds Project for allocation, infrastructure reimbursement and application fees; the Public Works Director was instructed to include the input from both superintendents before the Lien was finalized, which was not carried out. Dodge will circulate the sewer and water items on the single unit municipal lien. The broader question of unpaid bills for the Seawind Project (reimbursement of infrastructure costs, allocation, application fees and unsigned agreements originating from 2006) remains unresolved and without action.

2. Finance

- Town FY 2011 Budget: Items of Mutual Interest.

A. Land reported that the Town budget for FY 2011 was not yet finalized, but that the Water & Sewer District should look for a 3% increase for billing and payroll services. Alternatively, R. Boucher projected that charges to the Town for septage would likely go up ~\$10/1,000 gallons based on loading factors and increased costs experienced over the last year.

- SHUT-OFFS.

R. Boucher reported contacting most of the people on the proposed January shut-off lists. A. Land stated that the trigger for shut-offs was 90-days, however, she was unconcerned with collections for the seasonal accounts as those

funds were eventually re-couped when people returned in the spring and wanted service restored. The superintendents can collect outstanding bills before services were reinstated.

- STATUS OF CREDIT CARD APPLICATIONS.

A. Land reported that the bank has not yet responded to the application for credit cards. She highly recommended that a written policy be established for their use, defining appropriate occasions and types of purchases; the goal was to authenticate the expenditures of public funds backed by the purchase order policies in place. A draft would be distributed for the next meeting.

### 3. Energy Grants - E. Taubman.

E. Taubman reported that he has been in contact with various agents regarding solar applications for the two plants and had also been working with R. Torrey (Town Council) to put together the Town's proposal. D. Simmons stated that the new water grant proposal to USDA could not be amended as it is critical to operations as it stands. Responding to the suggestion that sewer might sell excess power to BIPCO, R. Boucher stated that while the sewer plant was on BI Power's grid in the winter, there was no excess power generated in the summer. E. Taubman said he and Geremia's office would be submitting a grant proposal to USDA for solar applications in a couple of weeks.

## WATER DISTRICT BUSINESS.

### 4. Accept January 20 Water Minutes.

**MOTION:** by S. Finizia to accept the January 20 minutes as distributed. The motion was seconded, a quorum was present and the vote to affirm was:

AYE: 4 (Battey, Leslie, Finizia, Migliaccio). NAY: Ø. ABSTAIN: Ø.

The motion carried.

### 5. DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS AND ENGINEERING. *No report.*

### 6. Finance.

- January Financials. A. Land stated that revenues and expenses were typically on a holding pattern through spring. Simmons responded that there were two unusual expenses this year: (1) the five-year draining and inspection of the water storage tanks and (2) that Well #6 pump will be pulled and replaced before the season. The water tank inspections, planned for early April, are required by RI Drinking Water Quality.

- Aging Report. Land stated there was nothing new to report.

### 7. Water Plant Operations.

Simmons reported that there were a noteworthy number of freeze ups in January; most significant losses occurred from three sprinkler systems. The Alan Box and Honeywell alarms are running side by side and working great. Negotiations with USDA for the next water grant are expected to begin March 15.

### 8. Announcements and Public Comment.

## SEWER DISTRICT BUSINESS.

### 9. Accept January 20 Sewer Minutes.

**MOTION:** by T. Doyle to accept the minutes as distributed was seconded and adopted unanimously.

### 10. Director of Public Works and Engineering.

- Operator Work Hour Policy.

N. Dodge stated that a work policy has come into question. Although the sewer operator's working schedule has been customarily set at 7:00am to 3:30pm (8 hour day) with a fifteen minute (paid) break in the morning and half-hour (non-paid) lunch; the policy has never been put in writing. At issue is a sewer operator that clocked in before 7am and is demanding to be paid for the time. J. Ziegler will research past history regarding policies and the topic will be agended for the next meeting.

## 11. Finance. January Financials, Aging Report.

A. Land stated that sewer revenues were where they were last year, as are expenses, however sewer didn't do well last year and there was a need to look at expenses very carefully for the rest of the year.

Responding to a question regarding the AccuFund Utility package, Land said that the Town switched over to the AccuFund software a year ago, but that there was no target date to implement the utility software. She expects to run into technical difficulties especially importing the history. Implementing new software is best done at the beginning of a fiscal year. E. Taubman responded that the new rate design the committee has been working on, will require the new software. The finance office is presently using DOS software.

## 12. Sewer Plant Operations and Policies.

Update Roof Repairs. S. Finizia reported, from a conversation with engineer Geremia, that a new roof, stacks and spark arrestors would be rolled into the next sewer grant that he hopes to be funded next fall. In the meantime, the roof needs to be properly repaired and fire-proofing applied.

## 13. Report from Recommendation Committee for Job Applicant.

R. Boucher reported that the hiring committee and he had concurred on offering a position to C. McElderry.

**MOTION:** by S. Finizia to hire C. McElderry, based on the recommendation of the hiring committee and the sewer superintendent, to start April 1 at \$16/hour. The motion was seconded, a quorum was present and the vote to hire was:

AYE: 4 (Leslie, Doyle, Finizia, Migliaccio). NAY: Ø. ABSTAIN: Ø.

The motion carried.

Boucher reported that an electrical survey of the plant was initiated through Geremia's office; he was impressed with the depth and breath of coverage.

## 14. 2010 Parking Lot Permits.

The Commission discussed whether a storage trailer in the lot would be considered illegal under the new Town ordinance banning trade trailers except on site or on personal property. First Warden K. Gaffett, speaking from the audience, stated that the new ordinance may have unintended effects; she didn't think that renting space in the commission's parking lot would be in conflict. The Commission's intent was to allow permits for stationary trailers until the lot was sold out for passenger vehicles.

The Commission considered prices for the parking permit and changes in the consumer price index.

**MOTION:** by T. Doyle to maintain the current price structure for the upcoming year; the motion was seconded, a quorum was present and the vote to hire was:

AYE: 4 (Leslie, Doyle, Finizia, Migliaccio). NAY: Ø. ABSTAIN: Ø.

The motion carried.

15. Announcements and Public Comment. *None.*

Adjourn.

**MOTION:** by T. Doyle to adjourn the meeting was seconded and unanimously approved by all members.

The meeting adjourned at 5:50 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Janet Ziegler

District Clerk Approved: April 19, 2010



every drop counts