

Board of Water Commissioners

Minutes 03/13/2012

Harwich Water Department
BOARD OF WATER COMMISSIONERS
Meeting on March 13, 2012

Present: Chairman Donald Bates, Vice Chairman Allin Thompson, Clerk Danette Gonsalves, Superintendent Craig Wiegand, Secretary Alexandra Bilek, Senior Billing Administrator, Comptroller Sandra Cummings, Selectmen Angelo LaMantia, Town Treasurer Mary McIsaac

Chairman Donald Bates called the meeting to order at 8:15 a.m.

The minutes for the previous meetings held on February 28, 2012, were approved with a motion by Clerk Gonsalves and seconded by Vice Chairman Thompson; 3-0-0.

The Board reviewed the Warrant Articles for the Special Town Meeting.

- Accepting the SRF Funding for Site 10
- Change of use for solar panels at Route 39 site
- Change of use for solar panels at Site 10
- Becoming a Water-Sewer District

The Board signed two previously discussed letters. One regarding the name change from Highway Department to DPW and the other stating the Board would take over negotiating Union contracts.

Mr. Wiegand presented a letter of appreciation to the Board in regard to the work done by Foreman Steve Hicks and his crew.

Mr. Wiegand presented a Disposition for Surplus Goods and Equipment. Vice Chairman Thompson moved to accept the policy of the Disposition of Surplus Goods and Equipment with a second by Clerk Gonsalves; 3-0-0.

Selectmen Angelo LaMantia shared with the Board that at the last Cape Cod Selectmen's meeting the County Commissioners proposed and are supporting a regional wastewater operation. He said they ran into headwinds from the other selectmen present. Mr. LaMantia said a Warrant Article is being drafted that requires the County Commissioners to have each Town vote on it.

Mr. Wiegand apprised the board of the difficulty the Department has been having collecting monies owed for the services provided to National Grid. He said Mr. Merriam approached him last week because National Grid called him asking that the Department enter into a "gentleman's agreement" that they will pay if and when their Counsel says they can pay. Mr. Wiegand said they are \$6,300 in the arrears, and at the advice of Town Counsel a letter was sent to National Grid saying we will cease and desist all services until the payment has been rendered. He said it is currently between legal counsels. Mr.

LaMantia said the Department is holding up projects and suggested that we charge the homeowner instead. Mr. Wiegand explained that it is not in the home owner's best interest because if National Grid hits something the home owner is responsible for it. Mr. LaMantia suggested the Board send a letter to the Board of Selectmen in regard to this problem. Mr. Wiegand asked the Board if they wanted to enter into a gentlemen's agreement with National Grid. The Board agreed to continue holding back services until payment has been made.

Clerk Gonsalves moved to adjourn the regular meeting and open the public hearing at 8:35 a.m. with a second by Vice Chairman Thompson; 3-0-0. Clerk Gonsalves read the public hearing notice for the proposed rate increases into the minutes. Mr. Wiegand referred to the Cape water rate chart and pointed out that Harwich's rates are the third lowest on the Cape. Vice Chairman Thompson said the rate increase is \$.06 per 1,000 gallons. There was no public comment. Clerk Gonsalves moved to close the public hearing at 8:55 a.m. and resume the regular meeting with a second by Vice Chairman Thompson; 3-0-0. Clerk Gonsalves moved to accept the proposed water rate increase with a second by Vice Chairman Thompson; 3-0-0.

Town Treasurer Mary McIsaac presented the Tax Collector's proposal for a new lock box service with Century Bank. She explained that a lock box is a post office box where payments are mailed to and then the funds are immediately deposited into the Town's bank account. Ms. McIsaac said all of the mail is imaged and then uploaded to the Town to apply it to each account. She said it frees up her staff that is bogged down with processing payments. Vice Chairman Thompson asked what the fees would be. Ms. McIsaac said her office would absorb most of the cost, but the Water Department would have to pay a portion depending upon the Water Department's receipts. Ms. McIsaac said she does not have an exact figure of what the Water Department's portion would be at this time. Vice Chairman Thompson asked Mr. Wiegand if the Department needed this service. Mr. Wiegand said he believes it is necessary as the Water Department does not process its own payments. Ms. McIsaac said the lock box will help her to identify what is Enterprise Fund money and be more efficient. Vice Chairman Thompson moved to table this until Ms. McIsaac can present what the charge would be to the Water Department.

Senior Billing Administrator Wellesley Marsh presented the Board with a billing update. She the Consumer Confidence Report (CCR) will be included in the spring bills. Mr. Wiegand said by law the Department is required to provide a paper copy of the CCR to all of its customers. He said he would prefer to do it electronically like the larger towns and cities. Mr. LaMantia offered to send a letter to the State DEP from the Board of Selectmen.

Comptroller Sandra Cummings presented the Board with a budget overview and FY13 summary.

Vice Chairman Thompson told the Board that the Planning Board is not ready to accept the East Harwich Village handbook. He said that the Planning Board would like to meet with various departments in regard to water quality. Vice Chairman Thompson said they have not set a date for the Board of Water Commissioners to meet with them.

The Board will meet again on Tuesday, March 27, 2012.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:25 a.m. with a motion by Clerk Gonsalves and seconded by Chairman Bates; 3-0-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Donald T. Bates, Chairman

Craig Wiegand, Superintendent

Allin P. Thompson, Vice Chairman

Alexandra Bilek, Secretary

Danette Gonsalves, Clerk