

Harwich Water Department
BOARD OF WATER COMMISSIONERS
Meeting held on June 11, 2013 at 8:16 a.m.

Present: Chairman Donald Bates, Vice Chairman Allin Thompson, Clerk Danette Gonsalves, Superintendent Craig Wiegand, Comptroller Sandra Cummings, Office Assistant Anna Brigham and Billing Administrator Wellesley Marsh. Also in attendance was Selectman Angelo LaMantia.

Chairman Donald Bates called the meeting to order at 8:16 a.m.

The minutes for the meeting held on May 28, 2013 were approved with a motion by Vice Chairman Thompson and seconded by Clerk Gonsalves; 3-0-0. Minutes were signed.

Consent Agenda

Office received one request for abatement. Billing Administrator Wellesley Marsh explained that it was handled administratively. Vice Chairman Allin Thompson moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Seconded. All in Favor: 3-0-0.

Old Business

Superintendent Craig Wiegand discussed Intermunicipal Agreement. The Agreement is currently being reviewed at Town Hall. The Agreement will come to the Commissioners for final review shortly.

National Grid meeting is scheduled for June 26th. Location will be Town Hall and time is tentatively scheduled for 10:00. Town Counsel will be there.

Abatement update given by Clerk Danette Gonsalves. Met with Comptroller Sandra Cummings and reviewed how other towns handle their abatement matters. Superintendent Craig Wiegand spoke with other superintendents and they seem to be having the same issues as we are. Vice Chairman Allin Thompson stated that he appreciates that we black out the names of the applicants so they remain anonymous. The Town of Falmouth doesn't accept any abatement requests. Provincetown will issue an adjustment only after a plumber certifies the leak has been fixed. Board discussed our policy. Customers can always appeal to the State if their abatements are denied here but they don't seem to be doing it. State seems to approve most of the appeals they review.

Late fee's were discussed. It was clarified that the staff can waive a late fee only once for legitimate reasons for a resident who has a history of paying their bills in a timely manner. Superintendent Weigand discussed liens. The staff spends a lot of time with customers through the process only to be denied at the commissioners meeting. Shut off procedures were discussed. We give customers an opportunity to pay by a payment plan. At the time of Shut Off, these customers have had an outstanding balance for years. The office provides a list of agencies that may be able to help with a water bill for people in need. We have recently liened 107 customers, out of those, 50-75 are repeats. Billing Administrator Wellesley Marsh discussed payment plans and that we require 50% deposit. Selectman Angelo LaMantia suggested we talk to the Council on Aging about residents that are really stressed. Other options were discussed. Can we limit the number of gallons for customers who cannot pay their water bill but still allow them water as a necessity but not for irrigation? During shut off's, we end up collecting about 90% of what's owed. We hung 12 Shut Off cards and all but one are still on. They either paid in full or are on a plan. Next meeting we will discuss liens.

New Business

National Grid Markout draft policy was discussed. Vice Chairman Allin Thompson moved to approve the policy effective immediately. Clerk Danette Gonsalves seconded. All in favor.

Superintendent Craig Wiegand stated that this new policy will simplify the process and will be for all utility companies.

Local Rate study was reviewed. Harwich falls second to lowest in the study. Comptroller Sandra Cummings will gather some cost per billing numbers. Billing quarterly might make sense but should be reviewed. We will read monthly to catch large leaks.

Superintendent Craig Wiegand gave a brief update on theft of the old meters from the back of the property earlier in the week. Loss was approximately \$5,000. Apparently the thieves drove down the power line access road. The storage of the meters has since been relocated.

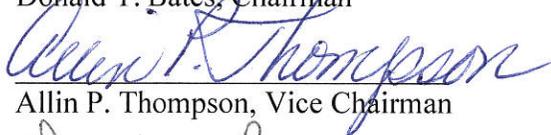
The next Board meeting will be held on Tuesday, June 25, 2013. The Board will discuss restructuring the committee next meeting.

Chairman Donald Bates moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:19 a.m. and seconded. 3-0-0.

Respectfully submitted,



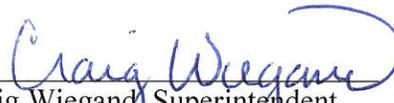
Donald T. Bates, Chairman



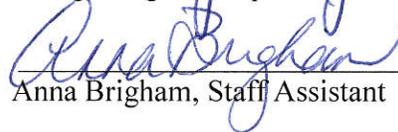
Allin P. Thompson, Vice Chairman



Danette Gonsalves, Clerk



Craig Wiegand, Superintendent



Anna Brigham, Staff Assistant