



Town Of Webster

Est. 1832

Massachusetts

Webster Water Sewer Commission

350 Main Street
Webster, MA 01570

Earl Gabor - Chairman
Rick Neeser - Vice Chairman
Dan Duteau - Secretary
Tom Andrade

Doug Willardson - Town Administrator
Gregory Woods - Water Superintendent
William Burke - Sewer Superintendent

Meeting Minutes

April 5, 2019, 1:00 PM

Webster Town Hall, Irene Martel Meeting Room
350 Main Street, Webster, MA 01570

Attendees: Earl Gabor, Rick Neeser, Dan Duteau, Tom Andrade, Bill Burke, and Greg Woods. Absent: Doug Willardson

Chairman Gabor called the meeting to order at 1:00 PM.

Meeting Minutes

The Commissioners reviewed the draft minutes and voted unanimously to approve the minutes, as amended.

1 - Existing Business

A – Abatements: Mr. Woods stated that there were four abatement requests for the Commission to review.

595 South Main Street: An abatement request was received from Mama's Kitchen, located at 595 South Main Street. Mr. Woods explained that the property had recently been purchased and that the new owners had identified a leak in a wall of the rental unit within the building. The leak did not enter the sewer system. Ms. Sherouk Gaber, the owner's daughter, stated that there was extensive damage as a result of the leak but it had been repaired by a licensed plumber. Mr. Woods stated that the water bill was roughly five times the average water bill from the previous owner of the restaurant and recommended the sewer bill be adjusted to the normal usage since the water did not enter the sewer system. The Commission discussed the abatement request. A motion was made, and seconded, to approve the abatement of the sewer portion of the bill to the average water usage. By Roll Call vote: Gabor – aye, Neeser – aye, Duteau – aye, Andrade – aye.

23 Ash Street: Mr. Woods explained to the Board that the property owner, Mr. Stephen Lyons, had paid to have a second water meter installed at his house in June, 2018



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for outdoor water use but that he did not use any water. Mr. Lyons is contesting the \$30.54 minimum usage fee, and the subsequent \$30.00 demand fee, because he didn't use any water. Mr. Woods explained that Mr. Lyons had spoken with the Water Department Administrative Assistant about the initial bill and then requested to speak with the Superintendent. Mr. Woods said he called Mr. Lyons before the bill due date and left a message but did not hear back from him. The Commissioner explained the minimum fee is per meter for the first 500 cubic feet of water, regardless of the amount of water used. It was pointed out that second meters are only read once a year and not at the normal quarterly schedule of the primary meters. A motion was made, and seconded, to deny the abatement request. By Roll Call vote: Gabor – aye, Neeser – aye, Duteau – aye, Andrade – aye.

4 Church Street: Mr. Woods explained that the United Church of Christ had requested an abatement for a leaking toilet that is located in an unused area of the church. Mr. Woods stated that since the water entered the sewer system, the recommendation is to deny the request. A motion was made, and seconded, to deny the abatement request. By Roll Call vote: Gabor – aye, Neeser – aye, Duteau – aye, Andrade – aye.

225 Killdeer Road: Mr. Woods explained that the homeowner repaired an underground leak in the water service between the garage, where the water meter is located, and the house. Mr. Woods stated that Water Department staff confirmed the presence of the leak and the subsequent repair. Since the leaked water did not enter the sewer system, the recommendation is to adjust the sewer portion of the bill to the average usage. A motion was made, and seconded, to approve the abatement of the sewer portion of the bill to the average water usage. By Roll Call vote: Gabor – aye, Neeser – aye, Duteau – aye, Andrade – aye.

B – Shut-Off Policy: Mr. Woods provided a final copy of the policy to the Board for their signature. The Commissioners signed the document and requested that Mr. Woods provide a copy to the Town Clerk. Commissioner Gabor said that he had spoken with the Jen Sullivan, Webster Director of Health, to discuss potential shut-off scenarios. Mr. Gabor suggested that the Board request a written statement from the Director so they can make informed decisions regarding the implementation of the policy.

C – Water Sewer Draft Bylaw: Commissioner Gabor stated that the draft bylaw will be presented for approval at the May 13, 2019 Town meeting.



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D – Legal Opinion Regarding Commission Officers: Commissioner Gabor stated that according to Town counsel, there are no regulations prohibiting non-voting members from being a Commission officer. Mr. Gabor suggested that the Chair and Vice Chair positions be restricted to voting members.

3 – Water Dept. Update: Superintendent Woods provided an overview of the Department’s annual budget, including personnel and operating expenses, and debt services. Commissioner Gabor suggested the budget be presented in a pie chart format as a visual representation of how the money is allocated. Mr. Woods then presented a plan of the water distribution system and explained the how the system is operated.

4 – Sewer Dept. Update: Superintendent Burke stated that the FY2020 budget will be similar to FY2019, with no major increases in spending. He provided a brief summary of the SCADA upgrades, stating that he expected the project to be completed in the next two weeks.

5 – New Business

A – ATM & STM May 2019 Warrant Articles: Superintendent Burke provided an overview of the Sewer Department warrant articles for the upcoming Town meeting. Chairman Gabor requested that the other Board members attend the Town meeting.

B – Waste Collection System at Memorial Beach: Chairman Gabor stated that as a member of the Memorial Beach Committee, there had been discussions regarding the status of the sewer lines at the beach house. Superintendent Burke provided insight as to the piping layout and recent modifications to the system that allow the discharges from the beach house to enter the municipal sewer collection system. The Board asked Mr. Burke to contact the Highway Superintendent to confirm that the pipes inside the building were also replaced.

C – Develop Mission Statement: Chairman Gabor and Commissioner Duteau provided examples of mission statements they had developed. A brief discussion followed and Mr. Gabor requested the Commissioners develop statements in preparation of the next meeting.

D – Commission Information: Chairman Gabor requested that at some point the Board review the water meter billing and installation policies. He also requested that a calendar be developed by the two Departments so the Board can be aware of upcoming submittal deadlines. Superintendent Burke informed the Board that the Town installed an electric sign board at Town Hall and that it would be a good idea for the Commission to utilize it for announcements.



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Adjournment

A motion was made, and unanimously approved, to adjourn the meeting at 3:05 PM. The next meeting is scheduled for April 18th at 2:30 PM in the Irene Martel Conference room.

Respectfully submitted,
Gregory Woods
Water Superintendent

Attachments: Draft minutes
Abatements
Water Shut-off Policy