



COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

Town of Southwick

454 COLLEGE HIGHWAY SOUTHWICK, MA 01077

Department of Public Works- Water Division

Telephone (413) 569-6772 Fax (413) 569-5001

Water Commissioners Meeting Minutes Thursday, May 18, 2017

Members in Attendance: Edward Johnson, Chairman
Dave Meczywor
Luther Hosmer

Others Present: Randy Brown, DPW Director
Christie Myette, Office Manager

Guests: Greg Fitzpatrick, Reporter
Eric Wilder, South View Estates, 61
Terry Ollbrych, South View Estates, 62

Absent: None

The meeting was recorded.

The meeting of the Water Commissioners was called to order at 6pm in Conference Room 2.

Review of the April 6, 2017 Minutes:

*A **MOTION** was made by David Meczywor to accept the April 6, 2017 Minutes. This was seconded by Luther Hosmer and motion passed unanimously.*

April 2017 Commitments was signed.

DPW DIRECTORS REPORT:

1. Water Meter Replacement Project there are 3 contracts that are in different stages.

Contract 1-The communication system is up and running. EJP is helping troubleshoot some of the issues with the meter installations.

Contract 2- We have been ordering meters and accessories on an as needed basis from TI-Sales and EJ Prescott.

Contract 3- East National Water started installing water meter in November 2016 and are currently working in all the regions. The Town-wide completion rate is at about 60%. The appointments have slowed so DPW has plans to send another notice for homeowners to schedule appointments.

2. Prowler Water conducted a Town-Wide leak detection in early May in accordance with Mass DEP policy. We are waiting for the final report.

3. At this time it is not known if a Water Use Restriction will be in effect for the upcoming summer. Per the Town's Water Withdrawal Permit through Mass DEP a Water Use Restriction must be implemented if the following conditions are met:

- During May & June the mean daily stream flow at the USGS gauge #0118350 (Westfield River) falls below 502 cubic feet per second for three consecutive days.

- During July, August & September the mean stream flow at the USGS gauge #0118350 (Westfield River) falls below 174 cubic feet per second for three consecutive days.

4. The State is officially out of drought conditions. Southwick was the last Town to be in a drought.

5. The Water Department has completed water readings in early May. Bills are expected to go out in early to mid June. Two letters were attached that were sent out with the billings. One outlines the Water Use Restriction and the Water Meter Replacement Project.

6. Jason Stevens joined the Water Department in mid-April to fill the open operator position when Paul Sleeper retired. Jason is taking a class in preparation of the distribution and treatment licensure tests.

A work order summary was presented to Commissioners.

OLD BUSINESS

North Pond Property

The vote at The Annual Town Meeting passed but they are about \$1.8 Million short in funds to purchase the North Pond Property. They are looking to secure the rest of the funding necessary to purchase this land by the end of this year.

NEW BUSINESS

Town Meeting Recap

The article that the Water Commissioners submitted for the Water Line Easement for the North Pond Property did pass. There was some discussion about it asking why the Water Department wouldn't give some more money to the purchase of the land. Randy Brown explained that the Water Commissioners voted to purchase the easement for \$30,000.00.

The articles for the College Highway Water Main, the Pump Station Upgrade and the Backhoe all which was included in the budget all passed.

The Water Commissioners discussed meeting with Russ Fox so that the assessment that the Town put on the Water Department could be discussed. Randy Brown was going to see if Russ would meet with the Water Commissioners at a later date.

APPOINTMENT

South View Estates Water Bill

Terry Ollbrych and Eric Wilder of the South View Estates Condominium Association met to discuss the past due water bill for their irrigation meter. This meter is located in a meter pit and was requested to be shutoff and never requested to be turned on but was turned on and used for the last few years. It was happened upon when water crews were in the area and found the sprinklers happened to be going during the Water Use Restriction last summer.

The representatives from South View Estates are looking to have their bill reduced because with the high turnover rate on the Board it was not caught that a bill was not received since 2012. It was also requested that South View be put on a payment plan. The Commissioners advised them that all payment plans will have to go through the Tax Collectors Office. The Water Commissioners decided to give 10% off the bill due to the circumstances but going forward the proper procedure would have to be followed regarding water turn on and shutoff and that the Town will be present each and every time. After the vote it was motioned that the irrigation contractor was the one who turned the water on recently this spring so that some work could be done to the pool at South View without notifying the DPW. This is likely what had happened in years past.

*A **MOTION** was made by David Meczywor to abate 10% of the water bill for South View Estates. This was seconded by Luther Hosmer and the motion passed unanimously.*

NEW BUSINESS CONTINUED

Water Meter Project

We are having trouble getting residents to make appointments to have their water meters changed over. A discussion was had about ways to get people to make appointments. The ways were possibly charging a surcharge if you still have the old meter and possibly progressing to having your water shutoff for non-compliance.

A MOTION was made by Dave Meczywor to adopt \$25.00 meter reading charge starting on the October bills. This was seconded by Luther Hosmer and motion passed unanimously.

Summer Schedule

The next meeting will be held on June 1st 2017 unless otherwise posted.

*Luther Hosmer made a **MOTION TO ADJOURN** this was seconded by David Meczywor the meeting was adjourned at 6:50 pm.*

Respectfully Submitted By,

Christie Myette
DPW Office Manager

Ed Johnson, Chairman

David Meczywor

Luther Hosmer