



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, September 6, 2018

Members in Attendance: Edward Johnson, Chairman  
Dave Meczywor

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

Guests: Ronald Berg  
Absent: Luther Hosmer

The meeting was recorded.

The meeting of the Water Commissioners was called to order at 6:00pm in Conference Room 2.

Review of the July 12, 2018 Minutes

*A MOTION was made by Dave Meczywor to accept July 12<sup>th</sup>, 2018 minutes as written. This was seconded by Edward Johnson. Motion passed.*

The Commitment for July & August was signed by The Commissioners.

There were no Elderly Rate Applications submitted.

#### **DPW DIRECTORS REPORT:**

1. Tighe & Bond is continuing the design efforts for the College Highway Water Main & Pump Station improvement project. Mass DOT is currently reviewing the plan for the water main replacement as part of a requirement for an Access Permit.

2. Water bills were issued in late May due June 20<sup>th</sup>. Demand and shutoff letters were sent to delinquent property owners, followed by shutoffs for those who did not pay. A report was provided to the Commissioners of those properties that are off to date.

3. Postcards were sent out to approximately 100 customers that have not had their water meter upgraded, with a message stating an additional \$100 fee would apply for manual readings. About 65 old meters remain. A list of those remaining was provided to the Commissioners.

4. Water crews will start manual reading meters starting in late September and bills are expected to go out in October/November.

5. The Greens of Southwick- West (Formerly Southwick County Club) is under constriction with plans to extend the water main to their subdivision. All utility work is expected to be completed by the end of the year.
6. The Town was given another extension until June 2019 to purchase the North Pond property.
7. Emil Pustea will start testing backflow devices in the next few weeks that were either 1) not tested in the spring or 2) require 2 tests per year.
8. We had 2 water main breaks recently. On Matthews Road which was a result of a failed coupling and the other on Congamond Road. On Congamond Road the contractor dug up a service line and pulled it out of the water main as a result the road had to be shutdown to complete repairs.

**A work order summary was presented to Commissioners.**

**OLD BUSINESS**

NONE

**NEW BUSINESS**

NONE

**APPOINTMENT**

**6:15pm Ron Berg- 131 Feeding Hills Road- Material & Labor Bill Dispute**

Some background information was given to The Commissioners regarding this billing dispute and history of the meter.

Ron Berg called on May 17<sup>th</sup> 2018 stating that his meter was leaking and asked what the procedure usually is in situations such as this. He couldn't remember who he spoke with if it was the office or the meter installer but whoever said that he would not be charged for the meter. His father, the owner of the property informed Ron that they were being charged for the meter after receiving the bill in late May 2018. The letter that was sent said that it was determined that the meter was damaged due to the meter not being protected from freezing temperatures.

Ron Berg wanted to know how that determination was made and it's impossible for a meter to freeze in May. The Water Commissioners said that due to the damage to the meter which was not leaking prior to winter of 2017-2018, the only reasonable explanation that lack of heat caused the meter to freeze. Ron Berg went on to say that there are several electric space heaters that heat the home when vacant. The Water Commissioners were in agreement that these heaters did not provide sufficient heat to the property thus causing the damage to the meter. Ron Berg inquired that the meter must be defective and that's why it cracked. The meter was installed for a total of 877 days if it was defective then it would have failed much sooner than 877 days. The DPW Director and Water Commissioners went on to discuss steps that can be taken to prevent a frozen meter in the future. At the end of this appointment the Water Department's determination stands and the material and labor bill for the frozen meter is still the homeowner's responsibility.

*Dave Meczywor made a **MOTION TO ADJOURN** this was seconded by Edward Johnson the meeting was adjourned at 6:31 pm.*

Respectfully Submitted By,

Christie Myette  
DPW Office Manager

---

Ed Johnson, Chairman

---

David Meczywor

---

Luther Hosmer