



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 November 5th, 2020

Members in Attendance: Edward Johnson, Chairman - Remote
Dave Meczywor, Commissioner - Remote
John Cain, Commissioner - Remote

Others Present: Randy Brown, DPW Director - Remote
Christie Myette, Office Manager – Town Hall Remote
Keven Soper, Southwick Water Foreman - Remote
Doug Moglin, Select Board Chairman - Remote

Guests: Gary Liquori, 266 South Longyard Road
Thomas Reed, 20 Great Brook Drive
Rob Levesque, R. Levesque Associates
John Pagliaro & Clyde Owen, Potential Developer 42 Depot St.
Michael Doherty, Southwick Planning Board Chairman

The meeting was recorded.

The meeting of the Board of Water Commissioners was called to order at 6:00pm.

Pursuant to the Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, M.G.L. Chapter. 30A, Section 18, and the Governor's March 15, 2020 Order imposing strict limitations on the number of people that may gather in one place, this meeting of the Town of Southwick, Board of Water Commissioners is being conducted at both Town Hall and via remote participation by some or all of its members to the greatest extent possible. No in-person attendance of members of the public will be permitted, but every effort will be made to ensure that the public can adequately access the proceedings as provided for the Order. Despite our best efforts, if we are not able to provide for real-time access via the Zoom Conference Call Platform we will post a record of the meeting on the Town's website as soon as we are able.

Public Comments
NONE

Introduction of John Cain to the Board as well as review of recent Water Department business.

Review of the September 2nd Meeting Minutes & October 13th Joint Appointment with the Select Board Minutes. Please note Edward Johnson listened to the recording of the October 13th Joint Appointment with the Select Board as he could not be present.

A MOTION was made by Dave Meczywor to accept the minutes from the September 2nd meeting. This was seconded by Edward Johnson.

Roll Call Vote:

Edward Johnson – Yes

Dave Meczywor- Yes

MOTION PASSED

A MOTION was made by Dave Meczywor to accept the minutes from the October 13th Joint Appointment with the Select Board Minutes. This was seconded by Edward Johnson.

Roll Call Vote:

Edward Johnson – Yes

Dave Meczywor- Yes

MOTION PASSED

The monthly commitments for August, September and October 2020 were approved to be signed at a later date.

Twelve Elderly Rate Applications were presented for the Water Commissioners. Eleven out of the twelve had met all the requirements necessary to receive the elderly rate.

A MOTION was made by Dave Meczywor to accept the elderly rate applications for 8 Renny Ave, 6 Deer Run, 43 Berkshire Ave, 55 Feeding Hills Road, 13 Tobacco Road, 118 Feeding Hills Road, 13 Shaggbark Drive, 3 Shore Road, 73 Summer Drive, 40 Wynnfield Circle and 27 Veteran Street. This was seconded by John Cain.

Roll Call Vote:

Edward Johnson – Yes

Dave Meczywor- Yes

John Cain- Yes

MOTION PASSED

A MOTION was made by Dave Meczywor to deny the elderly rate applications for 42 Rosewood Lane as the application did not meet the necessary requirements. This was seconded by John Cain.

Roll Call Vote:

Edward Johnson – Yes

Dave Meczywor- Yes

John Cain- Yes

MOTION PASSED

APPOINTMENTS

6:15pm-6:30pm- Gary Liquori- 266 South Longyard Road Abatement Request

Mr. Liquori was given 15 minutes to explain why he was due the requested abatement of \$2,000.00 out of his \$2,980.47 bill. Mr. Liquori believes his meter is incorrect because nothing had changed in his property from last year the amount of people living in the home did not change. The hourly readings from the property show that there was what looking like irrigation usage every day during the summer from Midnight to 9am which was more than in summer 2019 which was only from 5am to 9am. This also violated the water ban that was in effect for

most of the summer for 2020. Mr. Liquori says that he does not touch his sprinkler system and he doesn't know what it's set for and still doesn't agree with the bill. The Commissioners advised that he should watch his irrigation usage closer next year and follow the water ban if it is issued.

A MOTION was made by Dave Meczywor to deny the requested abatement for 266 South Longyard Road in the amount of \$2,000.00. This was seconded by John Cain.

Roll Call Vote:

Edward Johnson – Yes

Dave Meczywor- Yes

John Cain- Yes

MOTION PASSED

6:30pm- 6:45pm- Thomas Reed- 20 Great Brook Drive Abatement Request

Mr. Reed was given 15 minutes to explain his requested abatement of \$700.00 on his \$1,858.67 bill. Mr. Reed acknowledged that he used more water than he did in previous years due to the pandemic, drought as well as replacing a pool liner in the spring. He had received 2 water leak notifications and investigated the sprinkler system and said they had a small leak in their pool liner that was fixed. After receiving the water bill Mr. Reed contacted the DPW to discuss. When the meter was looked up a constant flow of water could be seen at the property which indicates a leak. Mr. Reed was advised if no faucets are dripping then likely he has a small leak in a toilet. He was instructed to turn off the toilet(s) and call back in the morning to see if the leak stopped. The leak stopped and the leak was repaired inside the toilet. The Water Commissioners discussed this abatement and made the following motion.

A MOTION was made by John Cain to abate 20,000 gallons worth of the bill at the tier 3 rate for 20 Great Brook Drive. This was seconded by Dave Meczywor.

Roll Call Vote:

Edward Johnson – Yes

Dave Meczywor- Yes

John Cain- Yes

MOTION PASSED

6:45pm-7:00pm- Hudson Holdings- 55 Hudson Drive Abatement Request

This was abatement was tabled until next meeting as no one representing this request was at the meeting.

A MOTION was made by Dave Meczywor to table this abatement to the next meeting. This was seconded by John Cain.

Roll Call Vote:

Edward Johnson – Yes

Dave Meczywor- Yes

John Cain- Yes

MOTION PASSED

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

1. Ludlow Construction completed the punch list items on their contract, including touching up the loam and seed where needed. This project is now closed out.
2. A total of four Lead and Copper Samples were taken in late September at Powder Mill School, Woodland School, and the Rec Center. One sample from Woodland School kitchen sink exceeded the action level for lead. Further, the Powder Mill School kitchen

sample and the Rec Center kitchen faucet had detectable levels of lead. These faucets were taken out of service and are waiting to be replaced.

3. On September 28th, there was a water main break on Lake Shore Drive which was repaired by DPW crews.
4. Water use restrictions were lifted on October 8th in accordance with the Water Withdrawal Permit. Despite lifting the ban, all of Western Massachusetts remains in a drought.
5. Water bills were issued and are due November 18th. The DPW office has received several dozen calls from residents with claims that the bills are too high. DPW looked into each claim and determined that the bills were correct. A chart was provided to the Commissioners showing the amount of water pumped into the system each month in comparison to previous years. From April 1st to October 1st, Town-wide water consumption increased 27% from 2019 which resulted in the higher than normal water bills for some customers.
6. Water tank inspections are scheduled for later this year.
7. Emil Pustea of Sigma Water Systems continues to perform inspections on backflow devices in Town.

A work order summary was provided to the Board.

OLD BUSINESS

NONE

NEW BUSINESS

TOP WATER USERS

A list of the top water users for the last cycle was presented to the Board. The list was broken down by type of connection i.e. residential, agricultural, commercial, industrial, municipal and seasonal irrigation. The Board discussed reaching out to those users and providing them with information on water conservation by way of a pamphlet or other forms of public education and outreach.

APPOINTMENTS CONTINUED

7:00pm-7:15pm- 42 Depot Street Development

Rob Levesque and his clients John Pagliaro and Clyde Owen came to the meeting to discuss the proposed Condo Development at 42 Depot Street. They are looking to be able to connect to the water system at this location but are now aware of the Water Moratorium. This proposed condo development would be for between 85-90 units, 2 bedroom units. Mr. Levesque and his clients plan to start the permitting portion of this project in winter with the construction starting around September 2021. They came to the board to see when and if water would be available to connect to or when a decision would be made to lift the moratorium. The moratorium was discussed at length with concerns brought up by the Planning Board Chairperson Michael Doherty that other boards and committees were not involved in the decision to put this moratorium in place and also the legality of the moratorium by the way it was brought to the meeting and voted on without a clear end date. Rob Levesque noted that they would like the okay to move forward with the planning and permitting process with the understanding that water might not be available right away but that when water is they would

have the ability to connect. Commissioner Dave Meczywor asked that the moratorium be reviewed by Town Counsel to make sure that it's not null and void due to the concerns Mr. Doherty voiced. Rob Levesque and his clients are flexible and would like to work with the Town to make this project happen.

*Dave Meczywor made a **MOTION TO ADJOURN** this was seconded by John Cain the meeting was adjourned at 7:36 pm.*

Roll Call Vote:

Edward Johnson – Yes

Dave Meczywor- Yes

John Cain- Yes

Respectfully Submitted By,

Christie Myette
DPW Office Manager

Ed Johnson, Chairman

David Meczywor

John Cain