



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 January 21, 2021

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

Absent: John Cain, Commissioner

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

Guests: Marcus Phelps, Southwick Planning Board Vice 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

Review of the December 10th 2020 Water Commissioners Meeting Minutes. NOTE: Commissioner Johnson was not present for the meeting but reviewed the minutes and the audio for the December 10th, 2020 meeting.

*A **MOTION** was made by Dave Meczywor to accept the minutes from the December 10th meeting. This was seconded by Edward Johnson.*

Roll Call Vote: Edward Johnson- Yes Dave Meczywor- Yes
MOTION PASSED

The monthly commitment for December 2020 was approved to be signed at a later date.

Eight Elderly Rate Applications were presented for the Water Commissioners. Six out of the eight had met all the requirements necessary to receive the elderly rate. Two did not meet all the criteria.

*A **MOTION** was made by Dave Meczywor to approve the elderly rate applications for Mark Mundie, Elizabeth Richton, Ray Lewis, Shawn Sullivan, Marcus Phelps and Jane Dame that meet the necessary requirements. 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 deny the elderly rate applications for Susan Meier and Chester Ogorzalek as they do not meet the necessary requirements. This was seconded by Edward Johnson.*

Roll Call Vote:
 Edward Johnson- Yes Dave Meczywor- Yes
MOTION PASSED

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

1. Mass DEP Is in the process of updating the Water Departments Coliform Sampling Plan to allow for samples to be taken from the new Jarry Drive Pump Station as opposed to the North Longyard Pump Station.
2. Top Knotch Tree Service removed several trees along the well access road to minimize damage to the existing overhead wires from falling trees and branches.
3. Emil Pustea of Sigma Water Systems has completed all the necessary backflow inspections for 2020. He will be back in Town in the early spring to start inspections for 2021.
4. Water tank inspections are scheduled for next spring.
5. Sensus is planning to update the RNI software to version 4.8 this winter.
6. The Water Department will take additional Lead & Copper Samples at Woodland School and the Rec Center after the schools re-open their doors.
7. Two water leaks were repaired today one on Rising Corner and another on South Longyard Road.
8. There is a potential for a large development in town and it would be a potential water and sewer user. A meeting took place yesterday with the developer and the town to go over some details and the Water Moratorium was discussed.

There was no work order summary as we only have one appointment since last meeting. The water crew has been working on trouble shooting meters that are not reading.

OLD BUSINESS

TOP WATER USERS

At the last meeting the high water usage during the summer was discussed and ways to curb the summer water usage. A list of the top 75 residential water users was provided to the Commissioners. All the accounts were reviewed to see if these water users abided by the Water Use Restriction none of these accounts did. A letter was reviewed by the Commissioners which will be sent out to these accounts to put them on notice regarding their water usage. A map was also provided which shows a majority of those who violated the water ban were in the developments off of South Longyard Road.

WATER MORATORIUM

This is a follow up from the last meeting whether to hold back or more language added. Also at the last meeting, due to the absence of Chairman Johnson, an end date or review date was not decided on. This was the recommendation of Town Counsel to put a review date on the moratorium and then extend the date if necessary. An August review date was suggested as it would give us more summer data which is when the water consumption is at its highest. The Commissioners do not want to hinder any potential developments at looking into building in the town. Randy also suggested the Board designate a Commissioner to attend meetings with other Boards, Committees and Commissions regarding this and other proposed developments. It was decided that Commissioner Meczywor would represent the Board at these meetings. It was then suggested to set a September date to review the moratorium being the end of the highest months of use. Select Board Chairman Doug Moglin suggested that the date be moved closer and move it out as needed such as the Governor does with the COVID restrictions. It was discussed that there might be potential to have some State Aid that comes with Economic Development that may help with the upgrade of infrastructure such as the water systems to accommodate a significant water user. A May date was then suggested for the review of the moratorium. Vice Chairman of the Planning Board Marcus Phelps outlined the timeline that the Planning Board normally takes in order to approve a development. He agreed that a May review date for the moratorium would be very reasonable.

*A **MOTION** was made by Dave Meczywor to revisit the Water Moratorium at a meeting on the first Thursday in May (May 6th, 2021). This was seconded by Edward Johnson.*

Roll Call Vote:

Edward Johnson- Yes

Dave Meczywor- Yes

MOTION PASSED

FY2022 BUDGET

A copy of the FY2022 Budget was given to the Commission. The items that are different from last year was the increase in the Springfield Water & Sewer budget line. We have had to rely on purchasing more water from Springfield due to the high usage this past summer. The line is currently at \$38,000.00 and we are requesting an increase to \$50,000.00.

The upgrade of the water main with the interconnection with Springfield Water from Jarry Drive. Last year we had to pull this from the warrant due to COVID and the financial uncertainties that came with it. We are looking at about \$575,000.00 for the project. Currently we have almost \$100,000.00 remaining from the Jarry Drive pump station that can be

reallocated to this project. Randy has had a conversation with a consultant regarding increasing the water main size to 12" or larger to increase capacity in our water system. The consultant is currently updating the water model to see how much this would increase our capacity.

It was suggested that we look towards the future of the Town and the future water needs of the Town over the next few decades. Unfortunately there is no updated "master plan" for the Town. Planning Board Vice Chair Marcus Phelps let the Commission know that the Planning Board is looking to update the "Master Plan" for the Town which the current plan is over 50 years old over the next two years requesting \$50,000.00 each year to get a plan prepared. Mr. Phelps also said that the Town needs to become more proactive rather than reactive when it comes to the future.

*A **MOTION** was made by Dave Meczywor to accept the FY2022 Budget as presented. This was seconded by Edward Johnson.*

Roll Call Vote:

Edward Johnson- Yes

Dave Meczywor- Yes

MOTION PASSED

CUSTOMER PORTAL SURVEY

At the last meeting a discussion was had regarding producing a survey to see if there is any interest in the customer portal by residents and how often it would be used. This survey would be done via our website and asks various questions regarding if they would use the portal, how often they would use the portal and if they would pay extra to use the portal. The upfront cost was about \$21,000.00 with a yearly maintenance fee of about \$7,000.00 which is a big investment and we need to make sure it will be utilized before moving forward. Randy Brown suggested that we include a flyer in the next water bill to direct water users to the survey.

*A **MOTION** was made by Dave Meczywor to send out the customer portal survey flyer in the spring billing. This was seconded by Edward Johnson.*

Roll Call Vote:

Edward Johnson- Yes

Dave Meczywor- Yes

MOTION PASSED

NEW BUSINESS

ANNUAL TOWN REPORT WRITE UP

A draft of the Annual Town Report for the Water Department was provided to the Commission. The first few paragraphs outline the Water Department and the system and connections. We also have a list of the projects that took place in 2020 and the projects for 2021 and beyond including the water main from Jarry Drive to Springfield Water Interconnection, the re-permitting of the Water Withdrawal Permit, Evaluating the reconstruction or reconditioning of Well #1 and the improving of the SCADA system.

*Dave Meczywor made a **MOTION TO ADJOURN** this was seconded by Edward Johnson the meeting was adjourned at 6:42 pm.*

Roll Call Vote:

Edward Johnson- Yes

Dave Meczywor- Yes

Respectfully Submitted By,

Christie Myette
DPW Office Manager

Ed Johnson, Chairman

David Meczywor

John Cain