



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

Southwick Town Hall- Conference Room 2 – Hybrid Meeting

Thursday May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2022 at 6:00 pm

Members in Attendance: Edward Johnson, Chairman  
Dave Meczywor, Commissioner  
John Cain, Commissioner\*

#### Others Present:

Randy Brown, DPW Director

Joe Deedy, Selectmen

Keven Soper, Water Foreman

James & Jodie Davis, 9 North Pond Rd

Christie Myette, DPW Office Manager

Bria Duncan, 7 Evergreen Terrace

\*= Remote Participation

The meeting was recorded.

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

Public Comments: NONE

Review of the March 24<sup>th</sup>, 2022 Water Commissioners Meeting Minutes.

*A MOTION was made by Dave Meczywor to accept the February 3<sup>rd</sup> 2022 Water Commissioners Meeting Minutes. This was seconded by John Cain. MOTION PASSED*

*Roll Call Vote:*

*Edward Johnson: Yes*

*Dave Meczywor: Yes*

*John Cain: Yes*

The Commitment was signed for March and April.

Five Elderly Rate Applications were presented to the Water Commissioners. These five applicants met all the necessary requirements.

*A MOTION was made by Dave Meczywor to accept the five Elderly Rate Applications. This was seconded by John Cain. MOTION PASSED*

*Roll Call Vote:*

*Edward Johnson: Yes*

*Dave Meczywor: Yes*

*John Cain: Yes*

One Elderly Rate Application for 23 Veteran St does not meet all the necessary requirements due to the location not being their full time residence.

*A MOTION was made by Dave Meczywor to deny the Elderly Rate for 23 Veteran Street. This was seconded by John Cain. MOTION PASSED*

*Roll Call Vote:*

*Edward Johnson: Yes*

*Dave Meczywor: Yes*

*John Cain: Yes*

### **DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

1. Construction for the water transmission main improvements project with Morais Concrete Service is almost complete. The water main work is finished and the pipe passed the pressure test. The chlorination process is underway and expected to be completed soon. Once complete, the new pipeline will be put into service.
2. Routine sampling for PFAS continued with two samples taken in April at Wells 1 and 2. Both results had trace amounts of PFAS, but are determined "No detect" as the levels are below the Minimum Reporting Limit (MRL). No other actions other than to continue periodic monitoring are required at this time.
3. Water bills for the October 2021 thru March 2022 bill cycle were mailed out and are due May 18th.
4. The 2021 Annual Statistical Report was finalized and sent to MassDEP. Here are the pertinent statistics:
  - a. Unaccounted for water: 0.8%
  - b. Residential gallons per capita day (RGPCD): 80 gallons/capita/day
5. Christie and Keven are working on 2021 Consumer Confidence Report which should be completed and advertised within the next few weeks.
6. MassDEP and Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) initiated the Water Needs Forecast which is required for the Town's Water Withdrawal Permit renewal. There has been no update from MassDEP or DCR since late 2021.
7. The owner of 55 Sam West Road has not yet performed the remedies necessary to re-establish the water service which included 1) replace the water service from the curb stop, 2) remove the pipe where the meter should be located and provide a proper setup for a new meter, 3) install a backflow device on the threaded hose bib, and 4) pay for a new meter. After these items are complete, the new meter will be installed by the Water Department.
8. Emil Pustea of Sigma Water Systems continues to perform inspections at backflow devices.

Work Order Summary Provided to Commissioners.

### **APPOINTMENT**

6:15pm- 6:30pm 10 Chapman Street Abatement

The Water Commissioners were presented an abatement request from Heidi Allen Anderson from 10 Chapman Street. An abatement was requested due to a hose that was left on. This was noticed after a leak notification card was sent out to the property. The amount of water lost from this leak was approximately 16,880 gallons. The Water Commissioners discussed the matter and made the following motion.

A MOTION was made by Dave Meczywor to abate 10% (\$25.25) on the water portion of this bill. This was seconded by John Cain. MOTION PASSED

*Roll Call Vote:*

*Edward Johnson: Yes*

*Dave Meczywor: Yes*

*John Cain: Yes*

The 6:15pm appointment ended early so we continued with the Old and New Business part of the meeting.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **WATER MORATORIUM**

Nothing to report on this until the transmission main with Springfield Water is complete and new rate of flow determined. Water usage has been consistent with historical usage. Over the last few weeks we have seen a small increase in usage due to irrigation, gardens and pools but this is expected due to the time of year.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **WATER RATES AND FEE SCHEDULE**

At the last few meeting we had discussed the FY2023 budget and this will be sent to the Town Meeting to be voted on. There have been some concerns about how much money is being brought in and the expenses. Randy Brown developed a Water Rate Study showing the projected expenses and the projected revenue for FY2023 which projects a shortfall of \$186,000. Over the past few years we have been operating in a shortfall but have made up the difference from the retained earnings but going forward we cannot rely on that. We are at a point where we need to discuss a rate increase. The rate changes presented were discussed and Randy Brown will provide additional rate scenarios for the next meeting.

The Water Commissioners at previous meetings discussed charging a fee for fire lines to cover the multiple inspections that are required per connection. A spreadsheet was compiled of what neighboring systems charge per connection. A few of these communities have other services included in the connection fee such as tapping or labor associated with the connection. Other municipalities charge an annual fee for fire lines based on size. The Water Commissioners discussed the matter and decided on charging a flat one-time fee for fire lines of \$1,500.00.

A MOTION was made by Dave Meczywor to charge \$1,500 for fire line connections. This was seconded by John Cain. MOTION PASSED

*Roll Call Vote:*

*Edward Johnson: Yes*

*Dave Meczywor: Yes*

*John Cain: Yes*

Randy Brown also suggested looking at the fees for service connections. Currently we charge \$825.00 for subdivision connections and \$1,200.00 for non-subdivision connections. Randy Brown suggested to charge a connection fee based on Equivalent Dwelling Unit (EDU) such as sewer does. This would make the connection fee larger for a larger water user or in the case of a mixed use development that includes residential housing as well as commercial businesses the connection fee would determine by the EDU equivalent based on the size of the building and type of business. The Water Commissioners discussed the subdivision connection fee

whether to keep it as is or go up on it. Currently the \$825.00 is the cost in materials for the curbstop, meter, MXU and shutoff valve before the meter, not including inspections.

A MOTION was made by Dave Meczywor to charge \$1,200.00 per EDU water connections for new water service connections with a minimum of 1 EDU. Seconded by John Cain.

*Roll Call Vote:*

*Edward Johnson: Yes*

*Dave Meczywor: Yes*

*John Cain: Yes*

6:30pm-6:45pm 7 Evergreen Terrace Abatement

The Water Commissioners were presented an abatement by James & Jodi Davis from 7 Evergreen Terrace. The property had a water leak which is a rental property due to a crack in the flapper of the toilet a rate of approximately 100 gallons an hour. The property owners were notified as soon as the leak was discovered as a result of a high water reading at the time of billing. The property owner was seeking an abatement down to the highest historical billing of \$407.27. The tenant at the property was present and was not aware of the leak and did not hear the toilet running. After discussion the Water Commissioners made the following motion.

A MOTION was made by Dave Meczywor to abate \$920.86 on the water portion of this bill. This was seconded by John Cain. MOTION PASSED

*Roll Call Vote:*

*Edward Johnson: Yes*

*Dave Meczywor: Yes*

*John Cain: Yes*

The next meeting was tentatively set for May 19<sup>th</sup> 2022 in Conference Room 2.

*Dave Meczywor made a **MOTION TO ADJOURN** this was seconded by John Cain the meeting was adjourned at 6:51 pm.*

*Roll Call Vote:*

*Edward Johnson: Yes*

*Dave Meczywor: Yes*

*John Cain: Yes*

**MEETING ADJOURNED**

Respectfully Submitted By,

Christie Myette  
DPW Office Manager

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Ed Johnson, Chairman

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David Meczywor

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John Cain