

**BOARD OF WATER COMMISSIONERS
MAY 18, 2010
MEETING ROOM Kitchen**

Present: Jeff Weise, Jared Adams, Dennis Ferreira, Doug Valovcin, Ron Sharpin

Carl Damigella, Selectman, arrived at 6:30pm.

Meeting began at 6:30pm

HIGH WATER BILL – 10 BONNEY DRIVE

Bill Cofran of 10 Bonney Drive appeared before the board to discuss the high water usage that was recorded from February 20 through February 23, 2010. He has checked on all possible reasons for the high usage and found none.

Andy Reid arrived at 6:45pm.

After reviewing two years of water usage information and three years of water bills, the board agreed that there was probably a toilet left running for those days.

After totaling his payments since 2007 and dividing by the number of billing periods, the board arrived at \$92.00 as the average payment. The board offered a compromise of reducing his latest bill by \$75.96. Mr. Cofran accepted the offer.

Mr. Ferreira made a motion: **“Motion to make an adjustment on Mr. Cofran’s latest water bill that reduces the bill by \$75.96 to \$100.00”**

Mr. Weise seconded the motion.

Mr. Weise, Mr. Ferreira, and Mr. Adams voted in favor of the motion.

Mr. Sharpin will inform the Office Manager of the board’s decision.

Mr. Cofran left at 6:50pm.

HIGHLAND MEADOWS DEVELOPMENT– 353 HIGHLAND STREET

There will be a Zoning Board of Appeals meeting on May 19, 2010.

The ZBA will discuss Water Department fees for the Highland Meadows Development on Highland Street. The development wants all Water Department fees to be waived.

Chris Woodcock arrived at 7:50pm.

The Water Department wants to collect department fees for the project. The Building Department has not waived any fees. Other departments have waived fees for only the 40B portion of the development.

METERED VERSUS PUMPED

A leak survey is continuing to be conducted east of Highland Street. Historically there have been more leaks found on the east side of town than the west side of town. As the leaks were found, the department has corrected them, usually by replacing the pipes.

Mr. Sharpin was asked to follow up on sending letters to two homeowners on Willow Gate Rise who have leaks on their side of the water service to their home. A list of approved contractors will be included in the mailing. The board agreed to add a rule to their Rules&Regulations that the department will inform homeowners who have a service leak that they have 60 days to correct the leak or the homeowner will be billed at the department's estimate of the leak for that quarter billing period.

Mr. Adams made a motion: **“Motion – when a leak occurs between the curb and the service to the house, the homeowner will be given written notice of the leak and told that he/she has sixty (60) days to get it fixed or the amount of the leaking water will be estimated by the Water Department and the owner will be charged for that amount.”**

Mr. Ferreira seconded the motion.

Mr. Weise, Mr. Adams, and Mr. Ferreira voted in favor of the motion.

WELL #6 – DOWN

Mr. Sharpin reported that Well #6 had been completely shut down for two weeks in April 2010 to see if there was a direct connection between Well #6 and its treatment plant in connection with the “missing water” problem. Mr. Weise noted that comparing the total finished water produced during that period to the total water billed (metered) showed no noticeable improvement of the problem. Hence, Well #6 is no longer a prime suspect.

WATER RATE WORKSHOP

Water rates have not been changed or adjusted since July 1, 2006.

The board invited Chris Woodcock to make a presentation regarding their options for water rates in FY11 which begins July 1, 2010. Mr. Woodcock had assisted the board in making changes to the water rate structure in 2006.

Mr. Woodcock asked the board to define their goals and priorities for the FY Water Department budget. He offered the following as potential goals/priorities:

- CONSERVATION
- REVENUE STABILITY
- EQUITY
- ADMINISTRATIVE

HISTORY

All agreed that leaks in the system will become prevalent because of the age of the infrastructure. The cost for replacement of water mains is \$800,000.00/mile. Mr. Woodcock suggested that the board strive to achieve and maintain at least \$600,000.00 in their WATER SURPLUS budget. The board agreed that the department needs to begin replacement of the old water mains **before** they break. While CONSERVATION is a desired goal, the department also requires REVENUE STABILITY to properly maintain the infrastructure.

Mr. Woodcock told the board that they cannot compare the Holliston Water Department water rates to those in nearby towns because of the following:

- Department does not collect revenue from cell tower leases on water tanks
- Department pays for water used by the Park & Recreation Department
- Department pays for water used at all town-owned buildings
- Department pays for water used at all Holliston schools
- Department pays for water used by Fire Department (35% of WD budget)
- Department pays for all of its debt

Mr. Woodcock suggested that the department create a revenue stream to fund a system upgrade by adding a base rate to every property owner. Everyone would share in the upgrade of the infrastructure. While a base rate would appear to affect the low-income owners, the department has accommodations to provide interest-free payment plans and abides by the Assessor's Office's rules for tax relief. This base rate would be used to fund the revenue that is needed to replace the infrastructure in the years ahead.

Mr. Woodcock and the board also discussed the following:

- The tier structure would continue to send a signal to conserve water
- Eliminate TIER 1
- Continue the TIER structure
- Meter size affects the cost of the pipe replacement
 - Larger meters require more excavation, higher pipe costs
- Bill monthly rather than quarterly
- Multi-units(four or more units) are not currently charged above TIER 2
- Condominium complexes
- Large water users may be businesses that use large amounts of water
 - but are not wasteful

The board will continue the discussion of water rates in their next two meetings before the WATER RATE HEARING on June 15, 2010.

AUTHORIZED SIGNATURE

Mr. Sharpin asked the board to designate an authorized signer for cellular antenna lease based on a request by Paul LeBeau.

Mr. Ferreira made a motion: **“Motion that Jeff Weise be the authorized signer to sign on behalf of the Water Department”**

Mr. Adams seconded the motion.

Mr. Ferreira, Mr. Weise, and Mr. Adams voted in favor of the motion.

MINUTES REVIEW

The following minutes were reviewed by the board:

April 7, 2010
April 14, 2010
April 21, 2010
April 27, 2010
May 5, 2010
May 10, 2010

Mr. Ferreira made a motion: “Motion to approve the following minutes:

April 7, 2010 as written
April 14, 2010 as amended
April 21, 2010 as written
April 27, 2010 as amended
May 5, 2010 as written
May 10, 2010 as written”

Mr. Adams seconded the motion.

Mr. Weise, Mr. Adams, and Mr. Ferreira voted in favor of the motion.

STAFFING

Mr. Sharpin will provide job descriptions for Water Department personnel to the board.

INVOICES AND CHANGE ORDERS

Invoices and change orders were signed at the meeting.

Mr. Weise made a motion: **“Motion to adjourn”**

Mr. Ferreira seconded the motion.

Mr. Adams, Mr. Ferreira, and Mr. Weise voted in favor of the motion.

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The meeting adjourned at 9:00pm

Next BWC meeting – Wednesday, May 26, 2010 at 6:30pm

Respectfully submitted,

Tricia Keating
Clerk

Approved 6/30/10 as written

Board of Water Commissioners Meeting

May 18, 2010

(Meeting to start at 6:30 PM in Room #201- Kitchen)

- **Public Comments - (6:30)**
 - *Water Bill – Bill Cofran
- **Metered vs Pumped Water Accounting – (6:45-7:30)**
 - *KP - status
 - *Leak Survey
 - *Well #6 Down-results
 - *Meter Calibrations
- **Rates-Workshop for Rate Hearing – (7:30-9:30)**
 - *Chris Woodcock – prepare for Rate Hearin
- **Invoices, Contracts and Minutes – (9:30-9:45)**
 - *Notarized Vote of Board-signatory for Atlantic Bell Lease Agreement
- **Adjourn - (9:45)**

Next BWC Meeting – June 2, 2010 @ 6:30PM @ Town Hall