

MINUTES OF MEETING

January 10, 2012

Mr. Mammone announced that an audio recording was being made of this meeting.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Steve Mammone at 7:00 p.m. at the District offices located at 50 Elm Street, Dedham. Present were Ken Bragg, Rob McLaughlin, Joe Carter, Robert Blume, Bob Eiben, Eileen Commane and John McCulloch. Mike Thornton, Steve Locke and Stephanie Costa were also in attendance.

MINUTES

The minutes for the meeting of December 27, 2011 were unanimously approved.

2012 SLATE OF OFFICERS

Mr. Carter moved to approve the following nominations for 2012:

Chairman	- Robert E. McLaughlin, Jr.
Vice Chairman	- Robert N. Blume
Clerk	- James J. Galvin
Executive Director/ Asst. Treasurer	- Eileen M. Commane
Treasurer	- John B. McCulloch, Jr.
Secretary	- Margaret M. Kelley

seconded by Mr. Bragg. Voted unanimously.

Mr. McLaughlin thanked Mr. Mammone on behalf of the Board for serving as chairman over the last year.

FINANCIAL

Warrants and checks were signed.

MANAGER'S REPORT

Pumpage Reports

Mr. Eiben reviewed the pumpage report for the period ending January 8 and noted that the pumpage has been going up over the past few weeks. Staff will be watching for evidence of any leaks in the system.

2012 Budgets

Approval of the 2012 budgets was deferred until the next meeting when a full board would be present.

Mr. Carter questioned the wording under Special Projects – 309.3 – Emergency Fund stating that it read that it was to cover emergency replacements for either water mains or plant and major equipment not specifically budgeted for in 2012 which he did not feel was entirely correct. He stated that the subcommittee set up this account so that this money could also be used to cover a shortfall in the operating budget. Mr. Eiben stated that in the past when we tried to set up an account like this the auditors said the money had to be specified for something. Mr. Carter asked if the wording “or for other general purposes of the District” could be added.

Amendment to Rules & Regulations

Mr. Eiben proposed a change in the rules and regulations under Rule #7 – Customer Service Pipes to require the customer’s side of the plumbing be type k copper. He explained that rocks and stones rubbing on the plastic service lines wear a hole in them and it is harder to trace and hear the leak than with a metal. Mr. Eiben questioned whether to allow plastic with a meter box in certain situations and gave the example of a development going in on Summer Street that will have service lines 400-500 ft long. Mr. Carter asked Mr. Eiben to prepare the amendment for the Board’s consideration at the next meeting.

DIRECTOR’S REPORT

Conservation Program Update

Ms. Commane provided a brief update on our conservation program for the past year. A total of about \$28,000 has been spent on the rebate program with \$18,000 going to \$100 washing machine rebates, \$4,000 for the 1.6 gallon flush toilet rebates and \$5,275 in rebates for new high efficiency toilets. She proposed eliminating the rebate for the 1.6 gallon toilet as an incentive for customers to replace their toilets with the newer, more water conserving high efficiency models. Ms. Commane also recommended offering the program to commercial accounts to get them to replace older toilets with high efficiency models. She suggested as an additional incentive for ratepayers to purchase more water efficient washers that the water factor be dropped down from the present 6 or lower to 3.5 or 4. Mr. McLaughlin asked Ms. Commane to prepare her recommendations for the Board’s consideration at the next meeting.

Water Shut-Offs

Ms. Commane stated that when she comes across an account that is shut off but our meter is still installed she has been reactivating the billing at the minimum level. She felt we still had an obligation to that property but they were not being billed and we do not charge when the water is turned back on. The Board agreed with Ms. Commane’s decision to reactivate the billing on these accounts but did believe there should be a charge for the water to be turned back on and asked her to provide more information on this for consideration at the next meeting.

Late Payment Fee

Ms. Commane proposed imposing a penalty for late payment of bills to address the longstanding problem with collections. She explained that in recent years we have been trying to address the issue in part by sending a lot of accounts to lien. Both the town of Dedham and Westwood charge 14% interest for paying your sewer bill late. Mr. McLaughlin proposed charging a 12% annual fee or 1% per month interest as a late payment fee. Ms. Commane will publicize the late fee on the website.

Conservation Coordinator

Ms. Commane stated she had received the proposal from the Neponset River Watershed Association regarding the school conservation program. They currently have an employee who does the school programs in Milton, Sharon, Canton and Stoughton and have given us a proposal to do the elementary schools in both towns for \$8,000 a year. The Board was in favor of outsourcing the elementary school conservation program to the Neponset River Watershed Association.

OLD/NEW BUSINESS

2012 Budgets

Mr. McLaughlin explained that the operating budget was still higher in expenses than revenues but a level budget could be reached with some adjustments. He asked the Board to consider the question of whether we should be looking at conservation budgeting which would build in a small yearly increase. In the past, there have been no increases for three or four years and then a 5 or 6% rate increase would be implemented which causes the ratepayers to complain. Mr. McLaughlin asked for this issue to be included on the agenda for the next meeting.

OPEB Fund

The Board agreed to defer discussion on this issue until the next meeting.

Water Bill Credit Adjustments

Mr. Carter questioned the status of the credit adjustment to the water bills. Mr. Thornton stated the adjustments were complete and any bill going out from this date forward would provide the credit. The cost of adjusting the bills was just under \$86,000 which was less than originally projected.

Unaccounted for Water

Mr. Blume questioned what the unaccounted for water figure was for this year. Mr. Eiben stated it was showing 7% but using DEP's formula it will be closer to 10% which is better than last year.

January Meetings

The next meeting will be held on January 24th.

Mr. Carter moved to adjourn at 7:47 p.m., seconded by Mr. Mammone. Voted unanimously.

DEDHAM-WESTWOOD WATER COMMISSION
LIST OF DOCUMENTS
January 10, 2012

1. December 27, 2011 Minutes
2. 2012 Slate of Officers
4. Pumpage report for the period ending January 8
6. 2012 Budgets