

SHELBURNE WATER COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes – July 5, 2022

Present: John Day, Jennifer Martinez, Steve Smith, Pete Gadue (arrived 5:35); also Chad Racine, Peter Frankenburg, Lee Krohn.

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 P.M. Motion by Day to approve the agenda; seconded by Smith and approved 3-0. Motion by Day to approve the minutes of June 28; seconded by Martinez and approved 3-0. There were no public comments on items not on the agenda.

Frankenburg presented a brief overview of the draft budget for fiscal year 2023, which is unchanged from that presented last week. Noted again: Other than inflationary increases in operations and benefits/salaries per the union contract, the only substantial change is a good one – a roughly \$69,000 decrease in the south water tank maintenance line. That contract is ‘front loaded’ with the first several years at a much higher rate to cover costs of both repainting and ongoing maintenance; the next few years are less costly for just maintenance. One option is to lower water rates; the other is to maintain rates but put the ‘surplus’ funds into a capital reserve fund. The advantages of the latter approach are to avoid ‘ping ponging’ water rates over time, and to build reserves toward significant and costly capital needs now and in the future. It was noted that water fees from Champlain Water District increased roughly 4%, and debt is being carried from the purchase of a truck this year.

It was agreed prudent to hold rates level, and put any surplus into the capital reserve fund for necessary future projects (including the Wake Robin generator that is still on backorder).

Questions were asked about:

Reviewing the actual budget outcome from this year: to be reviewed at next month’s meeting.

Capital projects/improvements: the RT 7 water line replacement/upgrade project remains a high priority, but awaits clarity on external funding opportunities. In the meantime, the engineering/design work that’s been done will position us well when those opportunities arise.

Whether pay rate was a factor in recruitment challenges for the Superintendent position.

Racine continues to seek clarity on who is required to participate in upcoming meetings/trainings for the asset management project.

Gadue appeared at this time. Motion by Day to approve the Water Department budget as proposed for the new fiscal year; seconded by Smith and approved 4-0.

Further discussion ensued regarding size of the Commission and whether to seek expansion. With no perceived need nor enthusiasm for that, the matter was put to rest for now.

With no other business, the meeting adjourned at 5:50 P.M.

Respectfully submitted by Lee Krohn