

Town of Shelburne Water Commission

Meeting minutes, October 5, 2020

Present: John Schold, Chair; John Day, Steve Smith, Pete Gadue; also Water Superintendent Rick Lewis, Finance Director Peter Frankenburg, and Town Manager Lee Krohn.

The meeting was called to order via Zoom at 5:00 P.M., with attendees identified. Motion by Day to approve the agenda; seconded by Schold and approved 4-0.

Motion by Gadue to approve the July meeting minutes; seconded by Schold and approved 4-0.

Public comments: none

Frankenburg presented an unofficial budget status update as of the end of the last fiscal year: overall, we finished the year with a roughly \$20,000 surplus. Fewer water breaks meant less spent on contractors and repairs; and revenues were up slightly. Water tank maintenance fee remains high for this current and one more fiscal year, and will then decrease dramatically for the rest of the contract term.

Current first quarter budget was reviewed, generally right on track with purchases, sales/revenues, and expenses. Debt payments will be owed next quarter, and will appear on budget reports at that time.

However, delinquencies are up significantly from the most recent billing: \$71,000 at this time, where \$40,000 is more typical. Hard to know if COVID-related or for other reasons, especially as the recent property tax revenues were on target. Usage was higher due to the dry summer (watering lawns and gardens), and perhaps with more people home more of the time. No shutoffs have been done, consistent with State COVID guidelines.

Lewis reported, as all were aware, that 22-year employee Chris Carlson is leaving this month to move away. We have two applications in hand, and will interview shortly, hoping to fill the position as soon as possible. Meters are being read as fast as possible before he departs. Unaccountable water is less than it has been for nearly a year, so it appears that leak detection and repair efforts have been successful.

Krohn reported on the outcome of the Precourt/Catholic Church matter. Sought was a 50% reimbursement/cost sharing from the Water Commission for the new water line along Church Street that was needed and built by the Church to provide sufficient flows for the sprinkler pumps for the new addition; this would have been roughly \$25,000. However, the Water Ordinance speaks directly to this matter, specifying that reimbursement may be made only for marginal cost/materials increases needed between what would have sufficed for a project and what is required by the Water Department specifications (for example, the marginal cost difference between a 6" water main, valves, fittings, etc and an 8" main and equipment). Rick Lewis had calculated these for this project, and found that the marginal cost was roughly \$7600. This amount was offered to Precourt, but he declined the offer. Thus, this new water line remains privately owned and maintained at this time.

A draft Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) was reviewed. Although unable to attend, Commission member Wooster asked about certain projects (connecting the above-noted water line to the Falls Road line to increase fire flows) and whether a certain amount of money currently held in CDs might be used to fund current needs or projects. Frankenburg suggested that could be done, but that it would be prudent to maintain reasonable reserves in case of need. Suggestions included accelerating radio meter replacement or the Falls Road connection. It was offered to investigate further the fire flow matter on Falls Road and report back.

Effective, efficient strategies were discussed for signing of warrants – members to coordinate with Frankenburg.

Motion by Schold to adjourn at 5:38 P.M., seconded by Smith and approved unanimously.

Respectfully submitted by Lee Krohn.