

**Town of Fairhaven
Board of Public Works Meeting
September 16, 2019**

Present

Brian Wotton, Commissioner
Robert Hobson, Commissioner
Keith Silvia, Commissioner
Frank Coelho, Commissioner
Vincent Furtado, BPW Superintendent
Rebecca Vento, Administrative Assistant
Jeffrey Furtado, Water Superintendent
Jean Canastra, 29 Sedgewick Road
Allan Rego, 27 Hawthorne Street
Michelle Rego, 27 Hawthorne Street



Mr. Durant was not in attendance.

I. Call to Order

Mr. Wotton called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

II. Routine Matters

A. Signing of Departmental Bills

III. Approval of Minutes

A. August 19, 2019

Mr. Hobson motioned to approve the minutes of August 19, 2019. Mr. Coelho seconded. Vote unanimous.

Mr. Hobson motioned to adjourn open session and enter into executive session and to reconvene in open session at 6:01 p.m. to discuss Employee timecards, comp time and discipline draft.

IV. Executive Session

A. Employee Timecards, Comp Time and Discipline Draft

V. Appointments

Mr. Wotton called the meeting back to order at 7: 03 p.m.

A. Jean Canastra, 29 Sedgewick Road – Water & Sewer Abatement

Ms. Canastra – I am here because my water bill was high, I then applied for an abatement and it was denied. Then I did my research and filed a civil suit after speaking with Magistrate Walsh. The magistrate then told me that I had to come in front of the Board and if it was not resolved to go back to court on

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October 15, 2019. I usually pay anywhere from one-hundred fifty to two hundred dollars, this bill was two thousand dollars. I got a pink tag on my door so I called the water department they asked me questions to see if we could figure out why my usage was high. I did have a toilet that was leaking for a few weeks and I had my plumber fix it in either December or January.

Mr. Wotton - By any chance, do you have a copy of the plumber's bill?

Ms. Canastra – No, I do not.

Mr. Wotton - Can you get me a plumber's bill stating that the leak was fixed? Unfortunately in the Town of Fairhaven we purchase our water from Mattapoisett, essentially the Town pays for your water and then we bill you. Once the water goes through your meter it is your responsibility.

Ms. Canastra - Now that I have had a huge bill can we read it more often?

Mr. J Furtado - We did read your meter in August and your usage for the past six months is six hundred cubic feet less than last year.

Mr. Silvia – This is kind of open and closed. There was a water leak that has been corrected. The only problem is that it went through the meter and once it goes through the meter, it is the responsibility of the property owner.

Mr. J Furtado – The problem here is that we need proof whether it be pictures, a plumber's bill, the broken item, etc.

Ms. Canastra - Let's say your toilet is running for 3 weeks it would not use that much water.

Mr. Silvia- That is what will be nice about the new meters system that we will be switching too. We will be able to notify residents of a leak sooner and possibly send out the bills more frequently.

Mr. Coelho – I agree with Mr. Silvia if you can show us you had a leak and that it has been fixed I would be willing to review it and discuss it again at another time.

Mr. Wotton - The Town has to pay for the water no matter what. My recommendation to you is to hire a plumber to make sure that you have no leaks or drips. We may be able to abate some of the sewer charges if you bring us the plumber's paperwork.

Mr. J Furtado - As soon as we saw that you had high usage we tried to notify you.

Ms. Canastra – Let say I do not have any leaks but I do have something stating that the toilet leak was fixed. What would I be looking at for an abatement?

Mr. J Furtado - The only issue is when you have a toilet leak and the water leaks into the bowl and then down the drain, it then goes to our sewerage treatment plant where the water is treated. If it leaks on

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the floor, we can justify an abatement but if it leaks in the bowl and goes down the drain then we do not abate the sewer.

Ms. Canastra - I will have the plumber check for any leaks even in the crawl space. I will get all the information to you that you requested.

B. Allan Rego, 27 Hawthorne Street – Water & Sewer Abatement

Mr. Rego - Everything is similar to Ms. Canastra situation except I hired a plumber and he went to my house 3 times and found no leaks. Someone from the Water Department also came and he found no leaks either. I have two toilets and nothing was leaking. This is the highest bill that I have had even when my son and stepson lived with us.

Mr. Wotton – There is no pool?

Mr. Rego -We have done nothing different.

Mr. Wotton – Have we tested the meter?

Mr. Furtado – No, we have read the meter two times before we left the pink tag to make sure that we had the correct read and when we read it the third time the usage was back to normal.

Mr. Hobson – Do you have town water and sewer?

Mr. Rego - Yes, I did contact a few plumbers from the town and no one ever responded to my call that's why I had to hire a plumber from out of town.

Mr. Wotton - You contacted a business in town not an employee of the town correct.

Mr. Silvia- Did one of the kids possibly leave the faucet cracked?

Mr. Rego – It is only my wife and myself, we do not have any kids that live with us anymore.

Mr. Wotton - The water went somewhere we have to determine where that water went. We can test the meter and if it comes back that the meter is faulty than we can adjust your bill accordingly. Let me tell you this I have never seen a meter come back faulty.

Ms. Rego - Every single year I make sure that I run the faucet outside and drain the pipes before the winter so the pipes do not break.

Mr. Hobson - I would be willing to use the normal sewer usage from a normal bill.

Mr. J Furtado - We have been getting reads before the abatement came in and there water is back on track. Their read in August is 800cf less than last year.

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Mr. Wotton – Do you have documentation from a plumber stating that you do not have any leaks in the house. We can discuss as a board to abate sewer charges because it did not leak into your house and it had to have leaked somewhere. What we can do is look at your last three bills at this time of year, get an average, and then abate the sewer charges based on the average.

Mr. Silvia motioned to table this until the next meeting for further discussion. Mr. Hobson seconded. Vote unanimous.

VI. Items for Action

A. Garage Supervisor

Mr. Silvia motioned to hire Kevin McCarron as the Garage Superintendent at Grade 16 Step 1 pending pre-employment screenings with a probationary period of six months. Mr. Coelho seconded. Vote unanimous.

B. Water & Sewer Rates

Mr. Hobson motioned to increase the water and sewer rates to the recommendation from the consultants as presented. Mr. Coelho seconded. Vote unanimous.

C. Water & Sewer Abatement Policy

Mr. Coelho motioned to adopt the water and sewer abatement policy. Mr. Hobson seconded. Vote unanimous.

D. BPW Member for Sewer Union Negotiations

Mr. Hobson motioned to assign Mr. Wotton to the Teamsters Sewer Union Negotiations. Mr. Silvia seconded. Vote unanimous.

E. Special Town Meeting Articles

Mr. Coelho motioned to accept Special Town Meeting Articles. Mr. Silvia seconded. Vote unanimous.

F. Fort Phoenix Encampment

Mr. Furtado - This is the annual encampment that the Fairhaven Village Militia puts on at Fort Phoenix. They are looking for your approval due to the EEE threat and since this event is being held for the entire weekend including overnight.

Mr. Silvia – They could contact the state to see if they would spray it beforehand.

Mr. Wotton - What I do not want to do is allow this and something happens because we make an exception. Many people in the area have contracted EEE.

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Mr. Silvia motioned to wave the fee and allow people to enter the Fort at their own risk and have someone from the Fairhaven Village Militia sign a waiver stating that we are not responsible if something were to happen. Mr. Hobson seconded. Vote unanimous.

**G. Dankris Builders Corp., Tinkham Lane Pump Station Modifications, Payment # 2,
\$ 17,204.50**

Mr. Coelho motioned to approve payment # 2 in the amount of \$17,204.50 to Dankris Builders Corp. Mr. Wotton seconded. Vote unanimous.

VII. Possible Topics of Discussion, Subject to Board Approval

A. N/A

VIII. Tabled Matters

A. N/A

IX. Old Business / New Business

A. Superintendent

Mr. Furtado - We went to the Pasta House last week to camera the sewer line. There is a bit of grease there.

Mr. Wotton - Is there anything to worry about? Will the quarterly cleaning service take care of this?

Mr. Furtado – No, there is nothing to worry about the cleaning service should take care of this. They are well aware if they fail the next time than they will have to install an external grease trap. Another thing in regards to the letter that I was asked to send Representative Straus at the last meeting. I spoke with Mr. Rees and he has a contact that works for Representative Straus. I have not sent the letter as of yet. I figured we would contact this gentleman first to see if he could help us before I send the letter.

B. Board Members

Mr. Silvia – I have spoken to a few of the employees that have to go into the mattress container. They mentioned that it smells bad. I would like to see us buy white Tyvek suits and respirators for whoever goes into the mattress container.

Mr. Hobson – Torrington Road between Briercilffe Road and Jerusalem Road on the left hand side there is brush sticking out from the sidewalk area into the street. Also on Dogwood Street there is brush that needs to be cut. Who put up signs on Winsegansett Avenue at the end? The signs say leash your dog and no parking. Are all the sewer tie-ins that needed to be done on Scoticut Neck Road done?

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C. Marine Resources Committee – BPW Related Matters

X. Set Date for the Next Meeting

Mr. Silvia motioned to set the date of the next meeting for September 30, 2019 at 6:00 p.m. Mr. Hobson seconded. Vote unanimous.

XI. Adjourn

Mr. Coelho motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:40 p.m. Mr. Hobson seconded. Vote unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,

**Rebecca Vento
Administrative Assistant**

Minutes approved on September 30, 2019