

Town of Exeter (NH) Water & Sewer Advisory Committee

DRAFT Minutes for Meeting of

June 12, 2024

1. Welcome and Introductions

The meeting was called to order in the Nowak Room at the Town Office Building, 10 Front Street, Exeter, NH by Chairman Bob Kelly at 6:35 pm. Other Committee members present included Mr. Carl Wikstrom and Selectboard Representative Molly Cowan. Mr. Alan Mangen and Ben Mosher were unable to attend.

Multiple members of the public were in attendance in person.

Mr. Kelly indicated that the draft minutes to the March 13 meeting were posted on the Town's website. Changes to those minutes should be forwarded to Mr. Kelly via email.

2. Water and Sewer Bill Abatement Requests

Three abatement requests were discussed by the Committee.

- a. 45 Epping Road. The customer, Ms. Georgene Vukelich, who was in attendance, was seeking an abatement for an excessive water and sewer bill. Reportedly, a toilet in an underused part of the household leaked for a period of time. Ms. Vukelich indicated she was somewhat hard of hearing, and it took several weeks to detect the leak.

The Committee discussed the occurrence details and felt that, even though this usage was the ratepayer's responsibility under the Abatement Policy, portions of it might fall under the "accidental usage" clause due to the fact that the customer was disadvantaged. Mr. Kelly also highlighted the Policy condition that allows for only one abatement every 10 years, and that the customer may want to hold this request in case they have a larger leak in the future, perhaps generating a several hundred dollar impact as with most abatement requests. Mr. Wikstrom moved and Mr. Kelly seconded a motion to approve 80% of the excess water and 80% of the excess sewer usage above normal customer usage over the past year as per

the Abatement Policy. An **ABATEMENT AMOUNT of \$171.92 (66.51 + 105.41) was APPROVED** by a vote of 3-0 for submission to the Public Works billing department.

- b. 153 High Street. The customer, Mr. and Mrs. James Carey, who were in attendance, were seeking an abatement for an excessive water and sewer bill. Reportedly, a toilet in an underused part of the household leaked for a period of time. The customers are elderly and indicated they are somewhat hard of hearing, and it took a while to detect the leak.

The Committee discussed the occurrence details and felt that, even though this usage was the ratepayer's responsibility under the Abatement Policy, portions of it might fall under the "accidental usage" clause due to the fact that the customer was disadvantaged. Mr. Kelly also highlighted the Policy condition that allows for only one abatement every 10 years, and that the customer may want to hold this request in case they have a larger leak in the future, perhaps generating a several hundred dollar impact as with most abatement requests. Mr. Kelly moved and Mr. Wikstrom seconded a motion to approve 80% of the excess water and 80% of the excess sewer usage above normal customer usage over the past year as per the Abatement Policy. An **ABATEMENT AMOUNT of \$128.52 (49.72 + 78.80) was APPROVED** by a vote of 3-0 for submission to the Public Works billing department.

- c. 189 Front Street. The customer was not in attendance but seeking an abatement for an excessive water and sewer bill. Reportedly, a leak occurred in a rental unit and the tenant did not inform the landlord/owner for quite some time before repairs were made.

The Committee discussed the occurrence details and felt that, even though this usage was the ratepayer's responsibility under the Abatement Policy, portions of it might fall under the "accidental usage" clause due to the fact that the customer was not present in the unit at all times. Mr. Wikstrom moved and Ms. Cowan seconded a motion to approve 50% of the excess water and 50% of the excess sewer usage above normal customer usage over the past year as per the Abatement Policy. An **ABATEMENT AMOUNT of \$2,380.95 (921.02 + 1,459.93) was APPROVED** by a vote of 3-0 for submission to the Public Works billing department.

3. Regular Business

a. Utility Operations Report

Mr. Kelly alerted the Committee to a few utility operations items that have occurred over the past three months.

The second siphon barrel has been completed and final work and testing on the Swazey Parkway side is being completed. Ms. Cowan reported that the contractor expects the work to be mostly completed by the end of the summer.

b. Utility Financial Report

The quarterly financial reports were previously distributed by the Finance Department under a separate email. Mr. Kelly reviewed fund balances and anticipated revenues in 2024.

4. New Business

None at this time.

5. Other Business

None at this time.

6. Committee Calendar

The Committee schedule of the first Wednesday of one month per quarter will be based on the exact dates of availability of the Committee members. The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for Wednesday, September 4, 2024.

Mr. Kelly adjourned the meeting at approximately 6:55 pm.

Respectively submitted,

Bob Kelly
Recording Secretary pro tem
June 17, 2024