
Town of Portland Water and Sewer Commission

July 10, 2023, Regular Meeting

Buck Foreman Community Center – Second Floor

265 Main Street, Portland, CT

Members Present: Jim Nursick, Jim Tripp, Jim McCabe, Dave Kuzminski, Dick Cote

Absent:

Also Present: Ryan O’Halpin, Public Works Director; Devon Arce, Revenue Collection Assistant; Members of the public

1. Call to Order

Chair Jim Tripp called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Buck Foreman Community Center.

2. Review & Approve Minutes of May 8, 2023, Regular Meeting

Jim Tripp entertained motions to approve the minutes of the May 8, 2023, meeting. A motion was made by Dick Cote, seconded by Dave Kuzminski to approve the minutes. Vote unanimous. Motion passed.

3. Correspondence and Communication:

Chairman Tripp noted information on two cases requesting relief were received. The information was received after the agenda was distributed so, therefore does not appear on the agenda.

4. Report from Director

Ryan O’Halpin noted that the usage from the well was 13.3 million gallons in May, 12.4 million gallons in June. The well depth rose to 9 feet and then was relatively steady at 7.5 feet.

5. Old Business

a. Development of an Alternate Water Source: Ryan O’Halpin stated that GZA is currently on the north side of the Route 17 Park site for a pumping test (two wells of different depths) this week. Water quality results are expected within 4-6 weeks. Information will be available next week to determine if one well affects the other.

b. Maintenance:

i. Water System: Ryan O’Halpin noted there were four leaks this past month (June 22 and July 8). Two on Prout St, near Brazos drive a new tee and valve was installed. A leak on Scenic Drive was reported and repaired over the weekend. Another leak on Russell Avenue was repaired. All leaks involved asbestos cement pipe.

New valves were installed on Freestone and Perry. Mizzy Construction reported that work on Perry Avenue will be completed in late August or early September. Three lines on Marlborough will eventually be abandoned.

Russel Avenue engineering plans have been received. This will be going out to bid soon.

Hilltop Drive – Ryan O’Halpin noted that expects the plan from Jacobson (expected next week) and the project should be going out to bid within the next two weeks.

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New Beacon software will be installed soon, which will help readings.

ii. Sewer System: Green Mountain Pipeline performed heavy duty cleaning on Airline, Brownstone, and Main Street. The tooth grinder on the Muffin Monster will need to be replaced (cost approx. \$15,000). All other main components have been replaced (good for 8 years). Clarifier work bids will be in on July 11.

c. Meter Updates, Budget Rates: Chairman Tripp noted that the town is under running on MDC currently. Ryan O'Halpin stated that MDC is aware of the work being done in the town, although no renegotiating has taken place to date. They are aware that those talks will be forthcoming.

6. **Committee Reports/General Discussion:** None

7. **Public Comment:** Chairman Tripp recognized Matthew Coronella, Portland Laundromat, 137 Marlborough Street, who asked about the relief request for Portland Laundromat. Ryan O'Halpin stated that a relief reduction of 7,279 cubic feet (\$510.99) was calculated for the most recent bill. Mr. Coronella asked about how sewer charges are calculated. Ryan O'Halpin and Chairman Tripp stated that the sewer rates are higher than water rates since there are fewer sewer users to support the fixed costs and operating structure. Once Brainerd Place is completed the additional water and sewer customers will help stabilize the rate.

Portland Laundromat

April billing usage 51,880.00 Bill was for 91 days

- 51880 cf / 91 days 570.11 Daily usage average
- 570.11 cf / day x 28 days 15,963.08 Average usage in 28 days
- Relief continuation of 45.6% of total usage 7,279.16 is 45.6% of average usage in 28 days
- $7,279.16 \text{ cf} \times \$0.0702/\text{cf} = \$510.99$ Amount of relief for sewer portion on 28 days, using average usage

Sharon Paddock and Joe Dinegar, 364 Main Street, spoke to the Commission about a burst water pipe in their basement on February 4. They are seeking relief from the sewer portion of the bill (177 days). Ryan O'Halpin noted that a relief of 2,632 cubic feet (\$184.77) was calculated.

Sharon Paddock and Joe Dinegar are also seeking relief for an exceptionally high water bill, which was purported to be caused by a water leak. However, the bill did not occur until 2-3 billing cycles after the water leak was to have occurred. The original (older style) meter was replaced. A new electronic style replacement meter was installed on June 5, 2020. Approximately six months later, it appeared to be malfunctioning as it indicated a significant fluctuation in usage. That meter was also replaced. They are asking for relief for the unusually high usage reported. Ryan O'Halpin stated that, based on his findings, for some isolated 4- and 6-hour windows usage rates, the homeowners would have had to have every faucet running in these windows to account for the spike in usage. Dave Kuzminski suggested putting the second replacement meter on a test bench to determine if the meter is functioning properly.

The test will determine both the physical operation of the meter and the electronic transmission of the usage. Once the testing is completed, a recommendation will be made to the Board of Selectman.

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364 Main Street, Portland

- Average Use (April 2019 - October 2022) 1,318.93 90 Day Bill Average
- 1,318.93 cf / 90 days = 14.65 cf/ day x 177 days 2,593.89 177 Bill Average
- 177 day bill of 5,226 cf - average 177 day bill 2,593 cf, 2,632.11 is the difference from average use
- Sewer relief only for 2,632.11 cf x \$0.0702/cf = \$184.77 Relief for sewer portion of 2,632.11CF for leak in basement 2/4-2/6

A motion to amend the agenda to add a discussion, and to move Adjournment to Agenda item 9, was made by Jim McCabe, seconded by Dave Kuzminski. Vote unanimous, motion passed.

8. Water and Sewer Commission Action for Possible Relief

A motion to approve the relief in the amount of \$184.77, was made by Dick Cote, seconded by Jim McCabe. Vote unanimous, motion passed.

A motion to recommend approval by the Board of Selectman of the relief in the amount of \$510.99, requested by Matthew Coronella, Portland Laundromat, was made by Dave Kuzminski, seconded by Jim McCabe. Vote unanimous, motion carried.

9. Adjournment

Dick Cote made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Jim Nursick. Motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 8:17 p.m.

Next Meeting: August 14, 2023

Respectfully submitted,

Jon D'Arpino
Board Clerk