

WATER ADVISORY BOARD



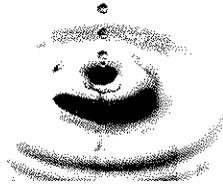
BELMONT, MA, 02478
(617) 993-2700

Water Advisory Board Meeting Minutes of January 7, 2010

In attendance: Chairman Frank E. French Jr., Clerk Joseph F. Greene, Member William Shea, DPW Director Peter J. Castanino, Assistant DPW Director Michael Santoro, Water Manager Michael Bishop, DPW Business Manager Judi Carmody, Customers Mr. Sorenson, Mr. Kerans, Mr. & Mrs. Moskowitz, Mr. Kang.

1. Chairman French called the meeting to order at 8:30 am.
2. Mr. Sorenson plead his case to the Board stating that there was an irrigation leak under the covered porch that was undetected until the he received his water bill and looked for any leaks. Water Manager Bishop explained the issue with the water /sewer bill #390637 from September 30, 2009 for 23 Oak Street. There was an increase in usage from 6/12/09 to 9/14/09; the Water Division re-read the irrigation meter on October 14, 2009. An appointment was made for November 3, 2009 to continue our meter investigation. During the meter investigation a leak was discovered in an irrigation zone valve. Mr. Sorenson was notified about our findings and he would contact a plumber to make the necessary repairs. The customer is asking for a one time water adjustment. Chairman French decided to deliberate after all disputes had been heard and to take under advisement, Peter Castanino would notify all requestors by mail of the Board's decision.
Mr. Shea made a motion of a one time water only adjustment based on the average usage for the prior two similar quarters.
Seconded by Mr. Greene.
Voted unanimously.
3. Mr. Kerans plead his case to the Board stating that the Water Division replaced his meter in August 2009 and credited his bill for the proper usage. Mr. Kerans believed that the new meter was defective and asked for the Water Division to test it for accuracy since it the consumption was three times higher than his normal consumption and nothing had changed in his household. After the meter was tested and it was found there was no problem with the meter Mr. Kerans stated that his next bill showed a normal consumption with no reason for the previous high consumption and Mr. Kerans questioned our findings. Water Manager Bishop explained the issue with the water /sewer bill #405821 from October 31, 2009 for 59 Middlecot Street. There was an increase in usage from 7/15/09 to 10/7/09, the Water Division tested the meter on November 11, 2009 and found the meter to be in compliance with the American Water Works Association and Badger Meter Company. The customer is asking for a one time water and sewer adjustment.
Mr. Shea made a motion of a one time water and sewer adjustment based on the average usage for the prior two similar quarters.
Seconded by Mr. Greene.
Voted unanimously.

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4. Mr. Moskowitz plead his case to the Board stating that after speaking with Mr. Bishop he hired a plumber to check for any leaks in the house specifically all toilets, no leaks were found. Mr. Moskowitz stated there was no explanation for the high reading, that he and his wife were out of town for most of this billing period. Water Manager Bishop explained the issue with the water /sewer bill #364778 from July 31, 2009 for 257 Prospect Street. There was an increase in usage from 4/11/09 to 7/16/09, the Water Division tested the meter on August 17, 2009 and found the meter to be in compliance with the American Water Works Association and Badger Meter Company. The customer is asking for a one time water and sewer adjustment. Mr. Greene made a motion of a one time water and sewer adjustment based on the average usage for the prior two similar quarters.
Seconded by Mr. Shea.
Voted unanimously.
5. Mr. Kang plead his case to the Board stating that while he and his family were on vacation he had arranged for a neighbor to check on his house, the neighbor found a leak in his irrigation system and called him, the neighbor shut off the water to the irrigation. When Mr. Kang returned home he had the irrigation system repaired by a plumber. Water Manager Bishop explained the issue with the water /sewer bill #389219 for 10 Jonathan Street. There was an increase in usage from June 11, 2009 to September 11, 2009 due to the leak in the irrigation system. The customer is asking for a one time water and sewer adjustment. Mr. Greene made a motion of a one time water and sewer adjustment based on the average usage for the prior two similar quarters.
Seconded by Mr. Shea.
Voted unanimously.
6. Water Manager Bishop explained the issue with the water /sewer bill #405716 for 51 Dean Street. There was an increase in usage from July 16, 2009 to October 7, 2009. An appointment was made for November 4, 2009 to conduct an investigation. During the investigation the meter was re-read and consumption was back to normal. Both Mr. Bishop and the customer agreed that the meter did not need to be tested for accuracy. Mr. Shea asked if anything had changed internally, Mr. Bishop responded with no. The customer is asking for a one time water and sewer adjustment. Mr. Greene made a motion of a one time water and sewer adjustment based on the average usage for the prior two similar quarters.
Seconded by Mr. Shea.
Voted unanimously.
7. Water Manager Bishop explained the issue with the water /sewer bill #363851 for 69 Snake Hill Road. There was an increase in usage from April 8, 2009 to July 8, 2009. An appointment was made for August 11, 2009 to conduct an investigation. During the investigation the Water Division staff discovered water flow through the meter indicating a possible internal leak. The valve that controlled the irrigation system was turned off and the

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water flow ceased. On August 14, 2009 an interim reading was taken and the reading was identical to the previous reading of August 11, 2009. The Water Division turned the irrigation valve on to check for water flow and discovered no water flow. Mr. Bishop decided that there was no need to test the meter for accuracy. The customer is asking for a one time water adjustment.

Mr. Greene made a motion of a one time water only adjustment based on the average usage for the prior two similar quarters.

Seconded by Mr. French.

Voted unanimously.

8. Water Manager Bishop explained the issue with the contested water /sewer bills for 4 Merrill Avenue. There was an increase in usage from October 7, 2008 to July 15, 2009. The customer stated in a letter that the 2009 bills were extremely high and that there was limited occupancy at this property. On August 3, 2009 the water meter was re-read the reading showed a consumption of 200 cubic feet from July 15, 2009 to August 3, 2009. Mr. Bishop discussed the results with the customer who requested that the meter be removed and tested for accuracy. The Water Division tested the meter on August 11, 2009 and found the meter to be in compliance with the American Water Works Association and Badger Meter Company. The customer is asking for a one time water and sewer adjustment. Mr. French questioned why the customer waited so long to question the consumption.

Mr. Shea made a motion to deny the request for of a one time water and sewer adjustment based on the average usage for the prior two similar quarters.

Seconded by Mr. Greene.

Voted unanimously.

9. Water Manager Bishop explained the issue with the water /sewer bill #321335 for 287 Brighton Street. There was an increase in usage from January 9, 2009 to April 8, 2009. On January 22, 2009 the Water Division responded to a call about water in the basement, a split outside the hose bib was found and the water source was shut off. The customer stated in a letter that she had a family friend winterize the house for her and they must have forgotten the outside hose. The customer is asking for a one time water adjustment.

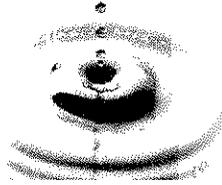
Mr. Greene made a motion of a one time water and sewer adjustment based on the average usage for the prior two similar quarters.

Seconded by Mr. Shea.

Voted unanimously.

10. Water Manager Bishop explained the issue with the water/sewer bill #389173 for 300 Trapelo Road. There was an increase in usage from June 11, 2009 to September 11, 2009. The customer had a plumber come and inspect for any leaks, one leak was found at the base of a toilet and was repaired on October 6, 2009. On October 9, 2009 the water and irrigation meters were re-read and the domestic meter was removed and tested for accuracy. The Water Division tested the meter and found the meter to be in compliance with the American

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Water Works Association and Badger Meter Company. The customer is asking for a one time water and sewer adjustment.

Mr. Greene made a motion of a one time water only adjustment based on the average usage for the prior two similar quarters.

Seconded by Mr. Shea.

Voted unanimously.

11. Director Castanino explained the situation with the water / sewer bills for the VFW Hall at 310 Trapelo Road prior to July 1, 2008. Mr. Castanino stated that the Town Administrator requested on behalf of the Board of Selectmen that all water / sewer bills be abated prior to July 1, 2008 due to a prior agreement the Town had with the VFW. Mr. Shea questioned if all town buildings paid for water and sewer. Mr. Castanino responded that all town buildings pay for water and sewer with the exception of the Water Division Building located at 35 Woodland St.

Mr. Greene made a motion to abate all past due water, sewer and interest charges for this location prior to July 1, 2008 in reference to the e-mail to Mr. Castanino received from the Town Administrator on November 23, 2009 and that the e-mail would be an attachment to these meeting minutes. This abatement would be for a total of \$3,286.83.

Seconded by Mr. French.

Voted unanimously.

12. There was a discussion about changing the water and sewer disputed bill policy to exclude sprinkler system and or irrigation accounts from requesting any adjustments from the Water Advisory Board.
13. Chairman French made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of September 25, 2009.
Seconded by Mr. Greene.
Voted unanimously.

14. Director Castanino discussed the Water Division Manager position and the plan for the Department of Public Works, there were seven applicants chosen for interviews the state requires a grade 3D Water Operators License Mr. Bishop passed the test and is now licensed, Director Castanino believes that Mr. Bishop is the most qualified of the applicants interviewed for the Water Division Manger position and expects to recommend his promotion within the next two weeks. Director Castanino discussed the vacant Operations Manager position, this new position replaces the Assistant Superintendent's position with a lower grade and salary range similar to the Highway Division's Operations Manager position and a minimum requirement is a grade 2D Water Operators License as regulated by the state. Mr. Greene made a motion to officially congratulate Mr. Bishop on his promotion to Water Manager.

Seconded by Mr. Shea

Voted Unanimously.

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15. Director Castanino discussed the MWRA Local Pipeline Assistance Program (LPAP) and the financial goals to continue Capital Water Main Replacement Projects. He discussed that there were two more years to borrow and that a decision was made to divide the balance of the monies available in half using \$988,000 each of the next two years and bid the contract for a two year term instead of one year. The proposed area to replace water mains is the Trapelo Road and Belmont Street corridor from Benton Square to Waverley Square in construction season 2010 and the remainder in construction season 2011. The Water Division is trying to accommodate the MBTA schedules that require a three month advance notice of any possible route change due to union contracts. Mr. Bishop informed the board that the Upper Concord Avenue water main project would be completed in the spring of 2010, there is 180' of pipe that needs to be replaced on Day School Lane and they were waiting for the school year to end to accommodate traffic flow for the school and some shoulder restoration needs to be completed along Concord Avenue.
16. Mr. Bishop discussed the repairs to the water building, that they were waiting for the spring to accomplish all repairs and to install the security system at the same time.
17. Mr. Bishop discussed the new utility software program from Cogsdale stating that the Electric Light Department plans to go live by October 2010. Director Castanino added that the water and sewer rate study will assist with determining the way the Town wishes to implement new rates and whether monthly billing should also be implemented at that time. Mr. Castanino hopes that the draft report on the rate study will be ready to review and comment on at the next Water Advisory Board meeting.
18. Director Castanino discussed the Lead Service Replacement Program stating that four of five locations have had the lead service replaced, this meets the consent order from the Department of Environmental Protection. The last lead service address is 203 Trapelo Road, the Water Division staff has not had any response from the owner of this property but will continue to request permission from this owner to replace the lead service line directly to the property's meter at no cost to the owner.
19. Director Castanino discussed the FY11 budget stating that there were minimal increase for supplies and that there are several "moving targets" that significantly affect the budget, one being the MWRA water and sewer rates are not set until June.
20. Manager Bishop reviewed the MWRA Conservation Program, we still offer low flow shower heads and aerators for the bathroom and kitchen sinks. Mr. Bishop showed the Board a draft brochure designed by the DPW Administration similar to the American Water Works Association brochure at a lesser cost, the brochure details the cost of tap water verses other liquids. Mr. Bishop wants to have more defined information relating to Belmont instead of several communities as in the AWWA brochure.

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21. Chairman French congratulated the Public Works Department for the article in the Belmont Citizen Herald stating the Department of Public Works was on target not over in their overtime accounts. Mr. Bishop claimed that the weather had been good with a few water main breaks, the water main improvement program has helped reduce overtime due to the flexibility of the main joints.
22. Mr. Greene motioned to adjourn the meeting at 10:48 am.
Seconded by Chairman French
Voted Unanimously.



Joseph F. Greene, Clerk