

## **Advisory Board of Public Works, August 30, 2021, 5:00 p.m.**

**Item 1 | Call to Order:** Chair Chris Tarr called the meeting to order at 5:00.

Present: Vice Chair Maria Palomino, Board Member Elena Proakis-Ellis, Business Manager Ann Waitt and Clerk Anna Amatucci. Absent: Director Joseph Conway

**Item 2 | Public Participation:** None

### **Item 3 | Previous Water/Sewer Abatement Requests:**

**331 Albion St.** - 6 condos in three buildings. The owner is requesting an abatement on the Oct. 2020 bill, which was larger than past bills (dry summer and Covid). Ms. Waitt met with Fred, the owner of the sprinkler/irrigation system several times, and no leaks were found. After reviewing data, Ms. Proakis mentioned she did not see anything compelling to show an issue. Ms. Proakis made a motion to deny an abatement, but recommend a payment plan. Ms. Palomino seconded the motion, no discussion, all approve, motion carries.

**1C Melvin Rear** - business with two toilets and a sink. There's not a lot of foot traffic and owner is not there a lot. Ms. Proakis asked what would Board abate and if the toilets looked old, therefore increasing gallon usage with flushes to which Ms. Waitt responded abatement would be 24.5% and toilets are just average. Motion made by Ms. Proakis to only allow an abatement of 24.5% of the sewer fee if the property owner or tenant opts to replace both toilets, otherwise no abatement. Ms. Palomino seconded the motion, no discussion, all approve, motion carries.

**44 Oak St.** - Ms. Waitt said owner planting some grass last summer, hand watered and it died. A second sod was put down and watered again. Meter replaced and usage appears back to normal. Ms. Waitt said she drove by and it wasn't as green as in the past. Ms. Palomino reminded board that this was the case where the Town was to go in and replace the meter because it was old. Ms. Palomino said one could assume there was meter involvement to which Ms. Waitt mentioned meters slow down and don't speed up. Ms. Proakis reiterated, it's hard for a meter to spin without water going through. Ms. Waitt mentioned when water is not on a timer it's hard to determine minutes of use. Mr. Tarr said there's no evidence of leaks. Mr. Tarr made a motion to deny abatement and Ms. Proakis seconded, no discussion, all approve, motion carries.

### **Item 4 | New Water/Sewer Abatement Requests:**

**75 Nahant St.** - Ms. Waitt said no one is living in the house. Owner was notified by neighbor of water leak in basement of part dirt/finish. Six feet of water in basement resulting in a bill of \$34,400. Ms. Proakis said we're 100% sure didn't go in sewer, so I'd say abate 100% of sewer which is 24.5 % portion that we incurred or what we

would pay the MWRA. This is a different case than someone who used the water as this is a break, an emergency situation and we know it didn't go in the sewer. Ms. Proakis questioned what have we done in the past with hot water tank breaking? Ms. Waitt said we've abated the sewer. Ms. Proakis said remind People should shut water off if they are not home. Ms. Proakis made a motion to abate 100% of sewer fee for the water of break in basement that we know didn't go in the sewer, no discussion, all approve, motion carries.

**1 Fairview Drive** - Ms. Waitt said this was a high bill due to a catch up with regular usage, after many estimates. Since it's a catch-up bill and a lot of the total charge was in tier 3, Ms. Proakis suggests some of the charges be moved to tier 2 since it was not in the resident's control. Ms. Proakis made a motion that the December 2020 bill be reduced by the amount that's reflected from changing any tier 3 or above usage into tier 2 usage. Mr. Tarr seconded motion.

**38R Walton St.** - High bill due to pipe burst in unoccupied home. Neighbor alerted owner. Ms. Proakis made a motion to abate sewer portion of the bill. Mr. Tarr seconded, no discussion, all approve, motion carries.

**553 Lowell St.** - has very inconsistent usage, and irrigation system. Wait replaced meter in Jan. 2021. Ms. Palomino asked if the town has been in touch with them about upgrading their meter. Ms. Waitt said yes, they have gotten cards. She reiterated how meters slow down when they get old. Mr. Tarr made a motion to table in order to gather more data/readings. Ms. Proakis seconded the motion, no discussion, all approve, motion carries.

### **Item 5 | New Business:**

Ms. Waitt mentioned Vernon St. paving projects getting completed right now and curbing on Broadway, which now has an opening date of Sept. 21<sup>st</sup>. Minutes/notes are completed for the last few meetings so will send for review. New Cardboard recycling program at pit is going well and being emptied weekly. Ms. Palomino asked how does the pink bag program work now to which Ms. Waitt responded you have to get in touch with company to schedule pickup. Ms. Proakis asked how is this different than Big Brothers or Veterans or Epilepsy. Ms. Waitt said Simple Recycling gives us 5 cents for every pickup.

### **Item 6 | Next Meeting:**

To be determined

### **Item 7 | Adjournment:**

Mr. Tarr motioned to adjourn at 5:58 and Ms. Proakis seconded, no discussion, all approve, motion carries.