

Advisory Board of Public Works, May 17, 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, Director Joe Conway, Business Manager Ann Waitt and Clerk Anna Amatucci

Item 2 | Public Participation: None

Item 3 | Water Dispute: 1C Melvin St. Rear:

Bob Levy is the tenant at property that is leased. He has 4-5 employees at property and 2 bathrooms. Sells auto body supplies, mostly paint. Received huge water bill in October. Ms. Palomino asked if Mr. Levy checked for leaks to which Mr. Levy said yes. There is no irrigation at property. Ms. Palomino noted that consumption spiked in Sept. 2017 to which Mr. Levy responded the water meter was replaced.

Ms. Waitt said it's a fairly new meter and they usually slow down not speed up. Ms. Palomino noted that usage was high in Sept 2019 as well. Ms. Palomino asked Mr. Levy if he got a plumber to check for leaks and Mr. Levy said no, he only did a water dye test.

Ms. Proakis-Ellis said account notes indicate a water heater broke in 2017 and was replaced. Ms. Proakis-Ellis noted consumption tends to be around 300-500 then there's others that's 1200 and 1700 then 5100 so it's kind of up and down. It could be that something is intermittently leaking and then not leaking by the time you're seeing leaks. Ms. Proakis-Ellis said she suspects something is leaking. Mr. Tarr mentioned the high usage when they replaced the water tank and then new meter. At that time Mr. Levy received an abatement and Ms. Waitt mentioned there's usually a one time forgiveness or relief. Mr. Tarr asked Mr. Levy if something else could be leaking to which Mr. Levy said not that he's aware of. Mr. Tarr suggests monitoring usage for a certain period of time and watch for a consumption change. Interest and penalties will be deferred during this time and Mr. Levy agrees to pay his current bill in the amount equal to his usual consumption of 300 cubic feet.

Item 4 | New Business:

Mr. Conway said aside from the DPW budget there was the supplemental appropriation for last August's unexpected storm and all of the road money is in place. Due to the challenging year we've had, DPW tried to be modest in its requests.

Matt Abraham presented the water rate study and the three options for FY22 rates. Ms. Proakis-Ellis asked Mr. Conway if he would like to recommend an option and Mr. Conway said he would rather not influence board. Mr. Tarr noted all options have an increase in service charges and is it necessary to increase these. Given we

are still in the pandemic and trying to be conservative, what's the difference in no increase. Mr. Abraham said \$45,000 for water and \$49,000 for sewer; if not implemented not a game changer, but a small effect overall. Ms. Proakis-Ellis asked Mr. Conway if retained earnings was operating on reserve fund to which Mr.

Conway responded, yes otherwise it'd be a tax levy.

Ms. Palomino asked why was service charge implemented in the first place. Mr. Conway said it was charged years ago and covered things such as a resident going away for the winter, and DPW incurring costs of staff going to read the meter. It also ensures that something like postage is covered. Ms. Proakis-Ellis said Elena said our flow share is different because of Crystal Lake and how we use it. Mr. Conway said a significant impact of how it's used relies on the fact that the treatment operator doesn't work the usual shift, and he is there very early in morning to target peak consumption time. If we need to modify, we can follow that and tailor operation to suit that. We are just starting to hit our stride and hoping to continue to show return on investment. Ms. Palomino asked if we're relying on it more and are we treating more this year? Mr. Conway said it's what's permitted by DEP of what we can draw out of that system. An action plan was put in place with Water & Sewer Supervisor to try and consistently target the 75% maximum. Mr. Tarr asked if there will be any impact on the increased housing due to possibly increased water meter size to which Mr. Conway responded as long as infrastructure is there to support it we should be ok. Mr. Tarr mentioned the good part is that we review every year.

The Board would like to see what water rate plans would look like with the original option 1, option 1 and no increase in service charges and option 1 with no service charge but making up revenue. Also, the same scenarios for option 3 as well.

Votes should be cast for Chair and vice chair at this time. Ms. Proakis-Ellis made a motion to nominate Mr. Tarr the Chair. It was seconded by Ms. Palomino. Ms. Proakis-Ellis made a motion to nominate Ms. Palomino as Vice Chair and it was seconded by Mr. Tarr.

Item 5 | Next Meeting:

The next meeting will be on May 24 at 5:00.

Item 6 | Adjournment:

Chair Tarr made a motion to adjourn at 6:55. Motion was seconded by Ms. Palomino. Motion carries 3-0.