

Draft WMAC Meeting Minutes

April 24, 2014

Attendees: David Crosby, Chair; Anne Carney, David Hearne, Paul Lauenstein, Sarah Windman

Guest: Eric Hooper, Superintendent, Sharon DPW

Minutes of the March 20, 2014 meeting were approved as amended.

1. Eric presented the proposed water budget of \$2.845M. This budget shows \$54,950 of retained earnings but that amount is expected to be about \$250,000 by the end of the fiscal year. Money in the existing fiscal year water budget has not had the wages for snow and ice work done by water department employees transferred into the DPW budget yet. Snow and ice removal cannot be charged to the water department's enterprise account. The water department budget usually has about \$500,000 in retained earnings and any monies over that amount could be used to fund other water department projects instead of incurring additional debt. Revenues are running about \$50,000 behind projected revenues but the revenue from the January 1st rise in water rates has not been factored in yet but will be accounted for by June 30, 2014.
2. The largest project for the upcoming year will be replacing water mains from Mann's Pond on Billings Street up to East Street and then going both ways on East Street. The Brook Road project will take several years to complete since gas lines are also being done in that area and the Town wants to follow the gas lines with the new water mains rather than having the roads torn up twice. Eventually, all four quadrants around the square will have to be done. Currently, about \$500,000 is spent annually replacing water mains which puts the Town on a 200 year replacement plan instead of the recommended \$1,000,000 per year 100 year plan. The only town in the area that is even close to a 100 year plan is Concord and that is on a 125 year plan.
3. a: As previously mentioned water revenues are down about \$50,000 but they are expected to go up by the end of the fiscal year. David Crosby asked for quarter to quarter revenues billed for fiscal years 2013 and 2014. Eric noted several large expenses in the budget particularly the cost of potassium hydroxide for control of lead and copper in drinking water. He also stated a \$25,000 cost for lab testing. He answered Paul's question about conservation money by saying that there is still \$50,000 in that line item. Eric also stated that the Town aggressively pursues grant money.

b: Pumping is still low (third lowest in 20 years) but there is a high percentage of unaccounted for water -18%. The water department has to find leaks amounting to about 195,000 gallons a day. The department recently found two service leaks in the Knob Hill area. One of the leaks was losing 15 gallons a minute.

c: Well # 2 has been cleaned and well #3 is being cleaned right now. Well #2 has nitrate but not iron and manganese while well #3 doesn't have nitrate but does have iron and manganese. Well #3 has capacity back but high iron. Well #4 nitrates went up but are well below the 5 number that means something has to be done.

d: There was considerable discussion on how water service would be provided in the Rattlesnake hill subdivision area. Is a "high pressure district" still being looked at? Where would you put a booster pump? There was also discussion of the cost of a booster pump versus a water tank that could service the whole subdivision. Dead end water lines were also discussed since a break could mean a lot of houses without water while the break got fixed.

e: Paul asked Eric if it is possible to work with the company designing the water bill to show a graph depicting water usage quarter to quarter. Eric said he would like to see that and it is a matter of working with Munis to see if it could be done. The meeting concluded with Eric giving a demo on a website application (water act permitting tool) developed by MASS.gov/dep It doesn't appear to help a town like Sharon that is totally on septic since it does not account for water discharge back into the ground.

4. The next meeting will be on May 15, 2014 at 7:30PM at the Community Center.
5. Adjournment at 9:15 PM

Respectfully submitted

Anne Carney