

MINUTES
SHARON BOARD OF SELECTMEN
February 13, 2018

The meeting of the Sharon Board of Selectmen was called to order at 7:00pm in the Town Hearing Room at the Sharon Community Center with Chairman John J. McGrath, Selectman Walter B. Roach, Town Administrator Frederic E. Turkington, Jr. and Assistant to the Town Administrator Lauren Barnes. The meeting commenced with the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

Water Rates Public Hearing

DPW Superintendent Eric Hooper appeared before the Board.

MOTION: To open the public hearing at 7:02pm
(Roach - McGrath) 2-0 **PASSES**

In keeping with the approach adopted previously by the Water Management Advisory Committee of having regular relatively small rate increases, what is proposed is a modest rate increase that should result in an increase in overall revenues of about 2% up to roughly \$3.9 million. This revenue increase will allow the Water Department to continue its 20-year infrastructure improvement program of water main replacement and implementation of other large capital projects. This proposed increase was presented to the Water Management Advisory Committee for discussion in November and December and approved by the Committee for presentation to the Selectmen. The proposed changes include the following highlights:

1. Increased the fixed fee from \$27.50/quarter to \$32.50/quarter.
2. Raised rates of all blocks, including the most subsidized blocks 1 and 2 which have remained relatively unchanged the last rounds of rate changes.
3. Retained the 5-block structure.
 - 3.1. Reduced slightly the amount of water within the lowest blocks.
 - 3.2. Retained the block break points of the highest blocks during the fall/winter quarters.
 - 3.3. Retained the block break points of the highest blocks during the spring/summer quarters.
4. No rate increases are proposed for the Commercial/Other category.
5. Increased the upper most summer time residential rate from \$15/1,000 gallons to \$15.50/1,000 gallons and retained the block break at 27,500 gallons (roughly 75 gallons per day for a family of 4) during the summer quarters, April – September, and is intended to target the top irrigation users.

Based on past use history, approximately 350 households (7%), will remain in the lowest, most subsidized block, and approximately 500 households will remain in the second rate block. These two blocks represented approximately 16% of accounts and are primarily 1 and 2 person households.

Based on past use history, approximately 25% of Sharon households will have water use that will reach the top block rate.

Proposed rates and block break points:

Base Fee	Residential		Other*	Irrigation Only
	Spring/Summer	Fall/Winter		
0-4,000 gallons	\$5.00	\$4.25	\$4.00	\$10.00
4,000-7,000 gallons	\$8.00	\$7.00	\$4.50	\$10.00
7,000-17,500 gallons	\$10.50	\$9.25	\$5.00	\$11.00
17,500-27,000 gallons	\$13.00	\$12.50	\$5.50	\$13.50
>27,000 gallons	\$15.50	\$14.50	\$6.00	\$14.50

Existing rates and block break points:

Base Fee	Residential		Other*	Irrigation Only
	Spring/Summer	Fall/Winter		
0-4,500 gallons	\$4.50	\$3.50	\$4.00	\$10.00
4,500-7,500 gallons	\$7.50	\$6.50	\$4.50	\$10.00
7,500-17,500 gallons	\$10.00	\$8.75	\$5.00	\$11.00
17,500-27,000 gallons	\$12.50	\$12.00	\$5.50	\$13.50
>27,000 gallons	\$15.00	\$14.00	\$6.00	\$14.50

* Agriculture, commercial and industrial uses

Fall/Winter: October through March

Spring/Summer: April through September

From a revenue generating standpoint, water consumption has dropped 33% over the years, so that is why annual rate adjustments are needed. Operational expenses have been flat over the past several years. What has changed is the system improvement line item, so that component has jumped quite a bit. They are proposing a fairly aggressive water main replacement in the next year, but that means an investment in water main replacement. The replacement of the Massapoag Avenue water tank is also in the planning stages, at a cost of a couple million dollars. We need to replace the 100-year old water mains and the water tank is from 1954. The money in retained earnings is sufficient for emergency repairs, like the water main on Suffolk Road. After reviewing the latest pumping reports, the estimate of revenues has been lowered to \$3.79 million from \$3.9 million.

Chairman McGrath commented that there is no fat in the Water Department budget. Mr. Hooper it is incumbent upon us to eliminate the 100-year old cast iron mains and 70-year old ceramic pipes. They are trying to go for a state revolving fund (SRF), as they have lower interest rates. Chairman McGrath asked if there is a way to notify residents of water main breaks in their areas. Mr. Hooper noted that the breaks happened in the middle of the night, and by the time people wake up, people know of the break. He commented that the residents in the Suffolk Road neighborhood were very understanding given the circumstances.

Selectman Roach asked about the emergency hookup with the MWRA and Norwood officials. Town officials from both communities met twice, including the new Norwood Town Manager. Pressure testing has been completed, and it appears there are no problems. An operating plan is needed to minimize the water discoloration in Norwood when the connection is turned on. The most aggressive schedule has the connection completed in eighteen months. The funding has been set aside for this project.

Robert Parrish, Bay Road, asked about the operating budget. Mr. Turkington noted that the budget is \$2.7 million. Mr. Hooper said that Water Department staff is also used for snow removal, so he charges DPW side of the budget for their hours while they are plowing snow, which is essential a deduct on the water budget. With borrowing and capital projects, the budget is \$3.12 million, according to Mr. Turkington.

Mr. Parrish wondered if stainless steel is an option for the Massapoag Avenue water tank. Mr. Hooper noted that it is an option, as well as a fused steel panel. With respect to the rates, Mr. Parrish feels that the rate increase hits the elderly. He wondered that the Master Plan could be adjusted a little, so the town doesn't need to borrow as much as it does – some projects should be put off for a couple of years. He suggested that an assessment be put in place for a year or two to pay for some projects instead of raising rates.

Mr. Hooper acknowledged that the rate increase for the lowest tier has been a concern of his and the Water Management Advisory Committee. If people cannot afford water, they can come before the Board and the WMAC for relief, but people are proud. He does not have a good answer – they have tried to keep the lowest rates low.

Chairman McGrath noted that the Board will vote on the water rates at the Board's next meeting, as Selectman Heitin was unable to attend tonight's meeting.

Mr. Hooper is meeting with the Water Management Advisory Committee on Thursday evening and will consider the comments from tonight's meeting.

MOTION: To close the public hearing at 7:39pm
(Roach - McGrath) 2-0 **PASSES**

Zoning Amendment Proposal Form Discussion

Assistant Town Engineer Lance DelPriore appeared before the Board. He serves as an agent to the Planning Board, along with Town Engineer Peter O'Cain. They field a lot of questions about the process to amend the zoning bylaws. Mr. DelPriore drafted three documents, including the *Zoning Amendment Proposal Form*, which will help manage and track timelines. The guidelines are a working document at this point. The idea is to limit the number of last-minute revisions. The information in these documents follows state law. It is a little late in the process to use these documents for this year's Town Meeting, but the Board may want to consider using it moving forward. Mr. DelPriore added that the documents could be posted online. Chairman McGrath believes it is an excellent idea.

Chairman McGrath thanked Mr. DelPriore for taking the initiative.

Medical & Recreational Marijuana Status Update

Mr. Turkington noted that the Board has a memo in their packet from Town Counsel's office relative to the proposed articles relative to marijuana. There is a citizens group that presented a petition to the Board, asking for a ballot question to ban recreational marijuana in the town. Mr. Turkington reviewed the draft warrant articles, which include a ban on retail recreational establishments, amend the existing zoning bylaw to allow recreational in the same district as registered medical dispensaries, limiting the number of recreational establishments, extend the temporary moratorium and the adoption of a 3% local sales tax. An unanswered question: Can a medical marijuana facility that wishes to convert still subject to the ban or can they open regardless of the ban? The state regulations are due to come out on March 15.

The Planning Board's tentative public hearing is set for March 15.

Consider vote pursuant to M.G.L. Chapter 61B, Section 9 - 25 Tiot Street & 25 Tiot Holdings, LLC

Chairman McGrath noted this is a procedural matter. Mr. Turkington said that the intent is to build a limited number of housing units. This is an implementation matter - this will convert recreation property to residential. We are not buying the property.

MOTION: To decline the town's right of first refusal for the property at 25 Tiot Street as discussed under M.G.L. Chapter 61B
(McGrath - Roach) 2-0 **PASSES**

Consent Calendar

- I. Vote to approve regular session minutes of January 23, 2018
- II. Vote to approve the one-day alcohol license (wine & malt) for Tracey Robinson for an event at the Community Center on Sunday, March 25, 2018
- III. Vote to approve the following banner requests:
 - i. Veterans Services Memorial Day Banner - May 21-29, 2018 in first position (waive fee)
 - ii. Veterans Services Flag Day Banner - June 4-15, 2018 in first position (waive fee)
 - iii. Temple Sinai of Sharon - March 19-26, 2018 in second position
- IV. Supplemental: Vote to approve and sign the Southeastern Regional Services Group contract award for DPW Services for item no. 22 - tub grinding - at an estimated value of \$14,960

MOTION: To approve the February 13 consent calendar, as amended
(Roach - McGrath) 2-0 **PASSES**

Town Administrator's Report

Mr. Turkington reported the following:

- At last evening's Finance Committee, DPW, Fire, Police and Library presented their budgets, and also discussed the Capital Outlay requests.
- There are two long-time inspectors within the Department of Public Works and are ready to retire. They are exploring an interim by-law change to ensure the rate is sufficient in the market.
- He has reached out to several chiefs to see if they are able to assist the five-member search committee in the search for a new Police Chief.
- An internal investigation was conducted as a result of a complaint to the Board about a traffic stop. The officer was given a written reprimand.
- The Board will order the warrant articles at the next meeting.

Topics not reasonably anticipated forty-eight (48) hours in advance of the meeting

Announcements:

- As a reminder, Thursday, February 15, is the deadline to select the container size you want for trash collection (new program begins 7/1/18). For the cart selection registration page and answers to frequently asked questions, please visit the town's website at: <https://www.townofsharon.net/>
- During this flu season, residents are reminded to take care of themselves, and check in on your elderly neighbors.

Adjournment

MOTION: To adjourn at 8:01pm
(Roach - McGrath) 2-0 **PASSES**

List of Documents

- Memo from Eric Hooper, Superintendent of Public Works – Proposed Water Rate Increase Effective April 1, 2018
- Zoning Amendment Proposal Form
- Guidelines for Adopting and Amending Zoning – February 2018
- Zoning Amendment Flow Chart
- Memo from Lisa V. Whelan, Esq. – May 2018 ATM Marijuana Articles
- Email correspondence between Fred Turkington and Connie Dai regarding recreational marijuana restrictions
- Letter from Robert Shelmerdine, Esq. regarding Notice of Intent to Convert Use – 61 B “Lot 2” – A Portion of 25 Tiot Street, 25 Tiot Street Holdings, LLC
- January 23, 2018 Board of Selectmen minutes
- One-Day Alcohol License application – Tracey Robinson, March 25, 2018
- Banner requests: Veteran Services, Sharon Soccer Association, Temple Sinai
- Report of the Town Administrator
- Miscellaneous Correspondence