

**EAST LYME WATER & SEWER COMMISSION
SPECIAL MEETING
TUESDAY, APRIL 30th, 2019
MINUTES**

The East Lyme Water & Sewer Commission held a Special Meeting on Tuesday, April 30, 2019 at the East Lyme Town Hall, 108 Pennsylvania Avenue, Niantic, CT. Chairman Nickerson called the Regular Meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

PRESENT: Mark Nickerson Chairman, Dave Bond, Steve DiGiovanna, Dave Jacques, Dave Murphy, Joe Mingo, Carol Russell, Roger Spencer, Dave Zoller

ALSO PRESENT: Joe Bragaw, Public Works Director
Brad Kargl, Municipal Utility Engineer
Attorney Edward O'Connell, Town Counsel
William Scheer, Deputy Public Works Director
Anna Johnson, Finance Director

ABSENT: No One

1. Call to Order / Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman Nickerson called the Regular Meeting of the East Lyme Water & Sewer Commission to order at 7:00 PM and led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Approval of Minutes

▪ **Regular Meeting Minutes – March 26, 2019**

Mr. Nickerson called for a motion or any discussion or corrections to the Regular Meeting Minutes of March 26, 2019.

****MOTION (1)**

Mr. DiGiovanna moved to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of March 26, 2019 as presented.

Mr. Zoller seconded the motion.

Vote: 9 – 0 – 0. Motion passed.

3. Delegations

Mr. Nickerson called for delegations.

There were no delegations.

4. Billing Adjustments

There were none.

5. Approval of Bills

Mr. Nickerson called for a motion on the Well 1A/6 Treatment Project bill.

****MOTION (2)**

Mr. DiGiovanna moved to approve payment of the following Well 1A/6 Treatment Project bill:

Tighe & Bond, Inv. #041990013 in the amount of \$29,898.94.

Mr. Zoller seconded the motion.

Vote: 9 – 0 – 0. Motion passed.

FILED

May 4 20 19 AT 10:15 AM/PM

EAST LYME TOWN CLERK

6. Finance Director Report

Ms. Johnson noted that they had her report in their packets. She noted that some \$436,000 in the water cash balance is Meter Deposit funds and \$16,165 is due to sewer obligations. It was noted that they are no longer taking any payments out for the sewer debt as that portion has been paid off. Also, they are that time of the year where they are low on funds and the May billing is just now coming in.

Mr. Bond asked about the water meter deposits in light of the new meter charge on the billing.

Mr. Bragaw said that he would explain that during his update on the operating budgets.

7. Water Regulations Review – Set Meeting Date

Mr. Kargl recalled that they had discussed this lastly in November of 2018 and asked if Mr. Mingo, Ms. Russell and Mr. Zoller were available to get together for a meeting this month.

Mr. Nickerson urged them to get going on this as the new meter program is just about to be rolled out and they need to get this going.

Mr. Bragaw noted that Mr. Scheer has worked on a draft from another utility and that it should be a great starting point for them.

Attorney O'Connell said that when/if they change their regulations that they would need to hold a Public Hearing.

Mr. Mingo said that he would like to eliminate the '1 in 10'.

Attorney O'Connell and Mr. DiGiovanna said that is a policy of the Board and not part of the regulations.

Mr. Kargl suggested that they meet on Wednesday, May 8, 2019 at 10 AM.

8. West Road Subdivision Water and Sewer Extension

Mr. Kargl explained the upcoming five-lot subdivision off Bond/West noting that there is a one foot grudge strip so they are proposing running an easement to water & sewer the lots. There is a sewer shed line that bifurcates the properties so all of the lots have been located within the sewer shed area. The easement will carry the utilities. This will fall under a sewer main extension requiring a public hearing. The assessment number would be formalized at that time.

Attorney O'Connell noted that there will be water and sewer main extensions and that when acting as the WPCA they hold a public hearing and assess the fees. It is the Board of Selectmen that extends the water so they will make that decision which they typically do at the request of the WPCA.

Mr. Bond asked about the grudge strip.

Attorney O'Connell explained that it has been there and was intended for others not to be able to have rights to the new black point beach area or recreation facilities – so those homes will not be allowed to join or utilize those facilities.

9. Proposed Water & Sewer Operating Budgets for FY2020

Mr. Bragaw recalled that he had previously explained the expenditures and was waiting for the revenues to present the composite budgets. He noted that he had factored in a moderate rate increase rather than to have a large increase, then none, then a larger one. In this way the rates would be leveled out. It is showing a 2.75% increase.

He said that he would start with the water side and then explained the meter service fee that appeared on the current billing - \$25 per year charged at \$12.50 per billing period. This would move them out of the meter deposit business so he has incorporated a line item in the water budget for meter deposit reimbursement. He said that they are looking to refund back to the people this deposit over three to four years time including the interest. He is proposing to do it as \$25 per year which would offset the meter deposit. \$70 was the original meter deposit and the interest accrued over time would have to be added to it. The meter fee of \$25 per year provides approximately \$157,500 in revenues. He said that they would discuss this in more detail when the time comes to do it. People would receive interest based on the number of years that they have had the meter. They would also need to have a future agenda item where they motion to stop taking in a meter deposit so that the program could be changed over to the meter fee program that has been started.

Mr. Bond asked about the interest amount.
Attorney O'Connell said that PURA will tell them what the interest rate will be.
Mr. Bond asked how much water owes sewer.
Mr. Bragaw said that it is \$580,000.

Ms. Russell noted the hydrant fees and a memo that she had sent to Mr. Bragaw and Mr. Kargl in March that included her analysis of the hydrant fees from 1998 to current day. She said that it is not until 2026 that they will get back to where they were in 1998-1999. She asked what could be done in future years to close the gap before 2026.
Mr. Bragaw noted that in 2020 they would receive \$43,098 in fees.

Mr. Nickerson said that he is not entertaining discussion on this as it is not a budget item. They are getting 10% more each year but with future very tough budgets and more rough times ahead from the State it becomes an item that very well could take a hit.
Mr. Mingo said that it belongs in the Public Safety budget and not in the water budget.
Mr. Nickerson said again that it is not on the agenda and that there would be no more discussion on it tonight.

Ms. Russell asked about money from Montville and Waterford for hydrants.
Attorney O'Connell said that there is a provision that they can exercise –
Mr. Kargl said that they wanted the hydrants for flushing and they could hook up to them. Further, they do bill them for the sprinklers.
Mr. Mingo and Ms. Russell said that Montville benefits from the hydrants.
Mr. Bond asked if East Lyme pays property tax on the tank that is on the property there.
Mr. Bragaw said that they pay some \$20/year.

****MOTION (3)**

Mr. Mingo moved to approve the Water budget for 2019/2020 as presented.
Mr. Spencer seconded the motion.
Vote: 9 – 0 – 0. Motion passed.

On the sewer side Mr. Bragaw noted that he is looking at a 3.5% budget increase with a 2.5% rate increase at this time. He said that billable water is going up and that he has asked New London if they could set the flow rate at a rater per gallon so that they would have something to be able to budget for as that would make things easier for them to deal with. Anything left in the budget goes to pay down the sewer assessment fund. He also noted the vehicles that they would be sharing and utilizing which should make things easier.

****MOTION (4)**

Mr. Zoller moved to approve the Sewer budget for 2019/2020 as presented.
Mr. DiGiovanna seconded the motion.
Vote: 9 – 0 – 0. Motion passed.

10. Bridebrook Sewer Pump Station – Discussion and possible action to authorize funds from the sewer benefit assessment fund for equipment repair

Mr. Kargl said that he would like to use up to \$12,100 from the sewer benefit assessment fund for an overhaul of the Muffin Monster at the Bridebrook Sewer Pump station. This is a grinder assembly that manages the solid sin the waste stream. The grinder has been in operation for around six years but was recently taken out of service when the main bearing seized up.

****MOTION (5)**

Mr. Murphy moved to authorize an expenditure of up to \$12,100 from account A-03-70-724-700-308, sewer pump station upgrades to overhaul the Muffin Monster at the Bridebrook Sewer Pump station.
Mr. Zoller seconded the motion.
Vote: 9 – 0 – 0. Motion passed.

11. Niantic Pump Station – Vibration Analysis Update

Mr. Kargl reported the following from the vibration analysis - all of the readings fall within acceptable areas. It is the building design that acts like a 'tuning fork'. They can call for dampening of the pipe system or a reconfiguration of the layout of the pipes.

Further, Mr. Webster from Weston & Sampson stated in his memo that they could consider implementation in the pending station-wide upgrade that was identified in their recent study.

12. Water Project Updates

▪ Meter Replacement Project – Discussion of bid results and possible action to recommend project approval by the Board of Selectmen

Mr. Scheer said that they had gone out to bid and explained the process and the matrix as required by the DPH. PMI (Professional Meters Inc.) came out the preferred selection with a cost proposal total of \$548,995. There were only two bidders – PMI and CCI (Contract Callers Inc.).

Mr. Mingo asked how much they had put aside for the project.

Mr. Bragaw said approximately \$900,000 which was based on what Sensus had told them – so, they came in well under.

Mr. Jacques asked how someone could do the project for some \$300,000 less.

Mr. Scheer explained that CCI had branched out from their base business of collections calling into meters and other areas where as PMI specializes in this area and in these meters.

Mr. Bragaw added that they will hire locally to carry the job through with their own management over-seeing the process.

Mr. Jacques asked about local companies not bidding.

Mr. Scheer said that he had reached out to many but they found that they could not do it and there was only one who might be able to but they could not complete the project in the specified time.

Mr. Nickerson asked that they move the actions as recommended by Mr. Scheer to get this project on its way.

****MOTION (6)**

Mr. Mingo moved that the Water & Sewer Commission approves the following actions:

- 1. The selection and installation of Sensus meters and AMI, and authorizes the Chair to sign contracts, service agreements and any other related documents.**
- 2. The selection of Professional Meters Inc. (PMI) for meter installation services and awards the contract to PMI subject to the approval of the Connecticut Department of Health.**
- 3. Forwarding the Meter Replacement/AMI Project to the Board of Selectmen to begin the bonding authorization process in the amount of \$2,318,492 – and**
- 4. Authorizes its Chair to sign any and all documents to execute contracts and loan agreements for the Water Meter Replacement/AMI Project.**

Mr. DiGiovanna seconded the motion.

Vote: 9 – 0 – 0. Motion passed.

▪ Well 1A and 6 Treatment Plant Project – Bid Schedule

Mr. Kargl reported that the schedule is in place to go out to bid for May 9, 2019 with June 30, 2019 for the bid opening. He noted that under DWSRF funding that there is an approximate \$20,000 irrigation pump item that is not eligible so they will move forward without it at this time.

▪ Changes in State action level for Manganese – Strategy for Well 2A

Mr. Kargl reported that it was no surprise that the State lowered the manganese level from .5 to .3. This would affect well 2A and the DPH in the meantime would like those above the .3 to turn off their wells and to also provide notification. Well 2A is around a .4 and they are looking at employing blending. Well 1A had been addressed with the latest work being done on it. So, they are looking into a blending option for well 2A.

Mr. Jacques asked hypothetically – what if all of the wells here or elsewhere had this issue – would they have to turn all of them off.

Mr. Kargl said that they would have to notice the people and work on a blending plan but fortunately that does not apply to them.

13. Correspondence Log

There were no comments.

14. Chairman's Report

Mr. Nickerson reported that they would be closing on the Honeywell building this week Friday. There are a lot of people who have been working diligently on this project.

Also – The Annual Town Meeting on the budget is May 13, 2019 and the Town Referendum on the budget is scheduled for May 23, 2019.

Lastly, the Costco project is moving along.

15. Staff Updates

a. Water Department Monthly Report

Mr. DiGiovanna asked about the 21% spike on the water side

Mr. Kargl said that last years numbers were unusually low.

b. Sewer Department Monthly Report

There were no comments.

16. Future Agenda Items

No comments.

17. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Nickerson called for a motion to adjourn.

****MOTION (7)**

Mr. DiGiovanna moved to adjourn this Special Meeting of the East Lyme Water & Sewer Commission at 9:05 PM.

Mr. Spencer seconded the motion.

Vote: 9 – 0 – 0. Motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Zmitruk,
Recording Secretary