

**EAST LYME WATER & SEWER COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
TUESDAY, JUNE 25, 2024
MINUTES**

The East Lyme Water & Sewer Commission held a Regular Meeting on June 25, 2024. Chairman Dan Cunningham called the Regular Meeting at 7:00 PM.

PRESENT: Dan Cunningham Chairman, Dave Murphy, Dave Bond, Dave Zoller, Carol Russell, Ken Roberts, Roger Spencer

ALSO PRESENT: Ben North, Chief Operating Officer
Matt Garneau, Utility Engineer
Anne Cicchiello, Deputy First Selectman

ABSENT: Michelle Williams

1. Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman Dan Cunningham called the Regular Meeting for the Town of East Lyme Water and Sewer Commission to order at 7:00 PM. The Pledge was observed.

2. Approval of Minutes

Mr. Cunningham called for a motion to approve or any discussion on the Meeting Minutes of May 28, 2024. Mr. Zoller mentioned that on the Vote Line of each Motion, it is not necessary to add the absentee voters for each motion. In the future, the absentee voters will be noted as "0" (E.g., 6-0-0 instead of 6-0-2).

****MOTION (1)**

Mr. Murphy moved to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of May 28, 2024

Mr. Zoller seconded the motion.

Vote: 5 – 2– 0

Motion passed.

3. Delegations

Mr. Cunningham called for delegations. There were none.

4. Correspondence Log

Mr. Cunningham went over the correspondence log.

5. Billing Adjustments

Mr. Cunningham called for billing adjustments.

a. 267 Flanders Road (Starbucks)

Mr. North mentioned that this is a commercial building and that the commission needs to make decision on the 1 in 10 Request. Mr. North proposed that because the water department now has the smart meters with data available daily that 1-in-10 Requests should be dealt with

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Cunningham
TOWN CLERK

differently. In the past, requests were calculated using the readings for the entire course of a billing cycle. In this situation, the department alerted the customer of their leak because it was on the high consumption report that is run weekly. Mr. North pointed out that the attached reports show that this customer was alerted of the leak on February 5th, 2024 and that the leak was not fixed until March 13th, 2024. Mr. North would like to propose a new concept when dealing with these requests: when the staff identify the leak and alerts the customer, that alert we should serve as the start point for how long it takes to fix the leak. Mr. North continues that the idea is to have customers act on fixing or preventing further issues as soon as they are alerted. In this example (227 Flanders Rd.), Mr. North notes that the data was analyzed using the existing process (Agenda Attachment Version 1 for 1-in-10 request) and also using a proposed process (Version 2). In Version 2, the department proposes using the property's average meter readings (without a leak) for the calculation of the time between when the customer was alerted, and the leak was fixed. In this manner, the adjustment is reduced because it would reflect the possible water usage if the leak was fixed in a timely manner. Mr. North reiterates that with the new meter's technology and data availability, the process of calculation for 1-in-10 Requests needs to be revised and, that customers need to be diligent on getting leaks fixed.

Mr. Roberts noted that contractors are very hard to schedule these days and that a reasonable time should be offered to the customers to fix leaks. Mr. North responded that this is a valid point, and it needs to be investigated.

Mrs. Russell asked how the algorithm for the leak reports are set up. Mr. Garneau answered that the meter system software is programmed to send out a leak report weekly. Once this report is e-mailed to the meter technician, it is analyzed and prioritized. A post card is sent to inform the customer of leak and provides the gallons/hour usage, pointers on how to fix the leak and a phone number to contact the water department. Depending on how large the leak is, the technician may decide to call or attempt to contact the customer in person.

Mrs. Russell agreed that a grace period is necessary and that it needs to be documented on the policy. She also said that information on the dates can be provided on the alert post card. Mr. Murphy agreed that the policy needs to be updated since we have new technology and data availability. He also noted that in this case (227 Flanders Rd.) the existing policy should be used to adjust the bill.

Mr. Roberts asked Mr. North to provide the commission with the proposed changes on the policy to be reviewed. He also mentioned that the proposed changes should be reviewed by the town's attorney. Furthermore, he proposed that in the future, the 1-in-10 Adjustments should only be available for the properties with the new meters that were replaced by the department during its meter replacement program.

Mr. North summarized that the commission agrees that a new 1-in-10 policy is necessary that will be available only to properties that have replaced the meter and, that a grace period should also be in place. Mrs. Russell noted that this grace period should be appropriate to give both staff and customer to identify and fix the leak. She also noted that existing customers who have not yet replaced their meters, should be notified of their future inability to use the 1-in-10 Adjustment.

Mr. Cunningham asked if a motion was needed to approve the adjustment to the bill for 227 Flanders Rd.

****MOTION (2)**

Mr. Murphy moved to approve the request to an adjustment of the bill via 1-in-10 Adjustment request for 227 Flanders Rd. using Version 1 of calculations.

Mr. Zoller seconded the motion.

Vote: 7 – 0– 0

Motion passed.

6. Approval of Bills

There were none.

7. Finance Director Report

Mr. Gervais was not present at the meeting. Mr. North mentioned that Mr. Gervais will be able to provide a more detailed overview of the end of the fiscal year in the next meeting.

8. Discussion on Preliminary Engineering Report for Well 4A and Well 1A/6 PFAS Removal Project

Mr. North mentioned that this report is a draft, and that the department will be meeting with Tighe and Bond next week to discuss things that need clarification. Mr. North said that he is planning on getting an OPC for the entire project instead of the OPC for only the treatment that Tighe and Bond provided at this time. He went on to say that the cost of treatment is around \$1.3M but this number will be clarified as they move forward. The \$1.3M is a number on the low end of treatment – only covering the filters cost. The OPC provided now will allow some finance decisions to be made and to hire an engineer based on its findings. He also mentioned that they will be progressing on to the QBS process this summer and that hopefully, by October/November the department will find out if any funding will be available from the state for the treatment of drinking water and an engineer selected. The design should be done by mid-winter and the project should be out to bid by early Spring.

Mrs. Russell asked if there were any plans for the prevention of PFAS. Mr. North responded that there are federal regulations to limit production of such products, but the department is concentrating on how to treat it. Mr. North also mentioned that maybe the department could contact the fire department to find out if they're still using PFAS, Mr. Cunningham said that he believes the fire department has removed that were identified as PFAS about 2-3 years ago, per a state mandate.

Mr. Roberts asked if the staff was confident that the granulated, activated carbon and the ionic exchange resin are the only two things that need to be evaluated as alternatives. Mr. North responded that because this issue is so new, there is still an expected technology boom to happen, and other options will surface to be investigated.

Mr. Roberts noted that the comparison tables in the report were very detailed but he wanted to know that a life cycle report analysis had been provided. Mr. North responded that again, because this issue is so new, there is no way to come up with a long-term cost.

Mr. Roberts mentioned that he would like to see a recommendations section on the report. Mr. Garneau responded that this project is in a preliminary state and that future meetings with Tighe and Bond will clarify a lot of these doubts.

Mr. Murphy asked if there were any funds available from the government to cover the cost of treating PFAS. Mr. North responded that he is not aware of any federal funding. From what he understands, the federal government would distribute any funding available to individual states.

Mrs. Russell asked if our Attorney General was pursuing lawsuits against the companies that produced PFAS. Mr. North responded that Mr. Garneau had been on a call with a law firm that may be pursuing a suit, but more information will be provided later.

9. Project Updates

a. Well 5A WTP Lagoon Improvement Project

Mr. Garneau reported that Well 5A lagoons have been completed. The only things left to do were establishing some grass and minor fencing. The contractors have reported that they have demobilized the lagoons. The lagoons are now working and in the past the lagoons were full. Now they are empty and only being used for the backwashing twice a day.

b. Well 2A/3A/3B WTP Upgrade Project

Mr. Garneau reported that Phase I was approved by the state last week which means that department can bring most of the new chemical feed system online. The IT vendor was brought on board, and he did a major upgrade and integration of the SCADA system – that’s how our operators get alarms and know what is going on. The department is going to be submitting the Phase II request to the state which will be the final approval to run Well 2A water through the Bridebrook Water Treatment plant. The water main was flushed and chlorinated last week and got the sample results back – once the state reviews those, that will be the final step to get the water treated through the Bridebrook Water Treatment after July 1st.

10. Chairman’s Report

Mr. Cunningham reported that there was a server issue over the weekend that became critical at some point which was resolved in a timely manner.

11. Staff Updates

a. Water Department Monthly Report

Mr. North wanted to point out that some of the distribution personnel have been working on the corner of Main St. and Black Point Rd. (picture was shared) – the assumption of a break on a 6” in. lateral turned out to be a hydrant main that had been erroneously installed years ago. Personnel were able to replace the broken part of the main all in one day. Mr. North wanted to share some of the work that the crew does in daily basis that keeps the whole system running. Mrs. Russell mentioned that this is a great example of how financial support for hydrants is important because it goes beyond maintenance of hydrants to underground and system flows.

Mr. Murphy pointed out the number of meters that still need to be replaced. Mr. North and Mr. Garneau mentioned that this number is not constant and that the number of meters to be replaced is probably close to one hundred to two hundred meters.

Mrs. Russell noted that she noticed in the report that 133 hydrants have been flushed so far this season and wanted to know if other maintenance is done at the same time as the flushing. Mr. North responded that replacement of caps and other parts are done at the same time. He also mentioned that a report could be provided in the next meeting that would pull numbers and more information on maintenance of hydrants.

b. Sewer Department Monthly Report

Mr. North reported that the sewer capacities are holding steady. He also reported that he is expecting the numbers to be up in the next month's report.

Mr. Murphy asked about Rocky Neck in relation to sewer connection. Mr. North answered that communication has restarted with the DEEP. Mr. North is confident that eventually they will tie into the sewer system. He will have more information in next months.

12. Future Agenda Items

a. Capital Projects Subcommittee

Mr. North would like to finalize the draft PER report with Tighe and Bond first and then schedule a meeting. Mr. Murphy mentioned that a maintenance plan for the Bridebrook Treatment Plan should be added to this subcommittee's list of subjects. Mr. North and Mr. Garneau agree.

13. Adjournment

Mr. Cunningham called for a motion to adjourn.

****MOTION (3)**

Mr. Murphy moved to adjourn this Regular Meeting of the East Lyme Water and Sewer Commission at 8:17 PM.

Mr. Zoller seconded the motion.

Vote 7-0-0

The motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,

Tania Ranelli
Recording Secretary