

Meeting Minutes
Charlton Water and Sewer Commission
Date: **January 7, 2008**

Time: 7:00 p.m. Location: Town Hall

Attendees:

<u>Members</u>	<u>Present</u>	<u>Members</u>	<u>Present</u>
Cheryl McKissick	Y	James McIntire	Y
Sandra Dam	Y	Paul Gagner	Y
John Elliott, Sr.	Y		

Item Business

7:00 p.m. Meeting opened. The Commission reviewed and signed various bills, warrants, commitments and refund warrants for payment. Ms. Dam moved to accept the warrants, the commitment for the MTA surcharge billing and the refund warrants for the meters as presented; Mr. Elliott seconded; unanimous.

Ms. McKissick stated that after much publicity with respect to the so-called breaking and entering caused at the plant by her and Jim McIntire at the Water/Sewer Commission office, a letter was received from the District Attorney's office saying that no further investigation would be done. The Commission welcomed Carol Goodspeed as the new Department Assistant.

Administrator's Report January 7, 2008

Training new department assistant to process mail, warrants, updating master spreadsheets.

Started training on VADAR billing – we will be concentrating over the next three weeks on the sewer billing that needs to be done for this month

Attended DEP meeting regarding water/Bufumville site with Mr. Gagner – Tighe & Bond will be meeting with us this evening at 7:30 p.m. to report on the memo that they sent us

Worked with rate consultant regarding proposed rate and additional information – final report is in your packets

Processed MTA surcharge billing

Sewer Plant Upgrade - getting OPM pricing from at least 5 other engineering firms – also in your packets; we should have responses by our next meeting

Interconnection Facility – Mr. Elliott and I met with Weston & Sampson regarding comments from Southbridge – info in packets

Mold Remediation Issue – 2 fans to be installed January 10th - Ms. McKissick inquired about the cost of the two fans that are getting installed above the ceiling in the Water/Sewer Commission office and also when the work was going to be done. Ms. Dam indicated the cost was approximately \$450 each and the work was to be done on January 10th.

Meters – Refund warrants have been processed and signed for all properties tied in prior to July 1, 2007.

Attended Department Head Meeting – ICS training was discussed – a letter will be forthcoming from the Emergency Planning Committee as to who must have training; most of you attended CPR and defibrillator training; Town Administrator looking into contract pricing for utilities-e.g. electric, propane...; one of our contracts costs is up; we are included in the Casella contract so if that gets signed, then we would be able to take that off of the Woodard & Curran contract price.

Hycor Unit in the headworks building – currently in need of major repairs – W&C is currently working with local rep and manufacturer to see if we can keep cost of repair down; we may have to fly someone in from the manufacturer; but we are trying other avenues first; it is 12 years old and has been running 14 hours a day; Mr. Elliott spoke with Joe Lavin of R.H. White Construction who does mechanical work there; Mr. Lavin also spoke with Ms. Dam and Jody St. George; and Mr. Lavin concluded that we do have a serious problem.

ADA Self Evaluation – working with Woodard & Curran and Bldg Inspector on compliance issues. Ms. Dam reported: with respect to conforming with the regulations of the American Disabilities Act, the Water/Sewer Commission building has some problems that will need to be addressed.

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Regarding the illegal sump pump connection, Mr. Elliott made a motion to give Ms. Dam the authority to do the following: within 24-48 hours give notice of the standard fine of \$300 per day to Wells Fargo Bank for 12A Power Station Road. Mr. McIntire seconded the motion. Unanimous vote.

Jean Vincent, Executive Director for the Charlton Housing Authority met with the Commission. She advised that she had attended the Rate Study meeting on September 10th hoping to get some relief from the sewer assessment; and at that time, the rates were to be re-evaluated. Mr. Alcott was in attendance at that meeting and then came back with a different structure on the rate plan--of 30/70 and 40/60 (his letter of January 4th explains all points). She spoke with Ms. Dam the second week of December and was told that the Housing Authority could not receive a discount since the elderly exemption applies only to owners of property. The CHA building is owned by the state; therefore, individual occupants of the building do not qualify for the elderly discount. All utilities are subsidized by the state. If the Housing Authority was running in the red, then the state would subsidize. The CHA is on Title V. Ms. Vincent indicated that she has always tried very hard to work within her budget. Mr. McIntire then asked what if the CHA runs in the black? Ms. Vincent responded saying that she tries to set money aside during years when she runs in the black so it is available when she needs it. Ms. Dam explained that we would be putting the burden on the backs of 560 sewer users in the Town of Charlton instead of all of the taxpayers of Massachusetts. The CHA isn't willing to go with a meter rate. Ms. McKissick advised that the CHA may be required to go on a meter eventually. There are 33 people living in 30 units so going to a meter won't benefit them. Ms. Vincent stated that the new DEP Title V design flow for elderly housing for one or two bedrooms can be 150 gallons per day instead of 110 gallons per day per bedroom. She then asked if we could divide the 150 by 2 and use only 75 gallons per day per bedroom for the housing units. Mr. Elliott addressed Jean – does it say that in the regulations – it would have to say that in order for the 75 gallons to be used, and it does not say it.

7:30 p.m. The Commission met with Omer Dumais from Tighe & Bond. The DEP has agreed to reconsider the Buffumville site. They have gone through the conceptual design. It is his understanding that their decision was based on that. The DEP will allow the Town to pursue this project with the Army Corps. of Engineers. Also, there must be provisions for a backup water supply. This is customary no matter who you are. Ms. McKissick expressed concern about the dollars the Town has spent thus far but suggested to Omer that he move forward and re-submit paperwork to the Army Corps of Engineers. Ms. McKissick expressed concern about meeting the criteria of the DEP. Did they look forthcoming with everything else we have brought to the table? Ms. Dam asked the Chair to address the four items contained in Tighe & Bond's report (copy attached). Mr. McIntire would like something in writing regarding the potential flooding problem. Tighe & Bond is meeting with Aquarion – they would like to be able to provide the Town of Charlton with a backup water supply. When asked about developing our own water source, Omer advised that this project could take four years to complete. By the end of conversation, it was agreed that Omer should not move forward with this site at this time until some discussion takes place with the Army Corps of Engineers. Ms. Dam motioned that we speak with the ACOE; request an answer in writing; in 4-6 months – submit an application processing an environmental review; seconded by Mr. Elliott. Unanimous. Ms. Dam indicated that the Town will have a backup water supply with Southbridge very soon.

Kathleen Walker of the Water Search Committee indicated that this committee had already met with various towns and are collecting information and will report back to the Commission. Mr. McIntire advised that as long as Ms. Walker and the Committee are just fact-finding, it was ok with him. The possibility of a regionalization plan is being looked into. Ms. Dam stated that the original plan was to present to the voters the cost of developing our own supply and the cost of going with another community. She believes this decision should be up to the voters of the Town of Charlton.

Regarding the North Main Street extension, the original quote of under \$30,000.00 remains, as their most recent figure was \$26,400.00. Mr. Elliott made a motion to accept the Weston and Sampson quote; seconded by Ms. McKissick; unanimous.

Next discussion was regarding the Rate Study (8 page report). Ms. Dam explained that all but 3 customers benefited from going to a meter. One bedroom units generally do not benefit from going to a meter; but 3, 4 or 5 bedroom units will. Sometimes a 2 bedroom unit may also benefit. Mr. McIntire expressed displeasure about the current rates. Mr. Alcott recommended a single rate not be used until the fiscal 2009 budget is in. Ms. Dam made a motion to work on the information suggested by Mr. Alcott, those items being the fiscal 2009 budget, resolving the MTA issue, and promoting meters; all of this to be done by July 1; but in the meantime, leave rates as they are. Mr. McIntire seconded Motion. Four I's and one abstention. Mr. Gagner expressed concern about the July 1st date and using Mr. Alcott for the rate study. Ms. Dam explained that the rate report clearly outlined the reason why Mr. Alcott set the rate structure as he did.

Ms. McKissick asked the Administrator to call the DEP regarding the suggestion by the CHA on Title V gallonage.

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Mr. McIntire made a Motion to give authority to Ms. Dam to move forward with the MTA and the resources she needs, and to revisit the rate structure on July 1st. Seconded by Mr. Elliott; 4 "I's" and one abstention by Mr. Gagner.

Sandra Dam moved to go into **Executive Session** to comply with Exception 3 – to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the government's bargaining or litigating position, to conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with non-union personnel, to actually conduct collective bargaining and contract negotiations with non-union personnel; and to come out for the purposes of adjournment. Roll call vote: Jim McIntire, Paul Gagner, Cheryl McKissick, Sandra Dam and John Elliott; all in favor - unanimous. Meeting adjourned at 9 p.m. to go into Executive Session.

Meeting reconvened at 9:05 p.m. and the regular meeting was adjourned at 9:06 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

_____ Cheryl McKissick	_____ Date	_____ John Elliott, Sr.	_____ Date
_____ Sandra Dam	_____ Date	_____ Paul Gagner	_____ Date
_____ James McIntire	_____ Date		