

Meeting Minutes
Charlton Water and Sewer Commission
 Date: **February 11, 2008**

Time: 7:10 p.m. Location: Town Hall

Attendees:

| Members | Present | Members | Present |
|-------------------|---------|----------------|---------|
| Cheryl McKissick | Y | James McIntire | Y |
| Sandra Dam | Y | Paul Gagner | Y |
| John Elliott, Sr. | N | | |

Recorded by Carol A. Goodspeed

Item Business

7:10 p.m. Meeting opened. The Commission reviewed various bills, commitments, warrants and minutes of prior meetings. Ms. Dam made a motion to approve all commitments presented dated February 11, the grinder pump violation notices dated February 11; and the abatement for the pro-rated meter bill dated February 11; seconded by Mr. McIntire; all in favor; unanimous.

Administrator’s Report dated February 11, 2008 (submitted)

- Wrote Article for Charlton Gazette – re: meters
- Over a dozen meters given out – receiving numerous phone calls requesting information regarding meters
- Attended meetings w/Town Administrator/re: Interconnection
- Sent letter to MTA
- Sewer Plant Upgrade - reviewed and presented OPM
- Interconnection Facility - met with W&S and Whitewater regarding comments from Southbridge
- Sent letter to Army Corps of Engineers re: water supply
- Met with a representative of Konover Group re: water/sewer issues on Rte 20
- Received letter from McClure Eng. re: request for water Trolley Crossing
- Attended Department Head Mtg - ADA issues – the Town Administrator will coordinate a meeting of the department heads of the various buildings to coordinate bid proposals

Ms. McKissick explained that John Elliott is away in Florida for three months. He was the designee to sign payroll for our Department Assistant, Carol Goodspeed, and Sandra Dam, our Administrator. Ms. Dam made a motion to have Jim McIntire be the designated payroll signer in Mr. Elliott’s absence; seconded by Ms. McKissick; all in favor.

The Commission reviewed the budget. Ms. Dam was asked to go back to the departments regarding indirect costs. The Administrator took their total budgets less certain costs that do not directly affect the Sewer Department; subtracted that part; multiplied by the percentage determined by the Treasurer when they figured indirect costs; and came up with \$29,693 instead of \$31,837. Savings is a little over \$2,000.00. Ms. Dam has a formula that was agreeable to other town departments. Ms. McKissick commended Ms. Dam. Ms. McKissick inquired about the possibility of the Water/Sewer Commission accepting payments of sewer bills at their office. Ms. Dam explained that Lucia Blanchette is the Town Collector; she collects all of the fees, and accounts for everything for all of the departments; she is bonded; when making deposits, she is escorted by a police officer to the bank. The Accountant processes all of our bills. The Sewer Commission commitments go to the Assessors, and it is their job to process them and then they go to the Town Collector.

Mr. Gagner asked how Ms. Dam arrived at a figure of \$115,000.00 for meters. Ms. Dam explained that she used 460 meters x \$250.00; we have 560 customers and have approximately 30 meters remaining from the original 100 purchased. Mr. Gagner indicated that after our last meeting, Mr. Elliott had made some inquiries regarding possibly purchasing meters for less than \$250.00. Ms. Dam explained that the Commission voted unanimously to obtain meters from E.J. Prescott at a cost of approximately \$250.00 per meter. She also explained that if we were to switch meters to save money and they were not compatible with our current software, that additional monies would have to be spent for new software. In addition, monies in the budget do not have to be spent unless necessary; but are there in the event they are needed. Also, the E.J. Prescott meters would be compatible for water connections later on. The meters cost approximately \$150.00 and the Radio Read box and other items necessary for the system cost \$110.00. Ms. Dam also explained that if the

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Commission chose to go with other meters, this would not change the user fees and that capital purchases come out of retained earnings. The deadline for the final budget is February 28th. Mr. Gagner mentioned that Mr. Elliott was going to provide him with information he obtained on meters prior to going away, but ran out of time and planned to get it to him as soon as he could from Florida. Mr. Gagner would like to find out the compatibility of the Radio Read with other meters. Ms. Dam advised that the number of meters could probably be reduced to 410 from 460.

Ms. Dam made a motion to lower the meter purchase line item of \$115,000.00 by \$15,000.00 to \$100,000.00, thus lowering retained earnings to \$463,568.25 with the assumption that we look into the meter cost; seconded by Mr. McIntire. Ms. Dam and Mr. McIntire – yes. Ms. McKissick and Mr. Gagner - no. The Motion failed. Any item in a budget is an appropriation. If you don't appropriate it, you don't spend it. When Alcott looks at the rates, they look at that number—is the one for user fees. Ms. McKissick told the Commission that she had been to the Commission's office and signed for a meter and other necessary parts as she had some persons interested in what equipment we were using. Ms. McKissick planned to speak with other companies. She asked about other companies who sell meters. Ms. Dam said she would be happy to look into that. She also mentioned that the software was free when we went with E.J. Prescott.

Next, discussion about the Enterprise Fund; Ms. Dam indicated it will come from the General Fund. Water costs can eventually be paid by user fees. Ms. Dam explained we need to get the water budget in as far in advance as we can since we don't have any revenue. Ms. Dam motioned to submit the water budget to the Town Administrator; seconded by Mr. McIntire; all in favor.

OPM: Ms. Dam presented a spreadsheet to the Commission of the bids for quick reference: 1. Woodard & Curran; 2. Weston & Sampson; and 3 Earth Tech. bids were requested to include a "not to exceed price". W&C: \$97,500; W&S: \$42,851; and EarthTech: \$88,500. Discussion regarding bids. The Administrator was directed to look into purchasing rules and to answer concerns of the Commission.

An application was received from the Recreation Building for a sewer connection. Their engineer made an error. They are going to use the pump that we service.

Water betterment assessment: Ms. Dam reported that the plan would be to work with 117 commercial properties on Route 20 because the vacant parcels have to be adjusted per zoning; and I think an engineering firm should do this (in member packets for this meeting—two prices, one from Tighe & Bond and the other from Weston & Sampson)—Ms. Dam explained that water betterment assessments need to be done. Ms. Dam has done all of the "behind the scenes" work which could normally cost \$40K to \$50K. Paul made a motion to accept Weston & Sampson's bid for the betterment evaluation process. Mr. McIntire agreed with Mr. Gagner to a point. No second was made to the motion. Mr. McIntire stated that Tighe & Bond (based on 378 properties) presented a more detailed and professional looking bid document than the Weston & Sampson bid document (based on 117 commercial properties). Mr. McIntire made a motion to go with Tighe & Bond; seconded by Ms. McKissick; Ms. McKissick: yes; Mr. McIntire: yes; Ms. Dam and Mr. Gagner abstained; motion passed.

Ms. Dam mentioned that she had spoken with Randy Bock, Joe Diozzi's replacement, of the MTA who indicated that a 5500 gallon second grease trap was installed; they are as concerned as we are that it is not working; they paid \$55K for design, environmental fees, and installation and are coming out with their contractor to videotape the line. Jody St. George will meet with them at the site on February 14th. A deadline of our first meeting in March which will be on the 10th will be given to them to comply. Ms. Dam made the motion that she be authorized to contact Randy, and advise the MTA they have one month to come back with a report; seconded by Ms. McKissick; all in favor.

Ms. McKissick reported she had received a telephone call from reporter Ryan from The Charlton Villager. Ryan had spoken with Michelle. Regarding HAP – Michelle had met with us requesting a letter guaranteeing her water for the Cady Brook Apartments. She was told that the Commission would support her going to Southbridge for the water supply. HAP is the realty company that was purchasing the apartment complex. Ms. McKissick reported to the Board that HAP was at a standstill with Southbridge regarding water based on her conversation with reporter Ryan. Ms. McKissick asked Ms. Dam to follow up on this. Ms. Dam will review what information we have and report to the Commission at the next meeting.

Grant – IMA: Ms. Dam moved that she be given authority to sign the grant for the IMA; seconded by Ms. McKissick; all in favor.

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Ms. Dam talked about 4 Overlook Avenue regarding an oil spill incident occurring March 20, 2007; and that the people have not been allowed to live there; building was torn down and is now being rebuilt. The owner has requested an abatement back to March 20, 2007. Mr. McIntire made a motion to approve the abatement; seconded by Ms. McKissick; all in favor.

The Administrator presented a sewer commercial permitting outline to the Commission. There were some concerns about the turnpike authority being singled; letters should be sent out to local businesses advising they will be inspected at various intervals. Ms. Dam requested a motion to move forward with the permitting program that includes all commercial users and have a budget of \$2,000 to cover cost of same; and that Woodard & Curran will assist with this program. Ms. Dam indicated that getting everything together would be a six-month process. Motion made by Mr. McIntire to move forward with this program; seconded by Ms. Dam. Three were in favor; and Mr. Gagner abstained; motion passed.

Meeting adjourned by motion of Ms. Dam; seconded by Mr. McIntire; and all in favor.

Adjourned: 8:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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