TOWN OF KINGSTON
BOARD OF WATER COMMISSIONERS
OPEN SESSION
WATER DEPT OFFICE - 22 ELM ST, MICHAEL J.
MACPHERSON MEETING ROOM & VIA ZOOM
DECEMBER 10, 2024

4:00 PM – CALL TO ORDER
Chairman Richard W. Loring Jr called the meeting to order at 4:00pm.

In attendance were Commissioner Robert Kostka, Superintendent Chris Veracka, Kristen Berger of Resilient CE, Kevin Grady of Grady Consulting and Clerk Stacey Smith.

APPROVAL OF DEPARTMENT BILL SCHEDULES:

MEETING MINUTES:

VOTE TO APPROVE THE MEETING MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 26, 2024
Commissioner Kostka suggested holding off the vote on the minutes of November 26, 2024 until Vice Chairman Erlandsen arrives. Chairman Loring agreed.

APPOINTMENTS:

KEVIN GRADY, GRADY CONSULTING RE: 70 SUMMER ST, ASSESSORS MAP 36, LOT 10-2
Kevin Grady of Grady Consulting reviewed the situation regarding 70 Summer Street. He stated it's an existing structure with a first floor office, two second floor apartments and an office. The owner would like to convert the office into an additional apartment. When he was last before the board, Mr. Grady said they were looking to increase the size of their current service. However, due to the moratorium that was not an option. Instead, the suggestion was to install a pressure booster.

Vice Chairman Robert Erlandsen entered the meeting at 4:02 pm.

Mr. Grady continued that this would allow the owner to accommodate the needed pressure without requesting a larger size service. Mr. Grady said they looked into the pressure booster and it appears that is a reasonable solution. Chairman Loring stated he sees no issue with the pressure booster being installed on the existing service.

Mr. Grady stated he and his client were originally referred to the Board of Water Commissioners from the Conservation Commission as they had concerns with drilling a well on the property. However, this solution solves that issue.

Superintendent Veracka asked if there was enough available storage to accommodate peak usage. Mr. Grady stated, according to his sources who did the research, yes. Superintendent Veracka stated his only request is a backflow preventor device be installed on the discharge side of the water meter.
Commissioner Kostka made the motion to approve the installation of a booster pump with a backflow prevention device at 70 Summer Street. Vice Chairman Erlandsen seconded the motion, and it was approved unanimously (3-0-0).

Mr. Grady thanked the Board for their time and left the meeting at 4:05pm.

Commissioner Kostka made the motion to approve the minutes of November 26, 2024. Vice Chairman Erlandsen seconded the motion and it was voted on unanimously (3-0-0).

KRISTEN BERGER, RESILIENT CE RE: ENGINEERING UPDATES

MAIN STREET WATER MAIN PROJECT UPDATE

Ms. Berger updated the board on the status of the Main Street Water Main Project. There are a couple of repair spots where the curbing settled. The contractor was supposed to have addressed that last week but needed to reschedule. An emergency request for approval was placed through MassDOT for Friday, December 13, 2024. Ms. Berger she is waiting for response from MassDOT that the repairs can be made as scheduled.

WELL CLEANING UPDATE (IF ANY)

Ms. Berger stated Maher Service has pulled the pump and found some sludgy materials blocking the flow.
Superintendent Veracka said they have taken the pump back to the Maher facility for cleaning and inspection.
Commissioner Kostka asked how long will the cleaning take, about two weeks? Ms. Berger stated it won't even be that long, the well cleaning should be done within a couple of days. The plan is to install the new pump and clean up the old pump. The old pump will be stored at the treatment plant as a spare.
Commissioner Kostka asked if that would work at all of our wells? Superintendent Veracka stated No. They are specific to each well.

GRANT UPDATE FOR UAW STUDY (IF ANY)

Ms. Berger stated she is still waiting for details to be released through Massachusetts Water Management Act regarding this grant program. She continues to keep her eye out on that and will notify the Board as soon as she has some information.

WATER RATE STRUCTURE CHANGES AND RATE INCREASE DISCUSSION

Ms. Berger presented the current 7-tiered rate structure along with the 3-tier and 4-tier proposed structures. She pointed out that 25% of users use less than 10K gallons per quarter and the median amount of users use less than 20K per quarter. She explained the goals of the department and how each rate meets or exceeds those goals. She showed the increases between the current rates and the proposed tiers. Ms. Berger presented the 3-tier proposal and said it was too simplified and created more of an increase on your lower to median users. Discussion continued amongst the Board specific to reliable revenue versus unreliable revenue. Ms. Berger reviewed the pie charts and said the goal is to have more equal shares in any tier structure.

Ms. Berger reviewed the 4-tier structure. Low and Median customers for necessity use will stay in the first tier. Obviously in the summer months with non-essential water usage, they may jump to a higher tier. Ms. Berger reviewed the different scenarios under the 4-tier system and how they reach or don't reach goals. She stated the Board chose to keep the service charge and increase the usage rates. Chairman Loring stated one of things we've always tried to do is maintain static rates for extended periods of time, thinking we were doing what was best for the consumer; however, this has proven not to be the best approach. Vice Chairman Erlandsen said his choice, after review of all options, would be the 4-tier system with Option 6. Discussion continued. Commissioner Kostka agreed with Chairman Loring regarding the past approach of not raising rates. He said perhaps raising them incrementally over time would have the better approach. Adding, while we may have received complaints of water quality, rates were not the subject of complaint.

Ms. Smith told the Board one of the concerns the Town Administrator and the Finance Director brought forward was our ability to collect at least two quarters with the new rates to meet our FY25 budget. In order to do this, the new rate would need to be backdated to November 1, 2024 to encompass the March 2025 billing period. She added, without backdating the new rate, we would only be able to collect the new rates on the June 2025 bills. Ms. Smith stated, there's no way to use two different rates in the same billing quarter. Discussion continued.

Vice Chairman Erlandsen made the motion to approve Scenario 6 under the 4-tiered structure with an effective date of November 1, 2024. Commissioner Kostka seconded the motion and it was voted on unanimously (3-0-0).

Ms. Smith stated we need to communicate this information out to the public. Unfortunately mailing 4,000 plus notices is not an option within our budget. Ms. Smith asked the Board for their input on outreach.
Chairman Loring stated it should be announced at a BOS meeting, posted on the website and he asked Ms. Smith to develop a letter to go out with the March bills explaining the rate increase and why it was post dated to November 1, 2024. He added, we can take it from there.

WATER SUPERINTENDENT DEPARTMENTAL UPDATE:

CAPITAL PLAN FOR FY26 SUBMITTED BY DEC 2ND DEADLINE TO TOWN ADMINISTRATOR
FY26 DEPARTMENTAL BUDGET TO BE SUBMITTED BY DEC 16TH
Superintendent Veracka stated he has been working with Ms. Smith on completing both the capital plan and the department budget for submission next week,

RECENT LEAKS DISCOVERED ON BOG VIEW, OCEAN HILL DR AND WEST AVE. FOREMAN IS MAKING A PLAN TO ADDRESS THESE REPAIRS AROUND WEATHER AND STAFFING.
Over the last few weeks several leaks have surfaced. One on Ocean Hill was completed today and the remaining repairs are in the process of being scheduled. Superintendent Veracka stated the Bog View leak has popped up again and will be researched and repaired if necessary.

NEW EMPLOYEE, EVAN DONNELLY, STARTED MONDAY DEC 9TH IN POSITION AS WATER REPAIRPERSON
New employee, Evan Donnelly, started December 9, 2024. Superintendent Veracka stated Evan is fitting in well with the crew and will be a great addition to the department.

NEW BUSINESS:

NONE

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

NONE

WATER CORRESPONDENCE FROM LAST MEETING:

NONE

BUSINESS OF WATER QUALITY REVIEW COMMITTEE:

NONE

NEXT REGULAR MEETING:

JANUARY 14, 2024 AT 4PM

ADJOURNMENT OF OPEN SESSION:

MOVE TO ENTER INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION, NOT TO RETURN TO OPEN SESSION, FOR THE PURPOSE OF CONDUCTING AN INTERVIEW (1 OF 3) FOR THE DESIGN AND ENGINEERING OF A NEW WELL.
Chairman Loring made the motion to enter into Executive Session, not to return to Open Session, to interview design and engineering firm Weston & Sampson.
Commissioner Kostka seconded the motion.
Roll call vote: Robert Erlandsen - aye, Robert Kostka -aye, Richard Loring Jr. - aye.
Motion voted unanimously (3-0-0).
Open session of the meeting ended at 4:31pm.

ZOOM INFORMATION

TOPIC: BOARD OF WATER COMMISSIONERS
TIME: THIS IS A RECURRING MEETING MEET ANYTIME
JOIN ZOOM MEETING
HTTPS://US02WEB.ZOOM.US/J/89052013207?PWD=AWNZOWIYK01WCGZJR2VEBFJNDVLSQT09
MEETING ID: 890 5201 3207

PASSCODE: 444915
ONE TAP MOBILE
+16469313860,,89052013207#,,,,*444915# US
DIAL BY YOUR LOCATION
• +1 301 715 8592 US (WASHINGTON DC)
• +1 646 558 8656 US (NEW YORK)
MEETING ID: 890 5201 3207
PASSCODE: 444915
FIND YOUR LOCAL NUMBER: HTTPS://US02WEB.ZOOM.US/U/KDWSDDJYBD

Respectfully submitted,

Stacey L. Smith

Stacey L. Smith
Clerk