



Town of Provincetown
Meeting of the
WATER & SEWER BOARD
Thursday, March 3, 2016

Veterans Memorial Community Center, Multi-purpose Room
2 Mayflower Street, Provincetown, MA

Board Members Present: Moe Van Dereck, Chair; Mark Collins; Bill Worthington; Jean Horner and Kathleen Meads (arrived late)

Board Members Absent: Kevin Kuechler and Gary Palmer

Other Attendees: Rich Waldo DPW Director, Sherry Prada, and Cody Salisbury, Water Superintendent

Recorder: Susan Leonard

Call to Order: Mr. Van Dereck, acting as chair, called the meeting to order at 2:31p.m.

Agenda Item 1 – Resignation of Current Chair. Election of New Chair [Full Board]

Discussion:

Mr. Van Dereck informed his fellow Board members that he has come to the conclusion that he does not have the time necessary to perform the duties expected of the board chairman. His personal business schedule makes it very difficult for him to attend other board meetings when necessary. He is happy to serve at this meeting, but he doesn't feel he can fill the position as it should be. He asked if anyone would like to step forward to take of the position of Chair.

Mr. Collins suggested that the natural person to take over the position would be Kathie Meads. She has been on the Board the longest and has the most experience with the department. Mr. Collins asked if the Agenda Item could be tabled until Ms. Meads is present.

The Board agreed to table Agenda Item 1.

Agenda Item 2 – Welcome to New Board Member Jean Horner

Discussion:

Mr. Van Dereck introduced and welcomed Jean Horner, the Board's newest member. The other Board members, in turn, briefly introduced themselves to her.

Agenda Item 3 – Public Hearing on Extending 41C exemption Eligibility for Water Charges to Sewer Charges As Well [Provincetown Board]

Discussion:

Mr. Van Dereck opened the Public Hearing to the public for comments. There being no members of the public present, the public portion of the meeting was closed and the topic was elaborated on by Water Superintendent, Mr. Salisbury.

Mr. Salisbury explained that the criteria for this exemption are the same as is used for the 41C Elderly water rate payers. Individuals 65 years old, within income guidelines are eligible. The amount of revenue that would be lost is a modest \$800. It would greatly benefit the few people that qualify.

Mr. Collins asked if there has been any discussion about extending exemptions to those who do not meet the 41C guideline. Is the Board able to have a higher threshold to allow an exemption? Is there a need in this town for a lowered rate for lower income individuals? If the threshold is difficult to meet for the elderly is there a way for them to come before the Board for some relief? Is it feasible?

Responding to a question by Mr. Worthington, Mr. Salisbury explained that 41C requires an individual to own the home and reside in it for at least 5 years.

Mr. Waldo stated it can be looked into to determine if there is a way to set it up within the guidelines of the Water Enterprise Fund.

Ms. Horner is of the opinion that the proper steps are to approve this exemption first and then look into what can be done.

Ms. Meads added that in the past, an elderly person with a specific serious problem such as a leak has been given a hardship abatement. This has been done in only a few cases and never before the problem has been fixed. Once we step out of the framework of 41C we can get ourselves into trouble for giving preferential treatment.

Motion: To adopt the 41C Exemption eligibility for Water, as well as, Sewer charges.

Motion: Kathleen Meads

Seconded: Mark Collins

Vote: 6 - 0 - 0

Agenda Item 4 – Request for Expansion of Truro Water Service by 618 Shore Road [Full Board]

Discussion:

Mr. Salisbury introduced Agenda Item 4. This property is planned to become individually owned condominiums. There are cottages, as well as motel units, and an office building that will be subdivided into separate units. The construction is planned for Fall 2016. The best approach is to allow the sale to take place with one meter to serve the condominium units. Once they progress to the installation of the septic system in the Fall they would separate the water lines and install individual meters as outlined in the approval letter by the Town of Provincetown. The current motel unit and office building have its own meter. The services for the cottages are fed off from the office building.

Ms. Meads asked if the conversion has been approved by the Town of Truro. Mr. Salisbury responded that it has been approved. Will the motel units be individually metered? Will there be a site plan that shows what is approved? It can go into each account where it can be found immediately where the shut offs and meters are located for each unit. Mr. Van Dereck added that this is only a temporary measure to get the project started.

Mr. Worthington asked if they have gone before the Truro Planning Board for site plan approval. Discussion of a site plan brings the Planning Board into the discussion.

Ms. Meads thinks there should be a definite time frame for separation of the water lines before the sale of the condominiums. Everything should be metered separately before it is sold.

Mary Ellen, the representative of the project assured the board that the condo documents state quite clearly that the units will be metered individually. The temporary meter is for the existing 7 cottages. We want all the plans done and then proceed with the construction all at once.

Mr. Salisbury stated the developer is familiar with the process of separating the units. We can give them a specific deadline for doing it.

Motion: To accept the plan as outlined for 618 Shore Road, N. Truro with the condition that the Water Superintendent approves the plan and there will be a copy of the plan on record for each of the accounts, and the timeframe will be set by the Water Superintendent.

Motion: Kathleen Meads

Seconded: Bill Worthington

Vote: 6 – 0 - 0

Mr. Van Dereck suggested this is a fundamental change in how we do business. It will kill us down the road. Mr. Salisbury said the data speaks for itself.

Ms. Meads would like to take a vote expressing how the Board feels about the request now. Ms. Horner is of the opinion that a vote will help. Mr. Waldo pointed out the board will be voting on the email not an article.

Motion: *In light of the of the email from Barbara Rushmore and Peter Macara dated December 28, 2015 the Water & Sewer Board is not in favor of the changes to the plan of Provincetown's Water Department apportionments.*

Motion: Zoe Babe

Seconded: Kathleen Meads

Vote: 6 – 0 - 0

Agenda Item 8 - Staff Updates, Including Grease Inspection Program Update by_DPW Director

Discussion:

Mr. Waldo discussed the deleterious effects the grease has on the municipal sewer system and plant. Over the years old septic systems were converted to grease traps and were not properly sized. Working with the Health Director, a grease trap inspection program has been instituted. The inspection form requires all sinks to be shown on a diagram of the kitchen and sizes noted; also a menu must be presented in order to accurately determine the size of grease trap necessary for a business. It has been very helpful. There are a lot of traps that are adequate, but there are some that have been determined to be grossly undersized or oversized. We have requested modifications to the system and change of pumping schedule. There will be businesses coming before the Board to discuss a variance to the electronic grease monitor many of them use now. They will be asking for monthly visual inspections. Mr. Waldo is favor in this alternative. We now know everything about how an establishment's system is plumbed and can make recommendations of how to make it work properly.

Ms. Meads asked if any of the electronic systems in place in Provincetown are working properly. Mr. Waldo replied that often the monitors are not placed properly in the tank or when the tank is pumped the monitor is not cleaned, or sometimes a pressure washer knocks out its settings. We want to go back to popping the lid and looking at the tank. Plumbers, certified septic inspectors, and engineers can do the inspection. In order to be licensed a grease inspection report has to be submitted. An undersized grease trap would be a reason to deny an Economic Development Permit.

Adjournment: There being no other business to consider, Mr. Van Dereck adjourned the meeting at 3:50pm.