

## Provincetown Water and Sewer Board Meeting of August 16, 2001

The August 16, 2001 meeting of The Provincetown Water and Sewer Board was called to order by Chairman Lucille Plante at 5:00P.M. Present were: Chairman Lucille Plante, Board Members Anne Lord and Jonathan Sinaiko. also in attendance were Water Superintendent Craig Wiegand, D.P.W. Director Dave Guerton, and Assistant Town Manager Mark Latour.

Because of the change in the membership of The Board and the minutes of the previous meeting of the Water and Sewer Board were submitted to the Town Clerk.

The first account discussed was that of #6318 the property owner explained that in the current billing period, there was a charge for two people using 111,000 gallons of water and that in the previous billing period, the same two people had only been charged for the use of 97,000 gallons of water. She went on to explain that they had discovered that the source of the problem was because of an underground leak. Water Superintendent Craig Wiegand explained that the Water Department had investigated the leak a number of times and that it had taken a while for the leak to be repaired. After a lengthy discussion, The Board decided to wait on the abatement until all relevant information could be gathered.

Property owner of case #7105 appeared before the Water and Sewer Board to request an abatement on her water bill. The owner explained to The Board that she could not understand why she should have to pay between six and seven hundred dollars for water that she did not use. She went on to explain that construction and landscaping was being done on her neighbor's property. She also told The Board that her average water usage was between ten and twelve thousand gallons per year since she bought the property in November of 1996. She then explained that the initial water usage was eighteen thousand (18,000) gallons that year for two people. In the next three years, the water usage was twelve thousand (12,000) gallons for '97, ten thousand (10,000) gallons for '98 and twelve thousand (12,000) for '99. In the water bill for the first six months of 2000, the owner told the Board that there was a jump in the water usage to ninety-eight thousand (98,000) gallons and that she should not have had to pay for the difference in the water bill for water that she knew she did not use. The owner explained that she called The Water Department and spoke with Water Superintendent Craig Wiegand on several occasions and that she had The Department come and audit her house and found that it was, "as Mr. Wiegand said, as tight as a drum." Meaning that that the meter was working properly, and that there were no leaks on the premises. Craig Wiegand then explained that The Water Department conducted the audit of the owners property and found that the meter was working properly, and that there were no leaks to be found in the owners house. The owner then told The Board of the outside faucets and that she did not shut them off. Mr. Wiegand then told The Board that the meter on the construction site had been shut off in the summer. Mr. Wiegand then explained to The Board that he offered to audit both properties and that he could not audit the property in question because there had been no one there to let the audit take place. Mr. Wideband stated to The Board that he would provide the owner with any necessary documentation verifying that the water usage was consistent before and that there were no leaks in the owners house to justify such a drastic change in her water bill. After a lengthy discussion, a motion was made by A. Lord to not grant an abatement and that The Board regrets that it can't give the owner an abatement and that "We encourage The Water Superintendent to document what's happened in writing. After making the motion, Anne Lord suggested that the owner should take the violation to either Small Claims court or a mediation service to settle the problem. Jonathan Sinaiko then suggested that because the amount of the water stolen was over One Hundred (\$100.00) that the owner could report it to the police. Anne Lord repeated the motion which was then seconded by Jonathan Sinaiko. The motion passed three to zero.

The next account discussed was that of #4212 the property owner told the board that they had received a water bill for \$5,000.00 and that it was going to be hard for them to pay it. It was discovered that there was a leak at a T section where the line from their home and the water system intersected. They explained that they had no way of knowing of the leak because of its proximity. The owner went on to explain that they could possibly pay \$800 to \$1,000 of that bill, but \$5,000 was not possible. After a short discussion, The Board decided to withhold a decision on this account until they could determine what could be done under "The Hardship Clause."

The final topic on the agenda was that of other business. among the topics discussed were: The Enterprise Fund, The Local Comprehensive Plan, finding two new board Members plus an alternate, and the chairmanship of the board. It was then decided that for the present time, The Water and Sewer Board would have a revolving tenure of the

chairmanship. The next meeting was then scheduled for September 20, 2001 at 5:00 P.M. in the Grace Gouveia Building.

Minutes of August 16, 2001 accepted as corrected on September 20, 2001.

Lucille Plante, Chair