

**RICHMOND WATER AND SEWER
COMMISSION MEETING
January 6, 2014 MINUTES**

Members Present: Ashley Lucht, Chair; Amy Lord; Chris Granda (arrived 6:05); Bard Hill; Bruce Bailey

Members Absent: None

Others Present: Geoffrey Urbanik, Town Manager, Kendall Chamberlin, Water Resources; Cara and Bruce LaBounty; Sheila Bailey, Linda Parent, Town Clerk and Ruth Miller was present from MMCTV to tape the meeting.

Ms. Lucht called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

Welcome and Public Comment

Ms. Lucht asked if there was any public comment but there was none.

Allocation Policies

Ms. Lucht provided a copy of the 1961 water ordinance passed by the Water Commission. This had implications for the entire system, however, was not itself a significant document. The Manager had distributed a variety of documents from other towns to form a basis for a complete revision for both water and sewer regulations.

Mr. Hill suggested a subcommittee to develop these ordinances. Mr. Granda said that the rates should really be a priority and suggested a rates discussion first, and policies second. Ms. Lucht said that the town really needed an allocation policy and Mr. Granda agreed, however, said that rates were a more pressing issue and needed to be addressed prior to Town Meeting.

There was some discussion about the allocation-only accounts and Mr. Chamberlin said why not change them now with a new class? Mr. Granda agreed and said that he wanted to present on the 21st a new rate structure that included several new rate classes, with a new base unit design similar to the current gallonage/ERU scale but modified to not be based purely on usage.

Mr. Hill noted the Frequently Asked Questions from a previous customer notice and said we need to do this again. Mr. Granda agreed, and said it should focus on principles and goals. Ms. Lucht asked how do we ensure future boards will keep those goals? There was discussion on how this might or might not happen.

Mr. Granda said that our goals should be developed through public discussion.

Correspondence

The Manager noted correspondence from Litwin and Farr. Lisa Litwin had spoken in favor of changing rates for the elderly, since some were having trouble meeting their monthly expenses. Mr. Farr had written to say that they had a leak in their service line, which had caused the meter to read much higher than previous. Therefore, their account now had 7.5 ERU.

There was discussion on these letters. The letter from Ms. Litwin was acknowledged, however, rates were not being discussed tonight. On the Farr letter, Ms. Lucht noted it would be difficult to manage the budget if ERU adjustments were made on a piecemeal basis.

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2 Mr. Hill asked if we could calculate on a real use basis and ignore the leak? Mr. Chamberlin said that
3 existing policy was to put a meter at the main, not at the end of a long plastic service line.
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5 Mr. Granda said the board needed a policy on bill adjustments for leakage. He said that for less than
6 \$5,000 then no adjustments, but in instances where the cost of the leak would drive the annual cost
7 above \$5,000 then a prior year's average should be made. Ms. Lucht said that with a variance of
8 100% then needed proof.
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10 There was additional discussion.
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12 Mr. Granda offered a motion to draft a policy to consider ERU adjustments for users who experience
13 leaks with a result of a 100% or more increase in billing costs. Ms. Lord seconded the motion. There
14 was discussion about putting this into an ordinance. The motion carried 5-0.
15

16 **Adjourn**

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18 Mr. Granda offered a motion to adjourn at 7:00 pm and was seconded by Mr. Bailey. So voted.

DRAFT