

Water Commission Minutes
6/7/2021

Called to Order: 6:00 PM

Present by Zoom: Fran Huntoon, Don Morin, David Sander, Bard Hill, Cody Quattrocci
Absent: none

Others Present by Zoom: Josh Arneson, Town Manager; Kendall Chamberlin, Water & Sewer; Kathy Daub-Stearns, Admin. Assist.; the meeting was recorded for MMCTV Channel 15; Allen Knowles

1. Welcome by Bard. No comments.

2. Additions or Deletions to the Agenda. None

3. Items for Presentation or Discussion with those present

a. Follow up from Annual Meeting

Josh reported:

- that the annual meeting was May 18th and the Commission voted to approve the budget and that the rates for the coming year were set

Discussion included:

- that Bard noted that the rate for haulers was an agenda item

b. Review applicants for Water and Sewer Commission and make recommendations to the Selectboard for appointment

Bard reported:

- that Fran Huntoon had submitted a letter of interest for one of the open positions, and that she is a customer.
- that if there were not two (2) customers willing to serve on the Commission, then the Selectboard would need to appoint another member to fill the open seat.

Discussion included:

- that Don recommended Fran remain in her position saying she is a valued member of the board that brings good ideas to discussions. Cody thought Fran added detail that he appreciates since he is new to the Commission.

Cody moved to recommend to the Selectboard that they appoint Fran Huntoon to a one (1) year term on the Water and Sewer Commission; Don seconded. Roll call vote: Cody, Don, and Bard voted affirmatively; Motion passed.

David joined the meeting and agreed that he would welcome having Fran stay on the Commission.

Bard noted that Don had decided to not continue serving on the Commission and thanked him for his service on the Commission and to the residents of Richmond. Don said he would

be submitting a written letter that he would email to all the members regarding his departure. Bard thanked him for volunteering to do that as a way of having an exit interview.

c. Approval of septage rate

Bard reported:

- that rates in the packet showed the Town had the lowest rate for haulers at .05 cents per gallon with the next closest at .065 cents.
- that Kendall had noted in the past that the low rate is why we get so much septage

Kendal reported:

- that Montpelier increased their rate by .005 cents
- that most facilities raise their rates to prevent haulers from wanting to come and Montpelier and Richmond were more a business structure

Discussion included:

- that Bard asked how much septage is typical from a hauler, Kendall said it varies with the size of the truck, adding that the total intake per day is about 90,000 gal a day and 8-10,000,000 gal a year
- that Bard said at 5000 gal, it is only a \$75 difference to go to Montpelier and the cost of moving the truck had to be a factor in the decision where to go
- than Don was concerned that we are short income when it comes to adding wear and tear to equipment, Bard thought it could be cost allocated but had not been done in the past, Kendall said it was not necessary adding that if rates go up we would lose haulers, Bard asked if Kendall felt that were true even at a slight increase, Kendall replied, yes, if .005 cents to .01 cent we would lose some haulers and there would be no difference in what Richmond saw for income, Bard thought distance, travel costs and productivity would be factored in by haulers, Kendall said that haulers look at their routes every day and decide where to go.
- that Don asked about raising the rate to something above .05, David asked how long the rate has been .05, Kendall said since 2005, David said his immediate thought was to go up .005 but he heard Kendall, and did not want to kill the golden goose
- that Bard asked if the Commission wanted to stay at the same rate or match Montpelier, David and Cody thought matching Montpelier would be too much, Cody said adding .005 seemed reasonable but anything more haulers would be more likely to go somewhere else, he was in favor of keeping it at .05 or .055 and asked Kendall what he thought, Kendall replied .005 would be ok adding it could be looked at again in six (6) months to a year. Bard said that if business did not drop off it would mean an increase of \$40-50,000 of income, Don was in favor of .06 he thought we were sacrificing equipment maintenance and replacement so .06 would be his recommendation, Bard pointed out that we could go out more decimal points and go to .0575 which is half way to .06 asking if .0575 would be acceptable, Don asked if that would be a problem for billing, no one thought it would be a problem, Don was agreeable to .0575, David asked what Kendall thought, Kendall said .055 would not be a problem, and at .0575 he was not certain, Cody said at .06 he did not think the increase would offset the loss of haulers adding that the rate could be looked at again in six (6) months to review where we are

Don moved to set the septage rate at \$0.0575 per gallon; being no second the motion failed.

David moved to set the septage rate at \$0.055 per gallon; Cody seconded. Roll call vote: Cody, David, affirmatively Don; Bard and Don voted no.; Motion failed.

Discussion continued:

- David and Cody both asked Kendall what he thought about .0575, Kendall replied that at .055 would be no difference in where haulers went but was not sure what they would do with an increase to .0575, David said if Kendall was ok with .0575, he replied that he was, Josh asked how helpful would it be to look at month to month usage, looking at June/July last year and then this year, Kendall said its hard, the haulers say they like coming to Richmond because of the rate.
- David noted that at .06 it would be a 20% increase and at .055 it was still a 10% increase, Bard said that at .0575 we would still be under Montpelier

Don moved to set the septage rate at \$0.0575 per gallon; David seconded. Roll call vote: Cody, David, Don, and Bard voted affirmatively. Motion passed.

Discussion continued:

- that Bard said at a future meeting the Commission would look at whether the rate change was making any difference
- that Allen Knowles asked Josh if he could do a gallon cost analysis that included wear and tear, Bard thought that it did need a closer look, Kendall responded that the .0575 hauler rate it is higher than any other rate, Allen Knowles said dropping the price could bring more septage in and knowing what costs are could be informative on what to do
- that the rate increase will be effective July 1 all members agreed

d. Follow up on excavation bill to repair a leak from a private storm water pipe

Josh reported:

- that the leak was from Village View and after the last meeting the Association sent a letter stating they were going to pay the bill in full
- Bard thanked them

e. Superintendent's Report

Kendall reported:

- that Vt Works for Women, has asked Richmond to participate in their program saying they pay for a woman to come work for training at the facility, Kendall asked if the Commission would approve having a participant. All commission members were in favor of participating in the program.

4. Approval of Minutes, Warrants and Purchase Orders

a. Minutes of 5/17/21

David moved to approve the Minutes of 5/17/2021; Cody seconded. Roll Call Vote: David, Cody, Don, and Bard voted affirmatively; Motion passed.

b. Minutes of 5/18/21 Annual Meeting

David moved to approve the Minutes of 5/18/2021; Cody seconded. Roll Call Vote: David, Cody abstained, Don abstained, and Bard voted affirmatively; motion failed due to lack of a quorum and will be brought back at a future meeting.

c. Minutes of 5/24/21

David moved to approve the Minutes of 5/24/2021; Cody seconded. Roll Call Vote: David, Cody, Don, and Bard voted affirmatively; Motion passed.

Purchase Orders

David moved to approve PO 4145 to J Hutchins for the West Main St. waterline replacement project in an amount not to exceed \$ 84,594.33; Cody seconded. Roll Call Vote: Cody, David, Don, and Bard voted affirmatively; Motion passed.

Warrant

David moved to approve the warrant as presented; Cody seconded. Roll Call Vote: Cody, David, Don, and Bard voted affirmatively; Motion passed.

5. Discuss Items for Next Agenda and Adjourn

GME update for costs on the proposed expansion
updated cost structure for other waterline improvements

Adjourn

David moved to adjourn; Cody seconded. Roll call vote: Don, David, Cody, and Bard voted affirmatively. The meeting adjourned at 6:57PM.