

SPRINGFIELD WATER AND SEWER COMMISSION

Minutes of Meeting

January 19, 2017

The Springfield Water and Sewer Commission held a meeting at the John J. Lyons Administration Building, 250 M Street Ext., Agawam, MA on January 19, 2017.

Commission Chair Daniel Rodriguez called the meeting to order at 9:08 a.m. and Joyce Mulvaney, Secretary, called the attendance roll:

Daniel Rodriguez	Present
William Leonard	Present
Vanessa Otero	Present

Also Present

Joshua D. Schimmel, Executive Director
Norman J. Guz, Commission Counsel
Joyce Mulvaney, Public Communications Manager and Secretary
Anthony Basile, Comptroller
Domenic Pellegrino, Finance Director
Robert Stoops, Chief Engineer
Daniel DiRienzo, Director of Field Services
James Laurila, Director of Water Operations
William Fuqua, Director of Wastewater Operations
James Richardson, Director of IT
Bruce Leiter, Wastewater Contract Liaison
Nicole Sanford, Water Resources Manager
and
Norm Withers, 199 Corona Street
Kathy Brown, East Springfield Neighborhood Council, 136 Edendale Street
Marie Koski, East Springfield Neighborhood Council, 931 Saint James Ave.
Wendy Carty, 83 Davis Street
Donald Christianson, 83 Davis Street

Business Matters

Agenda Item #1 – Approve the minutes of the meeting held on December 8, 2016 without reading, because copies were furnished to each member of the Commission for their review.

UPON MOTION DULY MADE BY COMMISSIONER LEONARD AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER OTERO

UNANIMOUSLY VOTED: to approve the minutes of the meeting held on December 8, 2016 without reading, because copies have been furnished to each member of the Commission for their review.

Unfinished Business

There was no unfinished business.

New Business

The agenda was taken out of order.

Commissioners recognized the members of the public in attendance at the meeting and welcomed them to speak. Their concerns were regarding the recent changes to drinking water disinfection practices and chlorine taste and odor in the

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drinking water. Norm Withers stated that he experienced a strong taste and smell in his drinking water and utilized a pool testing strip to check the amount of chlorine. The strip turned bright pink which he interpreted as a very high chlorine level. The specific test strip parameters weren't clear, nor was the precise meaning of the described results. Mr. Withers inquired as to why disinfection processes changed. Wendy Carty asked whether a contamination event occurred in order to prompt the change in disinfection processes. Marie Koski noted that she has not noticed a chlorine taste or odor at her home and was present on behalf of the East Springfield Neighborhood Council.

Josh Schimmel explained that no contamination occurred, and that maintaining a higher chlorine residual in the distribution system is better for the protection of public health. Additionally, levels of chlorine in the system are well below the established limits. Jim Laurila added that chlorine residual levels in some areas of the City and Ludlow were lower than our water quality experts on staff were comfortable with. Bob Stoops explained that the Commission was able to make changes to the disinfection process now because other aspects of the treatment process were optimized. The optimized process has reduced organics which react with chlorine and create disinfection byproducts (DBPs), which are regulated. A decrease in organics has allowed for a slight increase in chlorine residual to a level that provides optimum protection without the risk of creating too many disinfection byproducts.

A map showing the addresses of residents who have called about chlorine taste/odor was presented and is a part of these minutes. Thus far, less than 40 residents have called. Commission staff will continue to track and respond to calls.

Commissioner Rodriguez thanked the residents for attending, assuring them that the Commission is there to listen and is happy to look into any concerns they have now and in the future.

Joyce Mulvaney advised the residents that a crew would be dispatched to test chlorine residual levels near each of their homes, and that she would provide them with the results later in the day.

Kathy Brown of the East Springfield Neighborhood Council thanked the Commission for their time and for the positive relationship maintained between the two entities over the years. The residents left the meeting.

Agenda Item #2 – Financial Update

Tony Basile presented the December financials. The Operating Budget is projected to be 98% expended at the end of the fiscal year. The variance is due to vacant positions that management is in the process of filling. Revenues are over projection by approximately \$1.1 million. Retail water and sewer sales are up 3% as compared to last year. Cash will be transferred to the Stabilization Fund in January and will be reflected on the cash report in the monthly financials. The OPEB Trust has decreased due to market volatility likely resulting from the presidential election. The reports are part of these minutes.

Agenda Item #3 – Consideration of Utility Billing Credit Summary and Summary of Accounts Receivable for November.

Domenic Pellegrino reported that approximately \$5.4 million in billing and \$4.8 million in collections occurred in December. The Utility Billing Credit Summary for December 2016, in the amount of \$89,366.12 was presented. Mr. Pellegrino noted that much of the credits presented are write offs for vacant properties. The credit due to ApMar upon fulfillment of their payment arrangement is also included. The summary is part of these minutes. The summaries include year-to-date credit amounts and the number of credits processed for each adjustment category.

UPON MOTION DULY MADE BY COMMISSIONER LEONARD AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER OTERO

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UNANIMOUSLY VOTED: to approve the Utility Billing Credits for December 2016 in the amount of \$89,366.12 in the form presented to the Commission.

Agenda Item #4 – Consideration of Project Order 34 with Kleinfelder Northeast, Inc. for the FY2017 Financial Planning Update.

Josh Schimmel presented a project order for an update to the financial model utilized in the comprehensive Financial Capability Assessment for water and sewer planning. This is the third year the model has been utilized. The project order is valued at \$41,160.

UPON MOTION DULY MADE BY COMMISSIONER LEONARD AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER OTERO

UNANIMOUSLY VOTED: to approve Project Order 34 with Kleinfelder Northeast, Inc. for a Financial Planning Update for an amount not to exceed \$41,160 in the form presented to the Commission.

Agenda Item #5 – Consideration of contract with Kleinfelder Northeast, Inc. for Workforce Facilities and Master Plan Development.

Bill Fuqua presented a contract for Workforce Facilities and Master Plan Development. The proposed contract is to determine the long term facility needs of the Commission’s workforce and equipment, and to develop a roadmap to address the identified needs that takes into account physical space, security concerns, and efficiency. Twenty-five packages were sent out, and two proposals were received. Kleinfelder’s proposal was identified as the most advantageous.

Commission Otero commented that she would like to see the Commission establish a presence downtown to provide a location where customers may more easily pay bills, and to participate in the resurgence of downtown Springfield.

Commission Rodriguez stated that he would like to table this agenda item until such time that he has a better understanding of the proposed contract.

UPON MOTION DULY MADE BY COMMISSIONER LEONARD AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER OTERO

UNANIMOUSLY VOTED: to table consideration of the proposed contract with Kleinfelder Northeast, Inc. for Workforce Facilities and Master Plan Development.

Agenda Item #6 – Consideration of Project Order 1 with Kleinfelder Northeast, Inc. for Workforce Facilities and Master Plan Development.

This agenda item was tabled.

The agenda was taken out of order.

Agenda Item #8 – Consideration of Capital Improvement Program Amendment 2017-5.

Domenic Pellegrino presented Capital Improvement Program Amendment 2017-5. A summary is a part of these minutes. The amendment increases the appropriation of the Main Interceptor and System Improvements Account by \$2 million to fund additional engineering and construction costs related to permitting issues, geotechnical issues, and an unforeseen

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water main replacement. Mr. Pellegrino noted that he will take the appropriate steps to follow up with the state regarding SRF funding.

UPON MOTION DULY MADE BY COMMISSIONER LEONARD AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER OTERO

UNANIMOUSLY VOTED: to approve Capital Improvement Program Amendment 2017-5 in the form presented to the Commission.

Agenda Item #7 – Consideration of Engineering Services Contract Amendment 2 with Kleinfelder Northeast, Inc. for the Main Interceptor Rehabilitation and CSO Outfall Improvements Project.

Bill Fuqua presented contract amendment 2 for the Main Interceptor Rehabilitation and CSO Outfall Improvements Project. The amendment is for additional engineering and construction work related to permitting issues, geotechnical issues, and an unforeseen water main replacement. The amendment also extends the contract completion date. A summary is a part of these minutes. It was also noted that additional amendments to the engineering services contract will be needed to complete the project.

UPON MOTION DULY MADE BY COMMISSIONER LEONARD AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER OTERO

UNANIMOUSLY VOTED: to approve Engineering Services Contract Amendment 2 with Kleinfelder Northeast, Inc. for the Main Interceptor Rehabilitation and CSO Outfall Improvements Project in the form presented to the Commission.

Agenda Item #9 – Update on water and sewer activities.

Josh Schimmel presented the revised GIS Analyst job description for approval with an entry level salary range of \$45,000 to \$55,000 annually. The position is non-bargaining.

UPON MOTION DULY MADE BY COMMISSIONER LEONARD AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER OTERO

UNANIMOUSLY VOTED: to approve the GIS Analyst job description and entry level salary range of \$45,000 to \$55,000 annually as presented to the Commission.

Mr. Schimmel informed the Board of Joyce Mulvaney’s resignation from the position of Public Communications Manager, and presented the revised Communications Manager job description for approval with an entry level salary range of \$65,000 to \$85,000 annually. The position is non-bargaining.

UPON MOTION DULY MADE BY COMMISSIONER LEONARD AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER OTERO

UNANIMOUSLY VOTED: to approve the Communications Manager job description and entry level salary range of \$65,000 to \$85,000 annually as presented to the Commission.

Commissioners thanked Ms. Mulvaney for her service and wished her success for the future. Ms. Mulvaney’s last day is February 17, 2017.

Mr. Schimmel presented an agreement with the Westfield Board of Water Commissioners to share water during emergency water supply conditions through interconnections between the systems. The contract is similar to those held

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between the Commission and the MWRA as well as between the Commission and Wilbraham. Counsel Guz noted that language about interconnections needs to be added.

UPON MOTION DULY MADE BY COMMISSIONER LEONARD AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER OTERO

UNANIMOUSLY VOTED: to approve the agreement with the Westfield Board of Water Commissioners to share water in emergency situations in the form presented to the Commission on this day.

Mr. Schimmel reported that a committee has been formed and is in the process of developing a procurement manual in order to standardize purchasing procedures within the Commission.

Incident Command System training will be held for managers, supervisors, and appropriate staff at the end of the month. In February, the Commission will conduct a boil water tabletop exercise for emergency response training purposes.

Staff have invited Longmeadow to a meeting to gauge their interest in sharing space in the river crossing project. Longmeadow currently has their own river crossing, and may be interested in sharing space for redundancy and/or increased capacity. This would be of benefit to Springfield ratepayers by alleviating some of the financial burden associated with construction of the river crossing project.

Chicopee is still looking for an alternative means to treat its wastewater rather than investing over \$100 million to upgrade the wastewater treatment plant. Mr. Schimmel anticipates presenting information on this for the Commission's review at an upcoming meeting.

The Commission, along with Chicopee will participate in an investigation as to the feasibility of a regional nitrogen trading program financed through a grant and administered by Pioneer Valley Planning Commission. The value of the grant is \$117,000.

Domenic Pellegrino reported that the Official Statement for possible refunding of 2008 and 2010 bonds is almost complete.

Dan DiRienzo reported that crews continue to respond to complaint calls regarding chlorine taste and odor. The Fort Pleasant Ave. water main replacement is ongoing. Crews are also performing hydrant replacements.

Tony Basile reported that the budget process for fiscal year 2018 has begun.

Jim Laurila reported that Cobble Mountain Reservoir is currently filled to 67% capacity, down from the three year average of 80% that is typical this time of year. He noted that rainfall was down by 50% in 2016. Reservoir levels will continue to be monitored. The Facilities Plan is ongoing. The plant is in the process of replacing backwash troughs in three rapid sand filters. Chlorine residual levels in the distribution system are being monitored regularly; current levels are appropriate. Refresher training for the work order system is in process. Staff is now receiving reports through new computerized systems.

Bob Stoops reported that the engineering group is working on design of next year's infrastructure improvements project, the intake dam rehabilitation, power plant improvements, and the 42-inch transmission main bypass improvements.

Bill Fuqua reported that the capital project to improve power centers 3 & 4 at the wastewater treatment plant is on hold. Lining as part of the Main Interceptor Rehabilitation Project is ongoing. CSO work is progressing. A permitting meeting regarding the upcoming River Crossing and York Street Pump Station project is scheduled for next week.

James Richardson reported that staffing is a focus and that the IT group is in the process of reorganizing. Mr. Schimmel added that GIS Manager interviews have been completed and an offer will be made.

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Agenda Item #10 – Consideration of property acquisition under Drinking Water Supply Protection Land Grant.

UPON MOTION DULY MADE BY COMMISSIONER LEONARD AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER OTERO, UNANIMOUSLY VOTED BY ROLL CALL VOTE, Commissioner Rodriguez Yes, Commissioner Otero Yes, Commissioner Leonard Yes: to enter into executive session at 10:35 a.m. to consider the purchase of property in Blandford, declaring that an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the Commission.

The Commission will return to Open Session.

UPON MOTION DULY MADE BY COMMISSIONER LEONARD AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER OTERO, UNANIMOUSLY VOTED BY ROLL CALL VOTE, Commissioner Rodriguez Yes, Commissioner Otero Yes, Commissioner Leonard Yes: to reconvene open session at 10:40 a.m.

UPON MOTION DULY MADE BY COMMISSIONER LEONARD AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER OTERO

UNANIMOUSLY VOTED: to authorize the Executive Director to make an offer in the amount of \$220,000 for purchase of the Case property contingent upon receipt of the Drinking Water Supply Protection Land Grant in the form presented to the Commission.

Agenda Item #11 – Consideration of separation settlement.

UPON MOTION DULY MADE BY COMMISSIONER LEONARD AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER OTERO, UNANIMOUSLY VOTED BY ROLL CALL VOTE, Commissioner Rodriguez Yes, Commissioner Otero Yes, Commissioner Leonard Yes: to enter into Executive Session at 10:41 a.m. to discuss potential litigation regarding Michael Blaine, declaring that an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the Commission.

The Commission will return to Open Session.

UPON MOTION DULY MADE BY COMMISSIONER LEONARD AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER OTERO, UNANIMOUSLY VOTED BY ROLL CALL VOTE, Commissioner Rodriguez Yes, Commissioner Otero Yes, Commissioner Leonard Yes: to reconvene open session at 11:11 a.m.

UPON MOTION DULY MADE BY COMMISSIONER LEONARD AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER OTERO

UNANIMOUSLY VOTED: to authorize the Executive Director to enter into a settlement agreement with Michael Blaine in the amount of \$65,000 in the form presented to the Commission.

Agenda Item #12 – Consideration and/or action on any other matters that may come before the Commission at this meeting.

There being no other matters to consider and

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UPON MOTION DULY MADE BY COMMISSIONER LEONARD AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER OTERO

UNANIMOUSLY VOTED: to adjourn the meeting at 11:12 a.m.

The next Commission meeting is scheduled for February 16, 2017 at 9:00am, at John J. Lyons Administration Building, Bondi's Island, Route 5, Agawam, MA.

Respectfully submitted,

Joyce Mulvaney
Secretary