

Board of Water and Sewer Commissioner's Meeting June 1, 2022

Present: Scott Zajkowski, Jay Spahl, William Conley, Tom Fournier, and George Patrinos

In attendance: Emily Heywood via telephone and Reham Makeem

Scott opened the meeting at 6:30 pm with the Pledge of Allegiance

Accept the minutes of the April 20, 2022, public meeting: *Tom made a motion to accept the minutes as written, Jay seconded the motion, no further discussion, a vote was taken, all in favor, passed unanimously.*

19 Brandon Rd – Reham Makeem- Dispute Bill: Reham Makeem states that her bill from October 2021 was about \$3000.00 for one cycle and then went back down to regular cycle. There was a fire at her house back in March (which is a multi-family) and now she has no income and cannot understand why the bill was so high. Scott states the high charge looks like something was running. She explained that it was a 3-family and that her tenants would let her know if there was something running. The board discussed that they needed to have the meter checked to be sure it was working properly before making a decision and they would follow up with her after the meter was checked.

Bill made a motion to check to see if the meter is working properly before making a final decision, Tom seconded the motion, discussion occurred about how she does not have the money to pay the bill and the board advised to speak with the Treasurer/Collector office regarding this, a vote was taken, all in favor, passed unanimously.

61 Brandon Rd – Emily Heywood – Dispute Bill: (via telephone) Emily stated that she sent an email and asked if we had a chance to read it, Scott stated that yes, we have a copy of the email. Emily is asking to not be charged the large amount of the bill. The house has been unoccupied because she was assaulted by someone who lives on Marshall Terrace and the person was arrested and then made bail and is back living on Marshall Terrace, Scott interrupted stating that we do have that information in writing and rather than you put it all out there we can move on from that. Emily Heywood stated ok, I just wanted you to have the history. Scott stated so the house is for sale and the water was on for the heating system. A neighbor was walking down the street and noticed something odd at the house and called Detective Annese from the Dudley Police Department, police investigated and there was a flood and the neighbor shut the water off. The very next day she contacted everyone possible, the insurance AAA who has been investigating to see what they would be covering. The conclusion was that something went wrong with the oil burner, and it stopped working so the heat went off and the pipes froze and then burst to fill up the cellar and part of the house. It was leaking upstairs and in the cellar. She does not think that she should be responsible for the water for something like this and due to her current living situation and the fact that she cannot go to the house per the District Attorney. Scott stated that the long-standing policy of the department is that if the water goes through the meter, we bill for it. Emily Heywood asked if they could discount the bill because it was an accident that happened, what if it was you, and I must pay for sewer when it didn't even go down the sewer. Tom stated that we can abate the sewer portion because it did not go down the sewer. Emily Heywood stated that she feels because she is a crime victim and due to the circumstances, she should be forgiven for the bill. She can't apply for jobs because she has to keep her address private. Scott reminded her that everything that you are saying is public information. He stated that he has had an overflowing toilet which caused him a large water sewer bill, so he can understand some. We could abate the sewer portion of the bill but the

water portion. Emily Heywood then stated that the water is contaminated and can't even drink or use it. Scott then stated that the issue with the water has been mitigated and it was only for a short time, and we mandated by the State and went through great expenses to temporarily and permanently fixed. Emily Heywood stated that this bill shouldn't go to a senior living on food stamps. Bill stated but that is why she has insurance. Jay stated that Tom brought up the right idea that the water went into the foundation and ground so sewer should not be charged, but the water is not free no matter how you look at, it cost us for the distribution and the chemicals. It costs us a lot of money to run our system and it goes through the meter so it's accountable. Emily stated that the only reason the water was on was for the baseboard heating so the pipes wouldn't freeze but something went wrong, and the pipes froze anyway. Tom stated that we can't take personal problems into account when charging customers. Emily Heywood stated that she is going to get legal advice regarding this and see what can be done, Scott advised that sounded like a good idea. Emily Heywood stated that there is no one who can pay the bill.

Tom made a motion to abate the sewer portion on this bill which is for 61 Brandon Rd and the amount of \$2371.74, Jay seconded the motion, no further discussion, a vote was taken, passed unanimously.

51 Airport Rd – Agata Palka – exception meter dispute: Did not show to meeting.

Potash Brook Culvert: There was an email from Tighe and Bond wanting to know what direction they should be given. Scott stated that they should make a proposal. George stated that I attended a meeting with the State regarding this and they are aware and looking into what needs to be done. Scott stated that we have one proposal already and should get one from Tighe and Bond. The first one came in back in the beginning of April, which was for everything except the actual construction. We should get three and then choose the lowest one. Jay asked who is handling this? George stated that the office and himself are handling. Scott stated that we should get a proposal from Tighe and Bond for this. Scott stated that one way or another we have to take care of this. We need to reach out to the company who already submitted and see if it was still good or if price changes need to occur.

Mason Road Hydrant Moves: George stated that we helped the highway moved 2 hydrants on Mason Rd. There was an issue about the 2nd hydrant being moved right next to a tree and in bushes/brush. The homeowner should have been notified that the trees/shrubs need to be cleared for access to hydrant. A discussion occurred about the rights of the hydrant and clearing around the hydrant. George stated that just wanted to make the board aware.

Project updates (Bates Tank and Vessel): George stated there are 2 big problems, that most are aware of. There were 4 main breaks caused by pressure problems with the Bates Tank project. George explained that there have been 4 meetings on this, everyone is working and trying to figure out the best way. The engineers are even baffled. This is a unique system. The stations are also still tied together with blending main per DEP, which is pumping a large amount of water through the main. The project has been halted till after the Memorial Day holiday. We will be going forward next week, and we are expecting more main breaks unfortunately. We are preparing for this the best we can, it is killing my budget for supplies. Scott states, as I understood what happened the other night, the booster station on Tanyard Rd shut down, Dresser Hill tank was full, pumps 7 & 6 were still pumping, the booster tanks can't take the pressure, there was a pressure hammer that popped the main. When the booster station is going to shut down, Station 6 & 7 will shut down first, then booster station will shut down then pumps 7 & 6 will start pumping again. Tom stated that he feels this should be on the Engineer and the experts we hired to do this, that should have been aware of what may have occurred. I think we should be reimbursed for the 4 breaks. A discussion occurred about who is responsible for the payment and who

is responsible for these breaks. George stated we are coming up with a game plan as to how we can proceed as best we can. I am expecting better things come Monday. Tom asked are we going to have a joint meeting with the engineer and other parties involved? Scott stated that yes, we will have a meeting and we need to be careful as to what we say in open meeting. A discussion occurred about sending out the Rave alerts and letting people know the information and making sure they get out in advance.

Well 7, the vessel is out of service because the Well 7 pump blew Friday night. We will be investigating this when we pull the pump up as to why and how this happened. Station 3 is running in blend right now. DEP was notified of the whole thing and along with that we are doing our PFAS testing of all the stations continuously now. Installation and the pump are somewhere around \$8000.00.

Indirect Costs: Scott stated that we have not received a response back at this time. Scott stated that we can send another letter questioning when we are meeting and handling this. George stated he would speak with the Town Administrator.

Superintendent Report: George stated most of the information you are aware of. The radar people are coming in to do up around Bates Tank. Bates tanks start up at the beginning of next week. I want to thank the Sewer Department for all the amount of help they gave us, and 2 highway guys came out for Lakeside break, I called for additional highway for Chase Ave break help but no one else showed up. I ended up taking some of our resources from Lakeside and moved them to Chase Ave. There were 2 breaks on Chase Ave, 1 on Lakeside and then Fairview Ave. The Fairview Ave we had to call in a company to help locate the break. All the areas of the breaks have been repaired. The garage heating tank has started to leak so we will need to replace the water garage's furnace as well as the sewer one too. Sewer side there has been a lot going, meeting with Tighe and Bond SSO, need operational manuals and reporting to DEP, it is a bit more involved. Getting all the information together and presenting it in a good package. Scott stated this is why we cross train people. Jay asked if there was any feedback on the part-time position advertised. Tom asked where do we stand on the paving of Mason Road? George stated that Tighe and Bond are in control of all this. Scott stated that the paving was supposed to be happening right now, I was told that the sidewalk project will start next month (June) and it will be completed in 8 weeks, sometime in the beginning of August. Tighe and Bond and Haluch will be notified when it close to the time for paving. Tom asked if there is increase in cost who pays for the difference. Scott states that we are going to be fighting that cost increase. A discussion occurred about the cost increase and time delay for the paving due to the sidewalk project. Tom we are doing a disservice because this is going to cost the users. Scott stated that there are other items going on that I won't discuss in a public meeting.

Public/Board Comments: Scott stated that during the breaks, the one on Lakeside I was there until 2am and I layed awake and listed to the back up alarm, kudos to the crew and the 2 highway guys come out to help. I watched your crew deep in the mud dealing with one break and then getting a call about the second break, it was all handled really well. Everything was done and you called in re-enforcements and you were down 2 personnel and did a great job. I was impressed with Timmy and Luke and the Administrative Assistant showed up to the site after sending out the second Rave alert.

Bill made a motion to adjourn, Tom seconded the motion, no further discussion, a vote was taken, passed unanimously, meeting adjourned at 7:43pm

****Documents physically identified, discussed, considered, or voted by the Board: ****

Posted agenda for June 1, 2022, meeting at 6:30pm Room 315
19 Brandon Rd Bill history
61 Brandon Rd Bill history and corresponding emails from Emily Heywood
Email from Jeff Faulkner regarding Potash Brook
Superintendent Report

Minutes were taken from the recording as admin was not in attendance.

Respectfully Submitted,
Jennifer Cournoyer, Administrative Assistant