

**Utility Advisory Board
December 14, 2015 5:30 P.M.
City Hall Council Conference Room**

MEMBERS PRESENT

Daniel Peterson, Chairman
Shawn Libby
Thomas H. Willis, Jr

MEMBERS ABSENT

Arthur Hoffman

OTHERS PRESENT

Blaine Cox, Deputy City Manager
Paul Dumont, 3 Church Street

MINUTES

1. Call to order:

Chairman Peterson called the meeting to order at 5:30PM. Board member Arthur Hoffman was absent.

2. Appeals -

2.1 Church Street #3, Paul Dumont

The appellant Paul Dumont was present. Mr. Dumont stated that his tenant did not inform him of the water leaking at the fixtures of this property. He stated that while he understands that he is responsible for what goes on at his property, he feels the City needs to be fair. He stated that the City should invoice monthly and he compared his water and sewer bill to monthly bills like electricity and phone. Chairman Peterson stated that unfortunately this board cannot credit a resident for water used or for sewer if it actually went into the sewer. Mr. Dumont stated that this board should reconsider because the leak would not have gone on so long if he had been billed monthly. Mr. Peterson stated that in the past the City has given a 25% abatement to residents demonstrating need. Mr. Dumont stated that the City would hear from him again on the monthly invoicing issue.

Mr. Willis made a motion to abate 25% of the above average usage (Billed 110 units, average is 19, 91 units at a total of 10.91 water and sewer charge per unit is equal to \$992.81x 25% = \$248.20), plus all accrued interest to date. Mr. Libby seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

2.2 Nicole Street, #22, Christopher Trask

The appellant was not present. The appeal stated that Mr. Trask is appealing the turn off and on fees charged to his account. The staff's recommendation was per ordinance 17.21(b) not to abate as the technicians did go out and turn the water off and then went back and turned the water on for a non-payment issue.

Mr. Willis made a motion to deny the appeal. Chairman Peterson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

2.3 Lowell Street, #32-34 Geoffrey Betts

The appellant was not present at the meeting . The appeal stated that Mr. Betts had found a leaking hot water heater and that the water did not go into the sewer system. He provided pictures of the leak stained floor and the crack in the concrete. He also provided receipts for repairs made and an invoice from Eversource showing the escalation in the electricity use and the reduction after the repair. The appeal stated that he paid the June invoice not knowing that there was a hidden leak. This was a newly purchased property for him. Mr. Betts's is appealing his September invoice. The account showed invoicing of 28 units and a history of 11 average units per quarter. The board discussed the issue and the previous owner's average.

Mr. Willis made a motion to table the request for two cycles and to have the request moved to the June 2016 agenda in order for the new owner average to be established prior to abatement on the sewer portion of the bill. Mr. Libby seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

2.4 Rochester Hill Road, #81, Thomas Gerrish

The appellant was not present at the meeting. Mr. Gerrish's appeal stated that his tenants had not informed him of leaking toilets. His appeal stated that some of the water had leaked all over the floors and some had gone into the sewer system. He did provide receipts for the repairs and replacement of two toilets. It was discussed that the water was used so the board would not abate the water, and that where they were unable to determine what may or may not have went into the sewer system they would settle on one half.

Chairman Petersen made a motion to abate ½ of the above average sewer use, which is 105.5 units at the cost of \$6.24 each for a total of \$658.32, plus all accrued interest to date. Mr. Libby seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

2.5 Salmon Falls Road, #594, Melena Lugo

The appellant was not present at the meeting. The appeal stated that they had several pool leaks and had to refill on several occasions. They did provide pictures of leaks and copies of receipts.

Mr. Willis made a motion to abate the above average sewer use which is 42 units at \$6.24 each for at total of \$262.08 plus accrued interest to date. The motion was seconded by Mr. Libby. The motion passed unanimously.

2.6 Chestnut Street, 53-53A Michelle Bernier

The appellant was not present at the meeting. The appeal stated that She was not aware that she could call in pool fill readings. She is seeking a sewer credit on the above average use.

Mr. Willis made a motion to abate the above average sewer use which is 11 units at \$6.24 each for a total of \$68.64 plus accrued interest to date. The motion was seconded by Mr. Libby. The motion passed unanimously.

2.7 Kodiak Court, #20, Michael O’Keefe

The appellant was not present at the meeting. The appeal stated that they could not find any leaks and that they were disputing the meter readings. The appeal also stated that the appellant does have a small garden. The board compared all available readings and noted that each growing season the property does have elevations in reading. They also noted that this past growing season was very dry and although the readings were much higher than previous years the elevation occurred and then went back to normal as they have previously.

Mr. Libby made a motion to have the meter tested if the resident would like the board to consider abatement. If the meter test proves accurate the appeal is denied and the resident is responsible for the cost of the test. If the meter fails testing the appeal can be re-heard at the January meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Willis. The motion passed unanimously.

3. Approval of the November 9, 2015 minutes

Chairman Peterson asked for a recommendation on last month’s meeting minutes.

Mr. Willis made a motion to accept the November 9, 2015 meeting minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Libby. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Financial Reports

The board reviewed all financial reports

5. Adjournment:

Chairman Peterson made a motion to adjourn at 6:19PM. The motion was seconded by Mr. Willis. The motion passed unanimously.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Lisa Clark, City of Rochester Office Manager.