

**Utility Advisory Board
August 14, 2017 5:30 P.M.
City Hall Council Conference Room**

MEMBERS PRESENT

Shawn Libby, Chairman

Ralph Sanders

Raymond Turner

Joe Boudreau

Eli Barnes

OTHERS PRESENT

Lisa Clark, Utility Billing Office Supervisor

Blaine Cox, Finance Director

Mark Sullivan, Business Office

Donna Landry, 8B Morrill Court Resident

Brandie Mackey, 6 Norman Street Resident

MINUTES

1. Call to order:

Chairman Libby called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM.

2. Appeals –

2.1 8B Morrill Court – Donna Landry

The appellant was present for the meeting. Ms. Landry stated that she had just purchased the home and it was her first bill. When she had walked through the home at purchase, a toilet was noticed to be running and was repaired by a plumber.

Chairman Libby made a motion to go with the staff recommendation and table the appeal until the October UAB meeting to establish average usage for the homeowner. The motion was seconded by Mr. Barnes. The motion passed unanimously.

2.2 6 Norman Street – Brandie Mackey

The appellant was present for the meeting. Ms. Mackey stated that she had noticed her bill had gone up since the winter months. Upon looking at the meter, she noticed it was leaking. The Technician determined it to be a frozen meter and replaced it.

Ms. Mackey is appealing the meter replacement cost as well as the increased usage.

Ms. Clark explained that there was no increased usage on the appealed bill to abate.

Ms. Mackey also stated they did move the meter to a dry area to avoid freezing in the future. Mr. Libby explained that the ordinance states it is the homeowners’

responsibility to keep the meter in a dry area and to protect the meter from freezing to avoid replacement charges.

Mr. Barnes made a motion to deny the appeal per staff recommendation. The motion was seconded by Mr. Turner. The motion passed unanimously.

2.3 824 Portland Street – Fred Mailhot

The appellant was not present for the meeting. The appeal is for the on/off charges applied for non-payment.

Chairman Libby made a motion to deny this appeal. The motion was seconded by Mr. Barnes. The motion passed unanimously.

2.4 223 North Main Street – Albert Valiquet

The appellant was not present for the meeting. The appeal is for abatement on the February, May and August 2017 invoices of a three unit apartment building. The board discussed the February appeal separately, as a toilet leak was found and repaired. The above average usage was not enough to qualify for a water abatement and because the water entered the sewer, it would not qualify for a sewer abatement. The May and August 2017 invoices were large due to a hot water tank leaking onto the floor, being repaired by a plumber. This meets the parameters for a 1 time in 10 year abatement per the Water and Sewer Adjustment Policy.

Mr. Barnes made a motion to abate per staff recommendation with language that this is a once in 10 year abatement for this property. The recommendation is for 40.5 units of water at \$214.25 and 81 units of sewer at \$528.12. The total abatement is in the amount of \$742.37 plus accrued interest. The motion was seconded by Chairman Libby. The motion passed unanimously.

3. Approval of July 10, 2017 Minutes

Chairman Libby made a motion to accept the July 10, 2017 meeting minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Turner. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Financials

Mark Sullivan and Blaine Cox were present to discuss the financial concerns and the need for increased user rates with the board. Mr. Cox explained the UAB's responsibility as to abatements and rate increase recommendations for City Council. He explained how the preference is to have rate recommendations to the Finance Committee by the October meeting. Mr. Sullivan provided members with varying rate increase projections and the impacts of the increases. Chairman Libby expressed disapproval of another 10% rate increase on water as the water rate was increased 10% last year. Mr. Barnes expressed an understanding of the needed increases and supported the increases as needed to fund the current level of approved budgets. Mr.

Boudreau stated that he too understood the need for incremental increases but was concerned for any increase over 3.5%. There was much discussion and the board expressed a commitment to determining the recommendation at the September 11, 2017 UAB meeting.

5. Adjournment:

Mr. Barnes made a motion to adjourn at 7:31PM. The motion was seconded by Chairman Libby. The motion passed unanimously.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Samantha Juneau, Utility Billing Administrator