

**Utility Advisory Board
August 10, 2020 5:30 P.M.
Annex Building Cocheco Conference Room**

MEMBERS PRESENT

Shawn Libby, Chairman
Eli Barnes
Brett Johnson
Joe Boudreau

MEMBERS ABSENT

Ralph Sanders

OTHERS PRESENT

Lisa Clark, Utility Billing Office Supervisor
Kimberly Nickerson, Utility Billing Administrator

MINUTES

1. Call to order:

Mr. Libby called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM. This meeting was held in the Annex Building in the Cocheco Conference Room.

2. Approval of July 13, 2020 Minutes

Mr. Libby requested a motion or comments on the Minutes for the July 13, 2020 meeting.

Mr. Johnson made a motion to accept the July 13, 2020 meeting minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Barnes. The motion passed unanimously.

3. Appeals

3.1 17 Wakefield Street – Federal Savings Bank

The appellant was not present for the meeting. The appeal requested a water and sewer abatement and stated that he believes water was being stolen from an outside spigot. The appeal noted that they had hired a plumber to install an internal shut off to deactivate the outside spigot.

Mr. Boudreau made a motion to abate the May 2020 invoice for 75 units of water at \$5.55 in the amount of \$416.25 and 150 units of sewer at \$6.75 in the amount of \$1012.50. The motion was for a total abatement of \$1428.75 plus accrued interest. Mr. Boudreau's motion stated that the account and decision letter should note that this is a once in 10 year abatement per Water and Sewer adjustment policy. The motion was seconded by Mr. Johnson. The motion passed unanimously.

3.2 11-13 Myrtle Street – Morning Star Properties

The appellant was not present for the meeting. The appeal requested was for both a water and sewer abatement. The owner stated that she had a leaking old washing machine that was no longer being used, the plumber shut off the water to the machine. The board discussed the March bill and the Water & Sewer Adjustment Policy, and noted that the June bill would not qualify for the water per policy.

Mr. Johnson made a motion to waive the filing period deadline for this appeal and others on a case by case basis due to the Covid-19 Pandemic. The motion was seconded by Mr. Barnes. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Johnson made a motion to abate 34 units of sewer on the March 2020 invoice, and 173 units of Sewer on the June 2020 invoice at cost of \$6.75 per unit. The amount of the sewer abatement is \$1,397.25. The motion included a water abatement of 87 units of water at \$5.55 per unit, for a total water abatement of \$482.85. The motion included an abatement on any accrued interest and the recommendation to include the once in 10 year notes on the account and decision letter. The motion was seconded by Mr. Barnes. The motion passed unanimously.

3.3 14 Granite Street -- Richard Moreau Jr.

The appellant was present for the meeting. The appeal is for above average sewer usage due broken water heater.

Mr. Johnson made a motion to abate the June 2020 invoice for 17 units of sewer at \$6.75 for a total abatement of \$114.75 plus any accrued interest. The motion was seconded by Mr. Barnes. The motion passed unanimously.

3.4 31 Tingley Street – Ronna Kaufman

The appellant not present for the meeting. The appeal is for above average water and Sewer usage due to watering of lawn for repairs due to new sewer main and new sewer connection as part of the Colonial Pines project. Ms. Clark explained to the Board that the Colonial Pine Sewer Extension Project caused damage to the lawns of many in this neighborhood. The damage was due to both the private connections and the City's main line. She stated that it is the City's policy to have lawns restored to the pre-project conditions and this is typically done at zero cost to the home owner. Ms. Clark stated that the hydro seeded grass needed to be watered and that the costs should not be passed on to the homeowner. Ms. Clark noted that there were several more appeals in the process for this exact issue.

Mr. Johnson made a motion to abate on the July 2020 invoice of 12 units of water at \$5.55 for a total of \$66.60 and 12 units of sewer at \$6.75 for a

total of \$81.00. The motion was for a total abatement of \$147.60 plus accrued interest. The motion was seconded by Mr. Boudreau. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Johnson made a motion to have all of the Colonial Pines appeals decided in the same manner. His motion stated that the Utility billing office should process the abatements and inform the Board at the September meeting of the abatements. Mr. Johnson's motion stated that a one time only water abatement should be noted on the decision letters. The motion was seconded by Mr. Libby. The motion passed unanimously.

3.5 117 Wakefield Street – Walter Unger

The appellant was not present for the meeting. The appeal request is for a water and sewer abatement. The representative stated that he had a running toilet that is now off.

Mr. Johnson made a motion to waive the filing period deadline for this appeal and others on a case by case basis due to the Covid-19 Pandemic. The motion was seconded by Mr. Barnes. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Barnes made a motion to abate the February 2020 invoice for 131 units of water at \$5.55 in the amount of \$727.05 and 262 units of sewer at \$6.75 in the amount of \$1768.50. The motion for a total abatement of \$2,495.55 plus accrued interest noting that this is a once in 10 year abatement per Water and Sewer adjustment policy.

3.6 131 Pickering Road – Jeffrey Gudim

The appellant not present for the meeting. The appeal is for above average sewer usage due to leaking water heater that has now been repaired.

Mr. Johnson made a motion to abate on the July 2020 invoice for 27 units of sewer at \$6.75 for a total abatement of \$182.25 plus any accrued interest. The motion was seconded by Mr. Boudreau. The motion passed unanimously

5. Financials

The board reviewed and discussed financial reports.

6. Adjournment:

Mr. Libby made a motion to adjourn at 6:26PM. The motion was seconded by Mr. Barnes. The motion passed unanimously.

*Minutes respectfully submitted by Kimberly S. Nickerson Utility Billing
Administrator*