

**Joint Meeting of the Water & Sewer Commission
And the Electric Utility Commission
Meeting Minutes, March 1, 2021**

Roll Call: Steve Fitzhugh, Dennis Donahue, John Stevens, Charlie Morse. Others present: Town Manager Jeff Schulz, Utility Superintendent Patrick Demasi. The meeting started at 6:30 PM.

Approval of Minutes of January 4, 2020

Motion by Charlie Morse, seconded by Dennis Donahue, to approve the minutes of the December 7, 2020 meeting. Steve Fitzhugh noted that the need for the battery upgrade at the King Street sub-station is due to the smart-grid effort and not the transfer trip issue.

Motion passed as amendment 4-0.

Meeting of the Electric Commission

Budget Status Report

Jeff Schulz presented an Electric Utility budget status report for the period ending January 31, 2021 (58% point of year) noting that the total revenues received thus far are on target at 59% of estimate.

Jeff added that the energy sales revenue, which represent 90% of the over-all budget, are also slightly ahead of the estimate at 59%. The total electric expenses are under budget at 51%. The power purchase costs, which represent 77% of the expenses, are under budget at 51% of the budgeted amount.

Renewable Energy Projects

Steve Fitzhugh noted that the Bone Hill project was anticipated to the start this past fall, however, was delayed to winter weather. The developer plans to start the project as soon as whether permits and will start with the installation of the road.

Steve added that the Town continues negotiating with Gravity Renewable on a make whole agreement and an interconnection agreement for the Nantanna Hydro plant. The Town was under the impression that a final agreement with Gravity Renewables been reached. However, it appears that Gravity, upon further review, is now unhappy with the agreement and wishes to renegotiate.

Meeting of Water and Sewer Commission

Budget Status Report

Jeff presented a water and sewer budget status report for the period ending January 31, 2021, noting that the overall water revenues are approximately 4% below the budget estimate and the water sales are down 3%. The nonresidential water revenues, which is includes Norwich, are down 18 percent. Fortunately, the single-family residential usage is up 7% and mostly offsets the nonresidential losses.

The total sewer revenues and sewer sales are approximately 4% below the budget estimates. The nonresidential revenues are down 14 percent. The single-family sewer revenues are up approximately 7%.

Main Street Stormwater Project

Jeff noted that as a follow-up to the previous Commission meeting, staff prepared a report that includes project costs and the impact on the utility rate payers and the town taxpayers. The report also provides cost splits between the rate payers and tax payers. Also, Jeff noted that he and Patrick Demasi analyzed the cost of the stormwater into the plant and estimated the cost of stormwater to be 10 to 15% of the total budget.

The Commission debated the project cost split between the Town tax payers and the Utility rate payers and it was generally agreed that both entities should share in the project cost with the Town contributing at higher percentage. This conclusion was based on the stormwater coming from the roads and that the Utility rate payers will also be contributing to the projects as taxpayers.

Charlie Morse asked if the State had mandated a specific deadline for the removal of the CSO. Jeff noted that the State established specific thresholds for the removal over several years with a deadline of approximately four years from the present. Charlie stated that there is no need to make a final decision at this time due to that schedule and that there likely will be stimulus funds for infrastructure projects in the near future.

Other Businesses

Jeff noted that over the past several years there had been several occasions where sewer lines on private property at or near the street have had plugged, and the property owner or their contractor asked the Town to assist. Because the ordinance states that the property owner is responsible for maintaining these lines, the Town has been reluctant to assist. As a follow-up, it has been suggested that the Town assist and charge the homeowner for this type of service. Jeff added that the Town's typical mission is to focus on public infrastructure and it can get complicated if the Town works on private property. The Commission discussed the issue and concluded that in those situations near or in the Town right of way, the Town Manager has the discretion to authorize the Water and Sewer Department to assist with the repair.

Motion by Charlie Morse, second by Dennis Donahue to adjourn the Joint Meeting of the Electric and the Water/Sewer Commission. **Motion passed 4-0.**

Jeff Schulz, Town Manager