

Minutes Sewer 150409 DRAFT

1 **TOWN OF WILTON SEWER DEPARTMENT**
2 **PUBLIC HEARING on RATE INCREASE & REGULAR MEETING**
3 **THURSDAY, APRIL 9, 2015 6:30 PM**
4 **DRAFT MINUTES**

5
6 PUBLIC HEARING ON RATE INCREASE
7

8 The Wilton Sewer Commission held a Public Hearing to discuss 2015 Sewer Rates on
9 Thursday, April 9, 2015 at 6:30 PM in Town Hall Courtroom. Present: Commissioners
10 Tom Herlihy (Chairman), Chris Carter, and Tom Schultz; Clerk Joanna K Eckstrom;
11 Member of Public Tracey Ewing; Selectman Rick Swanson (did not stay).
12

13 Chairman Herlihy called the meeting to order at 6:30PM and explained that purposed of
14 hearing was to discuss and vote to “increase the sewer use rate to \$90 per quarter,
15 increase to be effective with the first quarter billing period January 1 – March 31, 2015.”
16

17 Tracey Ewing asked why Sewer and Water rates weren’t based on meters as she has
18 experienced in neighboring towns. She stated that her flat rate sewer bill is almost
19 twice as much per quarter as her flat rate-metered water use; doesn’t seem fair to
20 charge like this.
21

22 Mr Schultz explained that Wilton Sewer Department and Wilton Water Works are
23 separate entities and that Sewer Department answers to town whereas, WWW does
24 not. Both entities have had flat rate for years but WWW adopted flat rate and metering.
25 Mr Herlihy noted that when metering was added, customers were more conscientious
26 about their water use. Mr Carter said that a combination of flat rate and metering is a
27 more fair way to charge for water and sewer but that WSD and WWW still have a long
28 way to go to get to a point where that can happen.
29

30 Former Water Commissioner Tom Schultz noted that the water works is required by
31 statute to read water meters four times a year so it has no choice about billing
32 frequency; Sewer has always been billed at same time as water.
33

34 Mr Herlihy said that in 2014, sewer billed \$220K in flat rate fees but this fell short of the
35 \$290K expenses. Department can’t go forward without an increase. He added that
36 what Milford raised its rate for Wilton to use their facility – that rate needs to be passed
37 on to Wilton users. Wilton Sewer department’s rate increase to \$90 per quarter for 858
38 services is necessary for the department to cover the \$309K projected expenses for
39 2015 operations. This should also help provide a small buffer for unexpected repairs.
40

41 There being no further discussion, Mr Herlihy called for a motion – Mr Schultz moved,
42 Mr Carter seconded to “increase the sewer use rate to \$90 per quarter, increase to be
43 effective with the first quarter billing period January 1 – March 31, 2015.” Motion carried
44 unanimously.

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46 Public Hearing on the rate increase was closed at 7PM.

47 **REGULAR MEETING – THURSDAY April 9, 2015**

48 The regular monthly session was called to order at 7:05 PM. Only the three
49 Commissions and the Clerk attended the regular session.

50

51 The agenda follows:

52 1. Call to order (Mr. Herlihy) 7:05PM

53 2. Public Input / Comment - NONE

54 3. Minutes of January 29, 2015 through March 24, 2015. These minutes were
55 approved as written by those commissioners eligible to vote on the minutes
56 (eligibility determined by a commissioner having attended a particular meeting).

57 4. AR / AP discussion: YTD through 3/31/2015 reports v. approved 2015 budget –
58 Mr Schultz noted that as of March 31, the department had spent 15% of budget.

59 Jane Farrell was given the rate increase proposal for billing purposes. She
60 also had commissioners sign warrants. There were no abatements. Jane
61 thanked her staff – Melissa, Doreece and Sara – for their help during her recent
62 illness. They kept the department going.

63 Mr Carter offered to explore what Monadnock Mountain is sending out in
64 sewage to see if flat rate should be adjusted.

65 5. Follow up to rate increase for 2015 billings discussion - Ms Eckstrom asked that
66 commissioners allow Jane and her staff to be 'lenient' about imposing late fees or
67 penalties on the sewer bill (for 1/1-3/31/15 period only) as this is going to be a big
68 hit on users. Commissioners agreed and Mr. Schultz will inform Jane of this.
69 Incidentally, Wilton's sewer rate is still among the lowest in the region.

70 6. Follow up on Intermunicipal Agreement, meeting with Milford (March 31),
71 explanation of 'estimated' bills, etc. – The agreement has been signed; Mr
72 Herlihy will bring document to Selectmen for safekeeping. Clerk will also scan
73 document.

74 Re: Milford billing procedure, Mr Schultz noted that rate changes month to
75 month but flow readings that Mike Bergeron (WWW) takes in AM are consistent
76 with afternoon readings that Dave Boucher (Milford) does. Mr Schultz will check
77 with Mr Sheehy about when an audit of 2014 rereadings/billings will be done to
78 see if Wilton is due a refund.

79 Mr Cater said there may be some inconsistencies with I and I and he will look
80 into this further.

81 Status – GIS mapping project – this is underway at WWW level; Sewer wants
82 to get into project.

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83 7. Status – system report - There's a hole in pipe under Island Street bridge; State
84 is aware of this. Considerations are being given on how to remedy the situation;
85 Mr Carter is following this.

86 Camera work was done at 80 Maple St – water infiltrating into sewer line. Also
87 at Whiting Hill Rd and Livermore Street, there also infiltration; Beech property
88 (Livermore Street) and Island Street properties need looking into.

89 8. Other: TBA as needed – Mr Carter asked about Pump Station Labor charges to
90 date ... He will explore how this is accounted for on employee time cards so it
91 can be confirmed as correct.

92 9. Next Meeting Thursday, May 14, 2015

93

94 10. Adjournment Tom Schultz moved, Chris Carter seconded to adjourn at 8:30.

95

96 Respectfully submitted,

97 Joanna K. Eckstrom, Clerk