

VILLAGE OF GRAFTON
BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS MEETING MINUTES

NOVEMBER 12, 2012

The Board of Public Works meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Chairman Richard Rieck.

Members present: Trustee Richard Rieck, Trustee Sue Meinecke, Pat Murray, Edwin Dietrich, and Trustee Lisa Harbeck

Staff Present: Utility Director Tom Krueger, Utility Superintendent Tim Nennig, Superintendent of Public Works Gary Helm, Utility Clerk Stacie Nelson, and Administrative Assistant Melissa Depies.

Others Present: John and Mary Kay Hagen and Beth and Derek Peterson.

HEAR PERSONS REQUESTING TO BE HEARD

None

MINUTES

Motion by Mr. Murray, seconded by Mr. Dietrich, to approve the October 8, 2012 Board of Public Works meeting minutes. Approved unanimously.

Water & Wastewater

Summer sprinkling credit elimination

Utility Director Tom Krueger explained that in August of 2011 the Village Board approved eliminating the summer sprinkling credit as a cost savings initiative and water conservation tool. However after the third quarter 2012 billing was mailed, it was discovered that the sprinkling credit language was not officially removed from the Village Code, therefore the credit policy remains in effect until the Village code is changed by ordinance.

Motion by Mr. Dietrich, seconded by Mr. Murray, to recommend the Village Board adopt an ordinance amending Section 12.08.090 / Sewerage Service Rates.

John G. Hagen, 1949 Surrey Lane, objected to this change. He stated that this policy has nothing to do with cost savings and has everything to do with revenue increases. After he received his third quarter 2013 billing he researched the notifications that were sent out to residents. He indicated that every customer was sent a notice stating that the average increase would be approximately \$51 for the quarter, his rebate check was \$276.

Mr. Krueger explained that the \$51 estimate was an average of all users. Not all properties water lawns or gardens therefore they do not receive any credit. Trustee Rieck

commented that his bill went up \$25 while his brother's bill went up \$400, it all depends on how much water you used.

Mr. Hagen again repeated that this was a revenue increase, like an additional tax, not a cost savings and there was no notification to the residents on how this would affect them.

Mr. Krueger indicated that the notice was on six quarterly bills prior to going into effect. The notice was also in the Village newsletter and on the Village website. Mr. Hagen indicated that he does not read the messages on the billing statement, he looks at the amount due and that is it.

Stacie Nelson, Utility Clerk, stated that the Village of Saukville eliminated their sprinkling credit 3 years ago, the Village of Fredonia also eliminated their sprinkling credit, and the City of Port Washington is considering removing the credit.

Trustee Harbeck questioned when the last rate increase was and if the Utility could keep the summer sprinkling credit if the rates were increased by 4 or 5 percent. Mr. Krueger responded that the last rate increase occurred in 2009. It was his opinion that it would not be fair to raise rates across the board to make up for those residents that wish to water their lawns and landscaping.

Mr. Krueger explained that the sprinkling credit is a fictitious number that is based on billing a lower than actual metered volume for sewer use. The calculated sewer use volume for billing purposes is equivalent to the average water usage measured during the two winter quarters. In effect, the Utility credits sewer charges to each and every residential customer that uses more water during the summer quarters. This system does not take into account the "snowbirds", or having school age children at home during the summertime, or just the basic increased water use, all of which results in a revenue loss for the Utility.

Ms. Nelson explained that in order to provide this credit to each resident, each and every account must be manually adjusted and handled creating additional work for Utility staff.

Mr. Krueger noted that if residents still wish to water they can install a deduct meter. This is a device that is installed to measure water use that is not discharged to the sewer system. This is and will remain an option for any residential customer.

Mary Kay Hagen, 1949 Surrey Lane, stated that they only watered annual flowers and some vegetables, they did not water the grass and their rebate was \$276. Residents must decide if it is more equitable to grow their own vegetables or purchase them.

Beth Peterson, 518 Woodridge Drive, stated that as things are dug in around her area you can see that there is a sand base with only about 4 or 5 inches of topsoil. If we do not water our lawns everything will die, does the Village want that, what kind of image is that for the Village? Ms. Peterson compared her water bill to her sister's water bill who resides in Port Washington and Grafton's bill was much higher. Ms. Nelson explained that the City

of Port Washington bills every two months and the Village bills every three months plus Port Washington has a higher minimum base charge than Grafton.

Ms. Peterson stated that she would rather see rate increases than elimination of the sprinkling credit.

Trustee Meinecke did not believe that all residents should pay more because some want to water their lawn and landscaping.

Utility Superintendent Tim Nennig explained that installing a deduct meter is a great option for those residents that want to continue to water. The meter is installed so that water going to the outside spigots is metered to provide the Utility with actual watering volumes not being discharged to the sanitary sewer. The resident is then only charged for the amount of water used and is credited the sewer charges on metered volumes used for sprinkling purposes. Once installed, the deduct meter has an annual cost of \$36.

Ms. Nelson commented that she has provided 3 year usage information to residents to determine if they would benefit from a deduct meter. The history helps the resident determine if it is cost effective to put a meter in and what the payback term will be.

Ms. Peterson indicated that she has spoken to Mr. Brunnquell regarding this and he told her that the Village is trying to make services between the businesses and residents more equitable. It was her opinion that it was the businesses that are driving this change.

Trustee Harbeck stated that the general volume of water world wide is lower, this change is also about water conservation. Mr. Nennig stated that the Regional Water Planning Study, prepared by SEWRPC, strongly suggests that communities with ground water reduce their maximum day and peak demands by 8 and 16 percent by 2020. The Village has signed into this initiative and elimination of the summer sprinkling credit is part of the water conservation plan.

Ms. Peterson again questioned why she should pay sewer charges on water that is used for watering grass and plants. Mr. Krueger again explained that water and sewer fees are charged on the water that is metered through the water meter. If you do not want to pay sewer fees on water used for watering plants and grass you have the option of installing a deduct meter so the Utility knows exactly how much water is not being discharged to the sanitary sewer.

Trustee Harbeck questioned if any communities provided two meters so that water and sewer usage could be metered separately. Mr. Krueger responded that is not done.

Mr. Krueger stated that there are residents who use more water during the summer months for reasons other than watering. These residents are using the sanitary sewer system and are receiving the same credit which in turn is costing the Utility money.

Trustee Harbeck questioned how the credit is determined. Mr. Krueger explained that the credit is based on an average of usage from the first two quarter billing cycles. Ms. Nelson commented that only single family homes are receiving the credit; industrial, commercial, and rental properties do not receive the credit. Ms. Nelson also noted that many residents are snowbirds, they leave during the winter months and return for the summer and their sewer charges are based on the winter usage when they are not here. Another consideration is those owners who have additional children at home during the summer.

Ms. Nelson stated that she mailed out over 60 letters in February to the high water users explaining the change. Many customers did not even know they were receiving the credit and did not know the deduct meter was available.

Mr. Nennig also noted that the Village's water conservation initiative is what helped the Village maintain good water levels for fire fighting and other consumption needs during the drought this past summer. Mr. Nennig stated that at the height of the drought the Utility was able to continue service without mandating a water ban.

Trustee Harbeck questioned when there will be a rate increase. Mr. Krueger responded that a rate study will be completed in 2013 which may result in an increase in 2014. He suggested a simplified rate bump in 2013 would reduce the amount of rate increase in 2014. There was general discussion on having a small increase of approximately 3 percent each year rather than one large increase every 5 or 6 years.

The motion to recommend the Village Board adopt an ordinance amending Section 12.08.090 / Sewerage Service Rates was approved unanimously.

Ordinance amending section 12.08.050 (G) / Sewer Construction

Utility Director Tom Krueger stated that a proposed ordinance revision has come about because the developer of the Tree House Subdivision has installed a garage floor drain in a home under construction with drainage or discharge into a gravel bed below. There currently is no language in the Village code pertaining to how this type of drain should discharge.

Mr. Krueger explained that past practice has been to require such floor drains to be connected to the sanitary sewer, however the developer has challenged the Village as to why draining into the gravel bed was not allowed. The state plumbing code states that floor drains can connect into the sanitary sewer system or a storm water management facility if acceptable to the municipality. The ordinance amendment addresses this issue in the Village code.

Motion by Mr. Dietrich, seconded by Trustee Harbeck, to recommend the Village Board adopt an ordinance amending 12.08.050 (G) / Sewer Construction. Approved unanimously.

2012 DNR water system sanitary survey

Utility Superintendent Tim Nennig stated that a comprehensive sanitary survey was completed by the DNR on September 18, and there were no significant water system deficiencies identified. The DNR did, however, make the following recommendations:

1. Continue to investigate ways to reduce the current unaccounted for water loss to less than 10 percent: Unaccounted for water loss percentages have dropped from 24 percent in 2009 to 12 percent in 2011.
2. Complete well pump pulls, inspections and necessary repair/replacement every 8 – 10 years: The Utility currently is up-to-date with the exception of two Village wells.
3. Continue implementation of the private well abandonment program: The Village currently has six active private well operating permits and the Village cannot require abandonment. Trustee Harbeck questioned if the Village can require abandonment at the time a homeowner moves. Mr. Krueger responded that our current ordinance does require abandonment prior to time-of-sale/change of ownership.
4. Continue implementation of the existing cross connection control program: Approximately 95 percent of all Village properties are in compliance with the cross connection control program requirements per Village and State plumbing codes.

4th Quarter – 2012 SDWA Compliance Results

Utility Superintendent Tim Nennig highlighted the Safe Drinking Water Act compliance results stating that samples were collected from all six active Village well sites on October 15, 2012.

Well 4 raw water sample showed an exceedance of trichloroethylene and an elevated level of tetrachloroethylene.

Well 5 raw water sample showed an exceedance of trichloroethylene and a near exceedance of dichloroethylene and an elevated level of tetrachloroethylene.

Well 6 had an elevated detection of trichloroethylene and a slight detect of tetrachloroethylene. The last exceedance at this well was in December of 2006.

Utility projects update

Utility Director Tom Krueger highlighted the Utility's ongoing capital projects.

Utility Vehicle/Storage Facility: Project is out for bid with a bid opening scheduled for November 27 and anticipated contract award on December 3.

Regional Lake Water Supply Study: The final draft for Phase II work has been completed. The study results will be formally presented at the meeting in December. All Village Board members should be invited to the meeting so the consultant can present the recommendations and conclusions one time.

Utility budget dashboard measurements update

Utility Director Tom Krueger stated that out of the 4,400 bills that were mailed, the Utility only received 30 high water usage complaints.

Report of benchmark measurements-Utility

The board reviewed the benchmark report.

Utility Superintendent Tim Nennig commented that over 3,000 residential customers received new billings as a result of the summer sprinkling credit issue. This amount is not included in the benchmark for water and sewer bills processed.

Mr. Nennig explained that Hydro Designs Incorporated performs all Village commercial, industrial and public authority cross connection control inspections. Aurora Medical Center was recently completed and a number of issues have been identified. It is believed that plans were sent to the state for approval however what was actually built was not exactly according to plan. Gauthier Biomedical and the Aurora Cancer Care will be inspected later this week.

Utility staff will not meet their goal for 'sewer mainline jetting'. Much of their field work has been re-directed to get caught up with various infrastructure repair work including water system mainline valves, sanitary sewer manholes, and hydrant repairs.

The last sanitary sewer main back-up occurred in November 2010.

Public Works

Ordinance amending section 10.32.010 / Stop intersections and section 10.36.010 / No parking at any time

Superintendent of Public Works Gary Helm stated that one ordinance is for traffic to come to a complete stop on Badger Court at Cheyenne Avenue. The second ordinance is to restrict parking on both sides of Badger Court as it is a much narrower street.

Motion by Trustee Harbeck, seconded by Trustee Meinecke, to recommend the Village Board adopt an ordinance amending 10.32.010 / Stop Intersections. Approved unanimously.

Motion by Trustee Harbeck, seconded by Trustee Meinecke, to recommend the Village Board adopt an ordinance amending Section 10.36.010 / No Parking at Any Time. Approved unanimously.

Public Works-Part Time Office Staff

Administrative Assistant Melissa Depies explained that Mr. Murphy is requesting to add additional hours to the current part-time Park and Recreation Department employee to help cover Public Works Department telephone and counter service when she is on vacation.

Board members questioned how this arrangement was proposed to work.

Ms. Depies explained that the Park and Recreation Department employee currently works Mondays and Wednesdays from 9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. and Fridays from 8:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. The plan is to revamp the telephone system so that when Ms. Depies is out of the office, the phone will ring at part-time Park and Recreation Department employee's desk. The part-time employee has already been trained and is currently assisting residents with yard card renewals when necessary.

It was the consensus of the board that they would like additional information from Mr. Murphy as to why this was necessary.

Motion by Trustee Meinecke, seconded by Mr. Murray, to table amending the 2013 budget to add \$1,600 to the Public Works Administration and \$1,600 to the Public Works Engineering personal services budgets and \$375 to the Public Works Administration and \$375 to Public Works Engineering Non-Personal Services budgets to the next Board of Public Works meeting. Approved unanimously.

Report of benchmark measurements-DPW

The board reviewed the benchmark report.

Superintendent of Public Works Gary Helm stated that crews are busy collecting leaves. The last day to rake leaves out is November 18. Crews will make one last sweep through the Village and all leaves should be collected before Thanksgiving.

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

None

ADJOURN

Motion by Mr. Dietrich, seconded by Mr. Murray, to adjourn the meeting at 7:38 p.m. Approved unanimously