

**WATER & SEWER COMMISSION  
MEETING MINUTES – JULY 18, 2023**

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5:30 PM – Conference Room B – Town Hall, 63 Main Street Northborough, MA 01532

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** John Meader  
Bryant Firmin  
David Pepe

**ALSO PRESENT:** Scott Charpentier, Public Works Director  
Tim Davison, Water & Sewer Operations Manager  
Robert Luke, Administrative Assistant  
Dave Fox, Raftelis Financial Consultants, Inc.  
Julianne Hirsh, Select Board Liaison

Commissioner Meader opened the meeting at 5:30 PM.

**CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES FROM THE JUNE 6, 2023 REGULAR MEETING**

Motion by Commissioner Pepe to approve the meeting minutes of the June 6, 2023 regular meeting as amended; the motion was seconded by Commissioner Firmin. The vote was unanimous with all votes in favor.

**REVIEW OF FY'24 DRAFT WATER & SEWER RATE STUDY REPORT WITH RAFTELIS FINANCIAL CONSULTANTS, INC.**

Mr. Charpentier began by informing the Commission that we are going through the annual rate study process now as we have done in past years and gave a brief overview of the rate process and recap of the revenue and consumption from fiscal year 2023. Mr. Charpentier noted that the revenue essentially met expenditures, meaning that we spent under budget and collected over projections. Mr. Charpentier then introduced Mr. Fox of Raftelis Financial Consultants and gave him the floor.

Mr. Fox referred to a dashboard printout of the rate model he uses and gave the Commission a detailed overview of the draft rate study process, explaining what items were taken into consideration when evaluating rate adjustments. He noted that existing debt service, operating expenses, and capital improvements are all analyzed to arrive at an appropriate rate for water and sewer in fiscal 2024.

Mr. Fox stated that for fiscal year 2024 the recommendation is a 4.0% increase to the water volumetric rate with a 6.25% increase to the base charge. Raftelis is also recommending a

4% increase to the sewer volumetric rate and a 4% increase to the flat sewer rate. Mr. Fox stated that all of this amounts to the typical residential bill increasing by about \$5.00 for water charges and \$9.00 for sewer charges.

Commissioner Meader offered comments on the report formatting with regard to missing items and overall consistency; Mr. Fox noted that those would be addressed on the spreadsheet and report going forward.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

Mr. Charpentier gave a brief update on the status of the special master proceedings for the Marlborough litigation with the post proceeding briefs being due in August.

Mr. Charpentier noted that the Inflow and Infiltration (I&I) program is nearing completion with approximately six sewer manholes remaining. This has decreased flow significantly. Commissioner Meader requested a brief summary or informational sheet, showing the effects of the I&I program.

Finally, Mr. Charpentier gave an update on the pump station at 63 Main Street. He noted the new concrete pad is awaiting its backup generator which was ordered one year ago. Once installed, we will be fully compliant with our federal permit requirements.

## **NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will be a remote Public Hearing via Zoom on Tuesday, August 22, 2023 at 5:30 PM

## **ADJOURN**

Commissioner Pepe motioned to adjourn at 6:20 PM; Commissioner Firmin seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous with three votes in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert Luke  
Administrative Assistant

### Documents used during meeting:

1. July 18, 2023 meeting agenda
2. June 6, 2023 regular meeting minutes
3. FY'24 Draft Water & Sewer Rate Study Dashboard Printout From Raftelis Financial