

## **West Windsor Utility Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes August 26, 2019**

**Call to order:** Meeting called to order at 4:05 p.m. Quorum established: Bob Norris (Ski Tow Road); Tom Marsh (Windsor Town Manager); Tom Kenyon (Brownsville Village); Ken Moore (Orange Lake); and Sharlene McEachern (Windsor House) present in person; David Leavitt (who joined meeting late by phone, Mountainside) present. Win Johnson (West Windsor Select Board), Martha Harrison (Town Administrator), Connie May (Clerk), and Jeffrey Hermanson (West Windsor resident) also present.

**Changes/additions to agenda:** None noted.

**Announcements/public comments:** None noted.

**Approval of minutes from last meeting on June 3:** Motion made to approve minutes. Seconded. No further discussion. Motion passed with Sharlene abstaining.

**Year to date finances:** Committee members had reviewed finances sent in advance of meeting. Win Johnson added two comments:

1. \$22,600 budgeted for water-system operations and maintenance. \$12,000 budgeted/year for work on valves. May not get this year's work done, so may come in under budget for 2019.
2. Did not budget enough for sewer fees due to Windsor, in part due to billing error on Windsor's part. About \$10,000 higher than planned for processing fees: \$144,500 instead of \$134,500. Won't change users' bills for 2019, but will reduce transfer of funds to capital reserves.

**Project updates, cost estimates, rate implications:** Win reviewed details.

### *Projects:*

Sewer: Bids for sewer-system rehab project to be opened a week from tomorrow on September 3<sup>rd</sup>. Still hopeful to get bids within budget or even under. Once bids reviewed, will be able to update project estimates. Legal fees are over budget by about \$1,000 due to work ascertaining rights-of-way to establish title. A&E hopes to have project work done if not by end of calendar year than by end of winter, as work can continue through the winter. Some old collection lines on upper and lower loops plugged.

Water: Emergency generator for water project will benefit all, as will new supply line; new distribution line will benefit those in the low zone. Act 250 permit will not be valid until 9/11 to allow time for public comments. May not be able to get water lines replaced this calendar year.

Rates: Just received rate study from A&E; haven't had time to peruse and discuss further with A&E. Likely to have increase of rates in area of 5% on water side as well as on sewer side; Martha doing some modeling. Reviewing implications that allocation of capital reserves and cost of sewer project may have on rates. On sewer side, authorization of 30-year versus 20-year bond would extend debt service but reduce annual cost. On water side, may be a 3% or 2% bond; not yet nailed down. Discussing whether to pay down sewer purchase debt versus paying new debt. Intent is to keep rate increases reasonable, but deferred maintenance must be tackled.

Point made that detailed communication to users about needed rate increases is of paramount importance. Hope is that after an increase (probably for 2021), rates will stay fairly consistent. On water side, most costs are fixed. On sewer side, though, Windsor may pass on increases due to insurance costs, wages, etc., so harder to predict. Will try to manage closely.

Sewer bills go out quarterly; water bills annually. At last meeting, a committee member requested review of water billing – whether could be split into several billings for easier budgeting for full-time residents. Will be reviewed. In the past, Town made decision about billing schedules.

**Metering non-residential users:** Motion made to table further discussion of rates and discussion of metering non-residential users until next meeting, to allow time for review of A&E's rate study. Seconded. No further discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

**Further business:** None noted.

**Next meeting:** Monday, October 7<sup>th</sup> at 4 p.m. Meeting after that in January.

**Adjournment:** Motion made to adjourn. Seconded. No further discussion. Meeting adjourned at 4:30 p.m.