



TOWNSEND WATER DEPARTMENT
540 Main Street West Townsend, Massachusetts 01474

Nathan Mattila, *Chairman*
(978) 597-2212

Todd Melanson, *Vice-Chairman*

Michael MacEachern, *Clerk*
Email: water@townsend.ma.us

PUBLIC RATE INCREASE MEETING MINUTES

June 25, 2020 – 7:00 P.M.

NOTE REGARDING ACCESS AND PARTICIPATION

Governor Baker declared a State of Emergency to respond to COVID-19 on March 10, 2020 and ordered a suspension of certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law M.G.L. c. 30A, s 20 on March 12, 2020. The Board of Selectmen closed the town offices, including boards and committee meetings consistent with the Governor's March 12th order, to public access to promote social distancing and reduce the spread of COVID-19. The Board of Water Commissioner's meetings will not be open to the public for physical attendance until further notice. The meeting will be available on Zoom. **Join Zoom Meeting**
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87838332965?pwd=dUwWGF1cmNrRFVwR3lWZDR0UnJSZz09>

Meeting ID: 878 3833 2965 Password: 913118 (Participation ID) log in Thursday, June 25, 2020 at 7:00 P.M. to participate.

To log in using your phone please call one of the bolded phone #'s listed on the second page and follow directions.

I. PRELIMINARIES:

- 1.1 NM called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M at 540 Main St and remotely by Zoom.
- 1.2 Roll Call Showed Members Present: Nathan Mattila (NM), Chairman, Todd Melanson (TM), Vice-Chairman, and Michael MacEachern (MM), clerk (not present) Guests Present: John Barret (JB), Moderator, Rebecca McEnroe (RM), Carolyn Smart (Recording), Rodger Rapoza, Shirley Coit, Henry Albro, Karen Distasio, Shawn Doherty, Darlene Sodano, Laurie Shifrin, Nick Cohonin, Elsa Farrell, Brian Lapointe, Jess Funaiole, Al & Cathy Hayward.

II. MEETING BUSINESS:

2.1 The Townsend Water Department will hold a public meeting by Zoom on Thursday, June 25, 2020, 7:00 P.M. to discuss amendments and additions to the Townsend Water Department's Schedule of Rates & Fees. Copies of the changes are on file at the Water Department office and may be requested by email at water@townsend.ma.us Rate payers may submit questions by email water@townsend.ma.us no later than 5:00 P.M. on Monday, June 22, 2020. RM introduced herself as the Interim Superintendent and reviewed her presentation to the rate payers present. RM cited the Water Rate Study conducted in 2010 by Pioneer Consulting Group. RM described what the rate study bases its results on, such as the Master Plan as well as current and future operating costs. RM described the recommendations that were given by the Rate Study at the time. RM reviewed the comparison chart between the Townsend Water Rates and the rates of surrounding towns. RM references maintenance projects on the water system that the increase in rates would help pay for. RM also talked about the impact that this increase would have on the rate payers based on average usage for a billing cycle. These rates will go into effect on 7/1/2020 with the first billing date of 10/1/2020.

III. PUBLIC QUESTIONS & ANSWERS:

- 3.1 The Board of Water Commissioners will answer questions for a reasonable amount of time. Guests asked questions via chat, email, and vocal. All written questions were answered verbally and are attached. All voiced concerns were addressed by TM and RM.

NM adjourned the rate increase meeting at 8:21PM

19:04:29 From Carolyn : How much do you have in undesignated funds as of June 30, 2019 and what do you expect at close of year for 2020

19:05:18 From Carolyn : What do you have in existing capital warrant articles that have not been expended?

19:07:53 From Carolyn : Rebecca is working as an engineer right? If would be a problem with procurement if you have her working as a Superintendent, she's contractual

19:19:15 From Carolyn : Are the projects on the five year plan?

19:21:33 From Carolyn : What would be the increase in terms of actual cost on the average water bill

19:26:56 From Theresa : i think that this format in appropriate and too complicated we should table this until we can have meeting at town hall 17 participants is too low

19:30:40 From Theresa : att moderator

19:31:43 From Brenda Boudreau : water@townsend.ma.us

19:35:57 From iPhone : will the issue of cloudy tap water be resolved with these projects?

19:38:16 From Carolyn : I disagree with your statement you need 500k in undesignated funds for borrowing. That would go against the Town's existing stabilization for whatever the project is that you would need to bond for. The water department does not have it's own bond rating, that would apply only to water districts. Do you plan on borrowing for the projects with a vote at town meeting?

19:39:21 From Carolyn : Did the Water Commissioners already vote to increase the water rates and if so when did that occur.

19:39:55 From Carolyn : Yes, Brenda is right, no public hearing in accordance with the law is necessary

19:40:50 From Theresa : we have always voted in thepast for rate increasesat townhall meetings what has changed

19:41:01 From Laura Shifrin : If this is considered a public hearing. You would have a roll call

19:43:33 From Darlene Sodano : If you can view the participants, hover over your name and there is an option to "rename" yourself.

19:53:05 From Carolyn : So this hearing means nothing, you've already voted in the increase prior, am I correct in understanding this.

19:53:21 From Laura Shifrin : I was there it was before you named everyone...Todd is right

19:53:42 From Laura Shifrin : Old messages

19:54:51 From karen distasio : do any of the planned projects involve digging up exsisting roads. if yes what is the plan for repaving those roads.

19:58:12 From Theresa and shawn doherty : Can i ask a Question without having to type out everything

20:14:44 From Darlene Sodano : Thank you for the presentation and taking the time to educate and inform us. It is much appreciated.

20:15:28 From Laura Shifrin : Seems you get more done with the zoom meetings..saves time and money

20:15:48 From Laura Shifrin : Todd is right

20:16:31 From Carolyn : Chapter 40 section 23b f "in any fiscal year there should be a net surplus remaining after providing for the aforesaid charges for that fiscal year, such surplus, or so much thereof as may be necessary to reimburse the town for moneys theretofore paid on account of its water department, shall be paid into the town treasury. If in any fiscal year there

should be a net surplus remaining after providing for the aforesaid charges and for the payment of any such reimbursement in full, such surplus may be appropriated for such new construction, extraordinary maintenance, or repairs, as the water commissioners, or selectmen authorized to act as such, with the approval of the town" ...my question is has any of the projects you're discussing been approved at town meeting and if not would the \$800,000 in undesignated funds have to go into the town treasury?

20:16:45 From Laura Shifrin : REALTORS held Washing DC meetings with thousands of people

20:20:42 From Laura Shifrin : Thank you all for doing this

Respectfully submitted,



Mistie Demazure

Office Assistant

Townsend Water Department

waterdepartment

From: SUSAN LISIO <smlisio@comcast.net>
Sent: Monday, June 22, 2020 4:29 PM
To: Water@townsend.ma.us
Subject: Rate Increase Questions

Water@townsend.ma.us

Hello,

Please read and respond to this question at the Rate Increase meeting on 6/25/2020.

According to the State certification letter, the Water Department's Retained Earnings exceeds \$800,000. And, the Water Department's end of June shows significant unexpended balances. These unspent monies came from money you charged and received from your Water Customers. Please explain why you have these substantial balances and how can you justify a rate increase on top of this?

Thank you,

Sue Lisio
28 Ash St
Townsend

Townsend Water Department

Rate Modification FY 2021
Public listening session
June 25, 2020

2010 Water Rate Study

Comprehensive rate study by Pioneer Consulting Group

Looked at capital improvement requirements

Looked at current and future operating costs

Recommended a 3 year annual increase starting in 2011

The first increase to \$3.00/ cu. ft. was implemented in 2011

The second increase to \$3.42/cu. ft. was not implemented in 2012 as recommended.

The third increase to \$4.32/ cu.ft. was recommended in 2013 and has now been implemented in FY 2021

History of Townsend Water Rates



2011- 2020 - \$3.00 per 100 cu. Ft. or
748 gallons

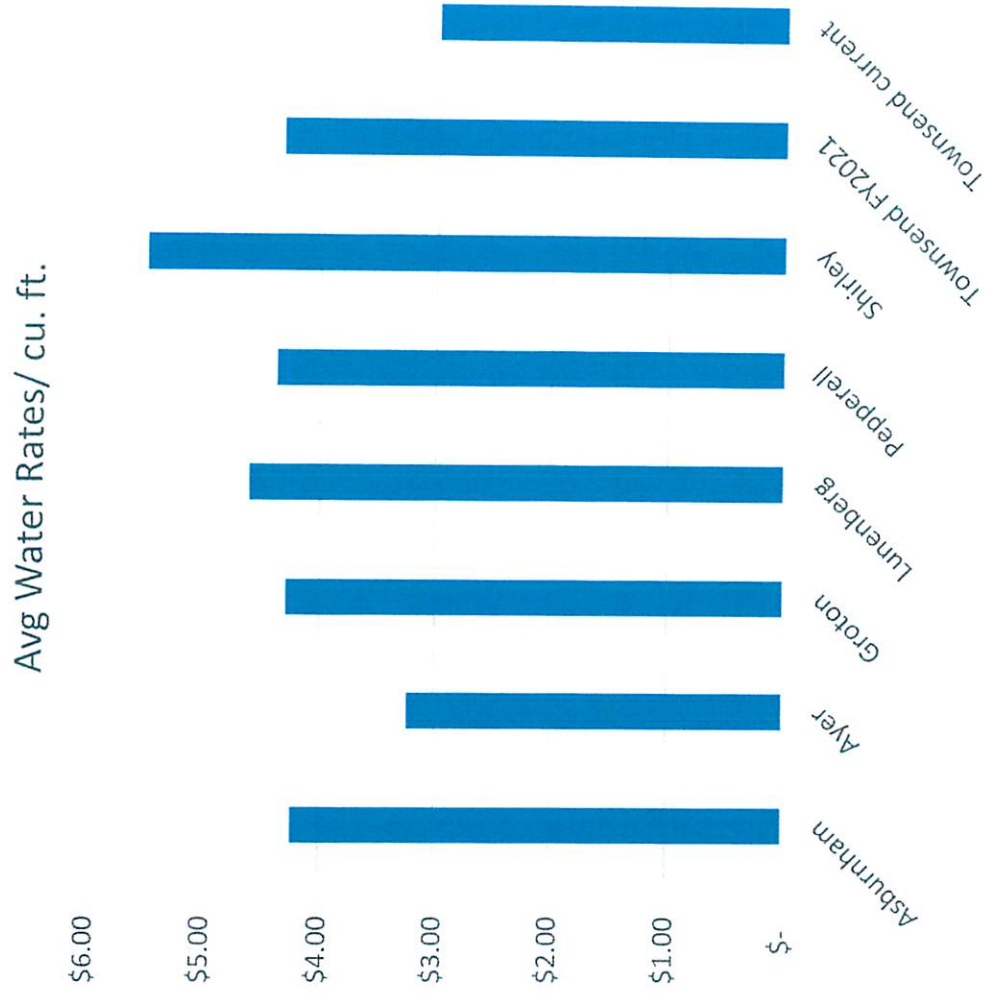
(Witches Brook residents with gallon
meter \$4.00 per 1000 gallons)



2021- Future - \$4.32 per 100 cu. Ft. or
748 gallons

(Witches Brook residents with gallon
meter \$5.36 per 1000 gallons)

Water Rate of Surrounding Towns FY 2020



2019 Water Masterplan

Masterplan completed by Tighe and Bond Engineers

Major Recommendation to replace tubular well field at Main St pump station with a gravel pack well

More Reliable , less maintenance

Tubular well field installed in 1935. Its practical life has past

Cost of this project is estimated to be \$800,000

2019 Water Masterplan

Distribution work recommended to increase reliability

- Recommended a 5 year upgrade plan to pipelines
- Estimated cost is \$1M per year for 5 years

Recommended a 5 year upgrade to hydrants and valves

- Estimated cost is \$150,000 per year for 5 years.

Average Water Bill based on 65gpd

Mass DEP suggest that water usage should be 65 gallons/person/day or less

Average quarterly bill based on a family of 4:

- Current = 23,000 gallons * \$3.00/cu ft = \$92.25/quarter
- Future rates FY 2021 = 23,000 gallons * \$4.32/cu. Ft. = \$132.83/ quarter
- Average annual increase for a family of 4 at 65gpd = \$161.34

New Water Rate FY 2021

New Water Rate per
100 cu ft starting
July 1, 2020 is \$4.32.

(Witches Brook
customers with gallon
meters \$5.36/1000
gallons)

July 1, 2020

First water bill with
new rates will be
mailed out October
2020 for water used
July 1 –Sept. 30, 2020

Oct. 2020



Office of the
Townsend Water Department
540 Main St.
West Townsend, Massachusetts 01474-0017
Tel: 978-597-2212
Fax: 978-597-5611

Schedule of Rates and Fees

Water Rates:	T.W.D. Witch's Brook:	\$37.50 Unit Chg. + \$4.32/100(ft) Billed Quarterly \$37.50 Unit Chg. + \$5.36/1000 Gals. Billed Quarterly
System Development Charges:		1" - \$2,500.00 1 1/2" - \$3,500.00 2" - \$3,600.00 3" & Over - \$25,000.00 Main and Sprinkler/connection - \$5,000.00 Inspection Fee (Main & Sprinkler Connection \$50/hour)
Sprinkler Charge:		According to size at a rate of \$35.00/in./6month period
Overdue Accounts:		\$2.00 demand charge + 1 1/4% interest of amount due (Min. of \$.50)
Service Installation:		1" Services Only (Tap Main + Installation Main to Property Line w/ Meter ~ \$200.00/hour including parts & backhoe Greater than 1" Cost shall include, Cost of meter + Labor, Material and Equipment Cost + 10% Cost + 20% Required for services over 475ft.
Material:		\$50.00
Labor:		\$50.00
Meter Pit:		\$250.00/Nozzle
Turn On Fee:		\$200.00 + water used
Final Readings:		\$50.00
Fire Flow Tests:		\$250.00/Nozzle
Hydrant Use:		\$200.00 + water used
Meter Testing:		\$50.00
Labor Charges:		For 1 or 2 men \$50.00 For The First Hr. \$25.00/hr thereafter Updated & Approved By Board of Water Commissioners 10/6/2014
Meter Valve Replacement		Labor Rate: \$50.00/1" hr., Meter Valve plus 10% and miscellaneous parts if needed Updated & Approved By Board of Water Commissioners 11/7/2016
Backhoe Rate:		\$100.00/hr.
Water Restriction Violations:		1" notice - written warning N/C 2nd notice - \$50.00 3rd notice - \$100.00 Each additional notice - \$100.00
Meter Tampering:		\$1,000.00/per offense and water usage averaged and repairs labor or triple amount of damages whichever is greater
Backflow Testing Charge		10% Admin Fee for Backflow

Effective 7/1/20

Brenda

From: Carolyn Smart <csmart@townsend.ma.us>
Sent: Wednesday, June 3, 2020 3:41 PM
To: Brenda Boudreau; Terry Walsh
Subject: FW: Public Meeting

FYI

From: Adam J. Costa [mailto:adam@mtclawyers.com]
Sent: Wednesday, June 3, 2020 11:32 AM
To: Carolyn Smart <csmart@townsend.ma.us>
Subject: RE: Public Meeting

Carolyn:

Is it a public hearing; or just a public meeting? Brenda's e-mail references a public "meeting." Yours references a public "hearing."

The Commission can conduct a public hearing via Zoom, under the Governor's order; and can invite questions in advance, by a specific deadline. HOWEVER, allowing for the submittal of questions in advance is NO substitute for the "active, real-time participation" that the order requires for public hearings. So, in addition to permitting the advance submittal of questions, the Commission must allow the public to participate in real-time, via Zoom, and ideally with a means to connect telephonically as well (for those without a computer or reliable internet access).

A public meeting isn't accompanied by the same real-time participation requirements. However, alternative means of public access to (but not necessarily participation in) the meeting must still be provided.



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