

Town of Farmingdale

Sewer Committee Meeting Minutes

February 19, 2015

The Farmingdale Sewer Committee met on Thursday February 19, 2015 at 6:30 p.m. at the Farmingdale Town Office.

Members Present: Mike Pelletier, Ben Sanborn, Dana Parker and Jim Grant (select Board Liaison)

Others Present: David Sirois, Nancy Grant, Julian Beale, Rose Webster, Chris Ellis, Bob Antognoni, Gary Choate, Russell Hubbard

Mike Pelletier called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

✚ Ben made a motion to accept the minutes of 1/15/2015 as written

✚ Dana 2nd the motion

✚ Vote 3-0-0

Discussion: On 2/10/2015 the Town Office received a call from a plumber who was working at the Hi-Hat Restaurant on Maine Ave. in Farmingdale. He stated that the Hi-Hat sewer was backing up and that he had checked all the Hi Hat lines and was sure it was not their problem. Mike Pelletier was called and he called to have Ted Berry Co. come down and camera the lines and find the problem. Ted Berry found that there was nothing wrong in the town lines and that it was a result of grease in the lines of the Hi-Hat. The Town of Farmingdale has received a bill in the amount of \$1,788.40 and should be receiving a video of what they saw in the lines. This video will be forwarded to the Town of Farmingdale's Sewer Committee. The Sewer Committee felt that perhaps the owner of the Hi Hat should reimburse the Town of Farmingdale for the Ted Berry Co. invoice. They felt that if it was not for the call from the Hi Hat there would have been no need for an emergency call to Ted Berry Co. to camera the lines and create this invoice. This bill may be forwarded to the Hit-Hat for reimbursement. *(See Attached section of Utility Ordinance)*

Conclusion or Action to be taken: This invoice was approved and will be paid. Natalie was asked to call Ted Berry Co. and ask if they could give us a more detailed description of the work that they did. Mike Pelletier will draft a letter to send to the Hi Hat owner in regards to this emergency call and the bill that it has created. The Sewer Committee will inform the owner of the Hi-Hat that per the Farmingdale Ordinance the restaurant is required to have a grease trap. *(See Attached section of Utility Ordinance)*

Discussion: Northern Ave pump station has had a lot of problems in the past month. Pat Jackson was called several times to pump the station out and found that there were heavy pads being put into the sewer system, this was stopping the pumps from working. The pumps have been turned up to full speed and a reverse switch has been installed. Julian explained that the pump stations are designed to run at full speed or variable speeds.

Conclusion Action to be taken: Julian explained that the reverse process has been working so far and the change in the start up to full speed has also made a difference. The Select Board along with the Sewer Committee will be sending out a letter to the residents about the problems that are occurring and hoping that this will help resolve the problem.

Discussion: Letter to the users of the Northern Ave. pump station was signed by the Sewer Committee.

Conclusion or Action to be taken: Natalie will send this letter out as soon as possible.

Discussion: Two pumps have been delivered and will be stored at the Hallowell/Litchfield Fire Station. These will be used as spare pumps if needed

Conclusion or Action to be taken: Julian will check to make sure these pumps are the same as we have currently in case we need to replace one.

Discussion: The Committee went over Julian's report of the Dale Street spill. There is also a Notice of Violation that was sent to the Sewer Committee stating that they had 60 days to produce an SOP. This SOP needs to be written and sent to DEP for review no later than April 9, 2015.

Conclusion or Action to be taken: The Sewer Committee will draft an SOP at the next meeting and have the Select Board sign before April 9, 2015.

Discussion: FCC frequency change was discussed.

Conclusion or Action to be taken: Mike explained that this is being worked on to be resolved as quickly as possible.

Discussion: Russell Street pump station is not clear of snow and ice. The other 4 pump stations need to be shoveled as well as making the covers accessible for maintenance.

Conclusion or Action to be taken: Jim explained that he has talked with the Road Commissioner and that the stations will be plowed and shoveled and sanded at the end of every storm. Julian said that in the event that he has to call out Ellis Construction to work on a pump station he will also call McGee to plow. These stations will also need to be shoveled and covers salted so that they can be removed for maintenance.

Discussion: There was discussion about how to allow Pat Jackson to dump back into our system after pumping.

Conclusion or Action to be taken: Julian will contact Pat Jackson to see what type of adapter is needed to be able to dump back into the Farmingdale sewer system.

Discussion: There was discussion about the Foggy Bottom Marina's Sewer Bill. Mr. Alexander was charge 18 for a flow charge because he did not call in a reading for the 4th qtr. It was decided after reading an agreement between Mr. Alexander and the Town of Farmingdale that Mr. Alexander should indeed be charged the 18 for flow for the 4th quarter and that he should not be charged a flow charge for the 1st quarter. The Sewer Committee determined that if Mr. Alexander was not happy with this agreement than he could come in and renegotiate the original agreement.

Conclusion or Action to be taken: Natalie will call Mr. Alexander and explain that the flow charge will remain at 18 and that there will be no flow charged during the first quarter. Note: This will be further discussed at the next sewer meeting.

Discussion: Shirley Wright called and wanted to know if she could have the flow charge of 5 taken off of her bill because she was not in the home at that time, she was in a nursing home. She is willing to pay the \$46.69 which is the basic charge but would like the remaining amount of flow taken off.

Conclusion or Action to be taken: the Sewer Committee agreed to do an abatement for the flow charge of 5 and allow Mrs. Wright to only pay the \$46.69. Natalie will write up the abatement and bring to the next sewer committee meeting. Natalie will also call Mrs. Wright and let her know of the decision.

Discussion: The Sewer Committee reviewed a note that was sent in with a bill requesting an abatement that was filed in 2013.

Conclusion or Action to be taken: The Sewer committee said that the early abatement was denied because the account was in arrears if this account is brought up currant then the abatement will be processed. Natalie will draft a letter for Ms. Chaplin.

Discussion: A Relator sent a letter in and asked if a piece of property know as Option Rentals was sold if the new owner would be able to hook into the sewer system. This went to the Select Board as well as the Sewer Committee.

Conclusion or Action to be taken: The Sewer Committee with the Select Board present agreed that this line would remain abandoned and that Option Rental would not be able to hook into the Town of Farmingdale's

sewer system.

Discussion: Russell Hubbard asked why the Town of Farmingdale charges for units as well as flow Mr. Hubbard stated that most towns only charge for flow. Mr. Hubbard would like to see the Town of Farmingdale charge only for flow. Mike Pelletier disagreed that most towns only charge for flow and that the way Farmingdale does bill out for the sewer services is not wrong just different, and that other towns use the same method as Farmingdale to bill out their sewer services.

Discussion: David Spoke to the Sewer Committee about some concerns he had. On February 4, 2015 an invoice was submitted by Ellis Construction for payment. This bill was approved by the Sewer Committee Chair as well as the Plumbing Inspector for the Town of Farmingdale. The Select Board chose to hold off on signing this invoice because they wanted better clarification. David explained that the Select Board did nothing wrong by requesting this information. What David was concerned about is the communication between the Sewer Committee, Select Board and the Contractor. David had to call the contractor to discuss the problem that they had with the invoice and to call Ellis Construction out for an emergency call for the pumps at Northern Ave which were down and not working. David explained that if he has a problem with a contractor's invoice he will speak with the contractor directly. David feels that Jim Grant the current liaison for the Sewer Committee is not communicating with the contractors as he should be. David respectfully asked Jim to step down from the Sewer Committee as the liaison and allow David to be the liaison for the Sewer Committee. David felt that if Jim did not want to step down as liaison then he would need to do a better job in the future with communication with the contractors that are working for this town.

Nancy spoke to the Sewer Committee and explained that she was one who questioned the bill from Ellis construction she also said she question a lot of bills and that Rose often helps to answer her questions. The question on the Ellis Construction bill was why it required 4 men to work on the pumps. Chris Ellis from Ellis Construction was here to answer the question. Chris stated that there could be problems with pulling a pump or getting the pump back on the tracks or if the pump can not be pulled then they would have to enter the pit and this would require confined space. Chris said that anytime when pumps are being pulled and there is a possibility there may be confined space that 4 men is required.

The Sewer Department may receive a fine for a spill because of Scherbon. There was a lot of discussion on charges that the Sewer Committee would be paying. Chris Ellis explained that there is a lot of sand and gravel getting into the sewer system and that this is very bad for the system. Chris wants to know if there is any way to hold Scherbon responsible for any problems that we have with the system because of them.

Mike explained that about a month ago Harlan Pease went to the meter pit and calibrated it. Mike thought that Ellis construction should go into the meter pit again sometime in March. Bob Antognoni who was present when the calibration was done said that we should be going down in the meter pit periodically to ensure everything is ok with the partial flume. There was a lot of discussion on how to keep up with the system and keep it working as efficiently as possible. Mike explained that Harlan told him that we have a good system but we need to be more aggressive in keeping it clean. Bob Antognoni said that Harlan is the only one at this time that can reset the eye to zero Bob will look into how much the tool that is needed costs and that someone can be trained to reset the eye.

Jim Grant explained that he will not be stepping down as the liaison for the Sewer Committee at this time. Jim has been the liaison for 18 months and feels that he has good working relationship with the Committee.

David feels that this has turned into a crisis situation and the entire Select Board needs to make amends with the contractor "Ellis Construction". If Jim is to remain the liaison Jim will need to be able to answer questions such as the one that was questioned on 2/4/2015 and if does not know the answer then he will need to contact the contractor and ask the questions that are needed.

The Select Board has the right to take 20 days to pay any bill that is turned in. Rose explained that this is true but the expectations of the contractors in this town are that they can bring a bill in on Wednesday and get paid on Thursday. Rose explained that she has changed things so that bills should be in no later than Monday to be presented to the Select Board.

The Sewer Committee was asked if they have a copy of the contract between Ellis Construction and the Town of Farmingdale. Ben was the only one that did not have a contract on hand but will make sure that he gets one, the others on the committee did have one and did read it.

Natalie asked for clarification on invoices that would need to break down in the description.

1. If a contractor that the Town of Farmingdale does not have contract with then we need to make sure that in the description of the invoice that it is broke down to show how the bill is arrived at.
2. If an invoice is turned in from someone who hold a valid contract with the Town then as long as they a billing per the rates in the contract then there is no need to breakdown any further.

(However the Select Board always has the right to question any and all invoices)

Discussion: Approval of bills – bills will be scanned and sent out to all the Sewer Committee members, Julian Beale and the Select Board. Mike Pelletier will make the decision for the Sewer Committee as to whether an invoice will be paid or not.

Discussion: A new letter needs to be drafted for the PUC mapping was recommended by the Sewer committee at an earlier meeting. Ben will draft this letter and email to Rose for the Select Boards signature

Discussion: There was some discussion about how to address customers who are in arrears with their sewer bills. This will be discussed again at the next Sewer Committee meeting on March 19, 2015.

Conclusion or Action to be taken:

Discussion: Rose had some extensive excel spreadsheets that had a lot of information (see attached). Rose went over these figures with the Sewer Committee to help them better understand the position that the Sewer Department is in. The Sewer Committee agreed to look this over and come to a decision about the sewer rates at the next meeting on 3/19/2015.

Minutes Approved:

Date

Michael Pelletier

Ben Sanborn

Mike LaPlante

Dana Parker