

**Town of Ashburnham
Water Sewer Commission Minutes
February 11, 2020 6:00 pm
Lower Level Meeting Room**

Call to Order

Leo Moved to accept agenda for February 11, 2020, Charlie seconded

Leo moved to approve minutes of January 21, 2020, Charlie seconded.

Chairman Comments: Chair sent an email asking if the select board appointed Dave MacDonald as the fifth member of the board. Mr. MacDonald was voted unanimously by the Commissioners to fill the empty spot last meeting.

No response to that email was forthcoming. Mr. McDonald was in attendance tonight as a nonvoting member.

Chair refused to sign the documents for the Water Usage Charges. **Emails seem to go unanswered?**

Water Usage Paperwork document was then signed by the remainder of the board.

New Business

Marijuana Grow facilities. No request for any water / sewer connections at this time.

Gardner Invoices. Two bills were sent to Ashburnham. One for Gardner lowering their wet well and pumping 4000 gallons of sewage on a holiday. Ashburnham D.P.W. director has decided that this bill is not to be paid as this is their infrastructure.

The invoice for cleaning fats and solids in the Westminster St. wet well in the amount of 1806.75 will be paid

Naukeag Hospital Site: The property has gone up for auction. The commission requested almost a year ago that the previous Town Administrator review the possibility of acquiring the land and building. A meeting was set up by the T/A and David Murphy owner of the site. The T/A was convinced by Mr. Murphy that the property would be revitalized and reopened. No action was taken at that time.

Chair feels the town Water/Sewer or Ashburnham / Winchendon Joint Water Authority should take / own the land for wetland protection. Discussion revolved around the loss of taxes involved in possible taking of land, how many homes could be put there and the problems new owners could encounter providing viable septic systems. No vote taken.

Depot Rd Property: The local Land Trust requested that the Burrageville Dam area owned by the Joint Water Authority be turned over to them and set up as recreation land.

This area was investigated and special legislation enacted at the state level years ago to provide another water source for the towns of Ashburnham and Winchendon. During the severe drought in the 60's Corps of Engineers pumps were brought in and water transferred to the

headwaters of the ponds in Fitchburg providing enough water to feed Fitchburg's mills. At the time the area was thought of as a prime source of groundwater for the two towns. The project never materialized.

Discussion revolved around losing that resource and whether or not the deed could be written and recorded reverting the dam back to the AWJWA in a time of a water shortage crisis in the distant future. The current load on Upper Naukeag Lake is sufficient to handle both towns at this time.

The proponents were not at the recent AWJWA meeting and the request was tabled.

Charlie made a motion to recuse a customers water or sewer bill. This woman took care of her husband for 5 years being unable to work and has asked for relief. These Abatement's or motions are currently taken care of by our D.P.W. director. Motion was tabled and the request will be looked into.

No Old Business

Motion to adjourn 7:07 pm
Motion by Leo second Charlie

Respectfully Submitted
George E Cornwall Jr.