

**TOWN OF WINDHAM
WATER DISTRICT MEETING
371 State Route 296, Hensonville, NY**

JANUARY 23, 2020

Present: Pres/Treas: Thomas F. Hoyt
Commissioners: Wayne Van Valin, Ian Peters, Stephen Walker & Kurt Goettsche
Secretary: Bonnie Poehmel

Also Present: Water Superintendent Kyle Schwarz, Town Attorney Larry Gardner, Highway Superintendent Gary Thorington, Police Chief Tor Tryland, Karen Hansen, Gail Nichol森, Drew Shuster and Mike Ryan Mountain Eagle

Absent: John Brust Delaware Engineering

The President called the meeting to order at 8:03 p.m.

THE MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER 26, 2019 WATER DISTRICT MEETING were approved as typed on a motion by Commissioner Peters, 2nd by Commissioner Walker, with 3 in favor, two abstained Supervisor Hoyt and Councilman Goettsche as their terms had not started yet.

1.DELAWARE ENGINEERING: John Brust was not present. Supervisor Hoyt met with Kyle Schwarz Water Superintendent and Josh Vital Cedarwood Environmental Services to discuss who controls what part of the daily operations for the water system during the day, like checking the chlorine, water complaints and fixing water breaks, as to whose responsibilities it is.

2.WATER SUPERINTENDENT REPORT: Water Superintendent Kyle Schwarz was present. We currently have 6 water meters and he would like permission to purchase more water meters. The water meters are purchased with six meters in a box, we will probably need about 20 water meters to go with the new water line from the Thompson House to Mitchell Hollow Road. Commissioner Peters has suggested to purchase \$7,000.00 more in water meters. A motion to approve the purchase of \$7,000.00 in water meters was made by Commissioner Peters, 2nd by Commissioner Van Valin, with all in favor. Kyle still has 3 one-inch meters. Kyle has a request to remove the old fire hydrant by the new units on 70 County Route 65, Hensonville; the hydrant on the sidewalk is in the way of the parking area. Supervisor Hoyt would like to table that request as we are still in the winter season and nothing can be done till spring. The new units are hooked up and the water is active to the building. Kyle believes all their water meters in the units are hooked up. Kallman's, State Route 296, their water line was broken apart and it has been fixed. Kyle has the remaining hydrant markers that still need to be done.

3. WATER DISTRICT RESOLUTION #2 OF 2020: to decrease the Metered Billing for January – June in the amount of \$1,622.53 and the Unmetered Billing for January-June in the amount of \$777.95 due to the following adjustments: Reason: Incorrect meter reading; Account #W245 Malegiannakis, Nicholas; Total Due: \$1,089.32. Reason: Became metered in August but did not notify us; Account #230 Schreiber, Antonia; Total Due: \$0.00. A motion to approve this resolution was made by Commissioner Peters, 2nd by Commissioner Goettsche, with all in favor. WATER DISTRICT RESOLUTION #3 OF 2020: the following resolution was proposed to transfer funds to balance the Water District Accounts for 2019. A motion to approve was made by Commissioner Peters, 2nd by Commissioner Van Valin, with all in favor. WATER DISTRICT RESOLUTION #4 OF 2020: the following resolution regarding the Water District Fund for the year 2019 to authorize the President/Treasurer to use \$4,299.85 from Unanticipated Revenue to balance the accounts in the Water District as per Water District Resolution #3 of 2020. A motion to approve was made by Commissioner Goettsche, 2nd by Commissioner Peters, with all in favor.

4. WINDHAM FIRE DISTRICT #1 Account #W219 hydrant rent water billing 2020. Commissioner Peters would like to recommend to the Board to approve the unmetered account to \$3,500.00 as an annual billing fee for the hydrants. A motion to approve the annual fee of \$3,500.00 was made by Commissioner Peters, 2nd by Commissioner Walker, with all in favor. Supervisor Hoyt stated, the Water District owns the hydrants. Should there be property damage to a hydrant like a driver running over it, the cost of repair will be billed by the Water District to the driver for the hydrant damage. WATER DISTRICT RESOLUTION #5 OF 2020: to decrease the Unmetered Billing for January-June in the amount of \$1,739.71 due to the following adjustment: Reason: Town Board decision set annual fee; Account #W219 Windham Fire District #1 Hydrants Total Due \$3,500.00. A motion to approve was made by Commissioner Peters, 2nd by Commissioner Walker, with all in favor.

PUBLIC COMMENT CONCERNING WATER BILL: Karen Hansen was present. Karen received her property taxes only three weeks ago. On her bill is a line item for the Water District Debt Service of \$378.00. She feels that a letter should have gone out ahead of time telling water district water users of this extra increased charge, as a lot of people may not have the extra money or have planned to have this extra money when paying for their property taxes. She feels this was not fair and a notice should have gone out giving people more time to pay at a later date than to come up with the extra money for the debt service now on their property taxes. Fortunately, Karen has the extra money but there is a lot of chatter in her restaurant that they do not have the money, what are they to do? If these people do not have the money to pay in full then a lien goes on their property. Karen is sure that this extra debt service was known in advance last year by the Water District and the water users should have been notified then! The people who do not have the extra money for this debt service will be the ones who will suffer. We all understand that this debt service will have to be paid. Karen would like to know where the Water District is? From where to where? Commissioner Peters we have a map where you see color that is the water line; the intersection on State Route 296 the top of Hensonville is one end, covers the core area of Hensonville, the triangle and a little bit outside of it (this was the old Hensonville water district). In the last two years we have hooked the small system into the larger Windham system. We have a line here that runs all the way down State Route 296, over to Windham, left down South Street, all the way to Windham Mountain, it crosses the golf course down into town. The core of Windham is covered from GNH Lumber, Catskill Mountain Country Store to Mitchell Hollow Road. The water district is bigger than the water service area. Karen asked if she could get a copy of the water map? Commissioner Peters will get her a map, as it is public information. Commissioner Peters “there are two categories of expenses to running the water district, there is the operational costs, the electricity, things that go into it, testing, supplies, etc. The second part is cost of capital, we have a loan that we took at zero percent interest, we are paying just principle on that loan, it was a one-time deal and we borrowed at zero percent interest which is phenomenal for the town. In the past there was not a lot of debt in the water district but now we have done over \$7 million dollars’ worth of upgrades and we borrowed at zero percent interest for that. The debt piece is now larger and is with improvements, like quality of water; and it links the two systems and there is a ton of benefits for doing that. There were improvements and expansions we had to do. Part of that expansion we added a large number of people to the water district and we are going to be adding more in the coming months.” Supervisor Hoyt added “to the service area of the water district.” Commissioner Peters, “more people will be serviced in the water district, State Route 23 to Mitchell Hollow to State

Route 296, where the Catholic Church is, and the new Hickory Hill Market, we are adding that corridor. As we go forward there will be more water customers added to the water district. The debt pie is set, this is the highest debt we are going to have to pay on a per account basis that will go down over time. Karen would like to know how many people are paying this debt? Supervisor Hoyt 470 people are paying. Karen would like to know about Ski Windham? Commissioner Peters "They are on this water district. They are a special account. They are by far the highest paying account and we have an interconnect agreement with them. They have their own water system and we have our own water system we agree to support each other. If we have an issue, they will provide us water and if they have an issue, we will provide them water. In addition to that agreement, they agreed to pay \$30,000.00 a year to have that agreement. They are a large source of revenue to the water district. Supervisor Hoyt, "they are in the water district. Their water line is hooked into our water line. Our line only goes to their base lodge reservoir". Ski Windham has a water meter and it is read, they are paying us \$30,000.00 plus they are getting charged for the water that they use and then for every piece of property they have within the service area they are getting charged that debt service of \$378.00. Karen "can't understand how someone who is not hooked up be in the water district?" Supervisor Hoyt "should they have a serviceable main in front of their house, whether they have a house or a vacant piece of land they are being charged that \$378.00 debt service. Even if they do not use the water. The confusion is with last year there was a half-year debt service charge sent out on their water usage bill. This time it is levied on your property taxes. Karen "would like to know how the water bill works?" Supervisor Hoyt, the water rates "**sets the biennial per gallon water rate for all gallons between 12,501 and 37,500 at \$0.0085 and the gallon water rate for all gallons above 37,500 at \$0.0094 per gallon.**" (see **Water District Resolution #14 of 2019**). The water charge is based on usage and the volume you use. The average person per day uses 55,000 gallons of water. The water bill pays for meter reading, fixing/repair, electric to run the pumps, treatment of four different chemicals, any equipment that is needed i.e. if a well pump burns out. If you only use 10,000 gallons of water you will only be charged for the 10,000 gallons." Supervisor Hoyt told the history of the water district back in 1998 when he first started to where it is current date. This debt service will only get lower as time goes on, this is a 40-year note. Karen is paying roughly \$950 a year in water that is a lot of money and she is aware that this had to be done, but she is not the only one paying a large sum of money for their water bill. Karen "this came out of nowhere. We all knew the work was being done. We just did not know how much and now we are stuck with this big bill. And there is nothing that can be done, because it has to be taken care of, we understand that." Karen feels bad for the people that are just getting by and she was just notified 3 weeks ago when she received her property tax bill. Supervisor Hoyt has made new committee liaisons Councilman Peters for the Planning Board and Councilman Goettsche for the Chamber of Commerce. Supervisor Hoyt, "because we have lost communications within our community and we have to build that communications back if we ever have another project people know this is going forward. In fact, this charge for the property was adopted on February 28, 2019. But it was not communicated to the people that this was going to happen...it's been out there for eleven months...the way the tax bill is set up, it is set up through the county." Communications should have been better when the charge was adopted February 28, 2019 (see **Water District Resolution #4 of 2019**). Supervisor Hoyt "we are pledging today that in the future with the projects within the town for my term here as the Town Supervisor there is going to be a lot of transparency, people have questions or if we are going to do something, we will make sure that Mr. Ryan gets it covered in the paper so it is out there for the people." Mike Ryan Mountain Eagle asked permission to speak, Town Supervisor Hoyt goes on the WRIP radio every two weeks just before the next board meeting to speak about up-coming topics. Supervisor Hoyt "is trying to keep people in the loop, he is going to do his best to get the information out to the people." Supervisor Hoyt thanked Karen Hansen for coming.

WATER DISTRICT WARRANT #1 contained vouchers #1-14, totaling \$8,347.53 was audited and approved for payment on a motion by Commissioner Goettsche, 2nd by Commissioner Van Valin, with all in favor.

WATER DISTRICT PAYROLL WARRANT #1-P (printed 01/03/2020) contained 2 claims, totaling \$638.40 was audited and approved for payment on a motion by Commissioner Van Valin, 2nd by Commissioner Goettsche, with all in favor.

WATER DISTRICT PAYROLL WARRANT #2-P (printed 01/17/2020) contained 1 claim, totaling \$76.13 was audited and approved for payment on a motion by Commissioner Van Valin, 2nd by Commissioner Goettsche, with all in favor.

The meeting adjourned at 8:38 pm on a motion by Commissioner Peters, 2nd by Commissioner Walker, with all in favor.

PRES /TREAS

COMMISSIONER

COMMISSIONER

COMMISSIONER

COMMISSIONER

SECRETARY

OFFICIAL