



CITY OF DOVER

DOVER UTILITIES COMMISSION - MINUTES

Meeting Type: Regular Meeting
Meeting Location: City Hall, Council Conference Room
Meeting Date: **March 22, 2021**
Meeting Time: **6:00 pm**

Members Present: Vice Chairman Jay Stephens, Bob Berry, Dennis Munson, Bill Davis

Excused Members Absent: Chairman Bret Carmichael, Otis Perry

Unexcused Members Absent: Mark Moeller

Alternate Members Present: Gregory Bird

Staff Present: John Storer, Community Services Director, William Boulanger, Deputy Director, Jennifer Bretz, Recording Secretary, Tom Zimmerman, Media Services

1. Call to Order

2. User's Forum

3. Approval of Minutes of December 28, 2020

Motion: Berry made the motion to approve the minutes, Munson seconded.

Vote: U/a

4. Abatement Requests

A. 100 Cocheco Street - Steven Myers

Applicant, Steven Myers, stated that his water and sewer bill is typically \$50-\$60 per quarter. When he received his March 16 bill the total was \$264.05. He thought it was a mistake that would correct itself with the next bill. When he received the next bill, he saw that it was even higher. He contacted the Water and Sewer Billing Office. A new meter was installed. The new meter reading was lower. He is requesting an abatement of \$500.00 due to a bad meter.

Berry asked if the toilets were checked.

Myers stated that the upstairs toilet has been completely shut off.

Boulanger stated that when the meter crew went to the home, they noted that the tank water was at the fill line.

Myers stated that his billing has returned to \$50.00.

Munson stated that he had gone to the home to check the fixtures and did not find any leaks.

Motion: Berry made the motion to grant the abatement for \$190.00 as well as the second abatement request the applicant will be submitting, Munson seconded.

Vote: U/a

B. 7 Riverdale Avenue - Thomas R. Jost

Applicant, Thomas Jost, stated that he received a letter from the city stating that his meter was running for 24 hours on a couple of occasions. After speaking with a couple of different people from the city, he realizes that the reading is a pretty manual process. His biggest hope is that if he's not approved he would like to know what can be done to help residents in same situation. He understands that there is a clause in the DUC rules and Regulations. He's curious to how many people assess their toilets for leaks?



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He didn't realize that his toilet was leaking but he also wasn't notified until a month after the leak showed up.

Boulanger stated that the Beacon software doesn't alert staff immediately. The city notifies the resident as a courtesy if/when they spot a high reading. It is unfortunate but the city doesn't have enough staff to monitor for high usage every day.

Just asked if there was a plan for the city to acquire better software to see readings more frequently.

Stephens stated that he was one of the original people to have a Galaxy meter installed. Boulanger sent him a usage log showing that his toilet was leaking.

Boulanger stated that have not had the opportunity to speak with the software/meter contractor regarding all of the different usages and alerts.

Berry stated that he's been on the DUC for a few years. He's a former city councilor, former mayor who recently moved into a brand new house. He has also been a huge proponent of having the new billing system and new software. His house runs on geothermal. He and his spouse typically use 10-11 units per quarter. He suddenly received bill for 20 units. He found out that he had three leaking toilets in a brand new house. He never heard any of them running. The other issue is he has a whole house humidifier. During the winter months it draws water. There was a spike that showed up on his Galaxy meter reading. Boulanger helped him to understand that since it was a dry winter, the humidifier was constantly drawing water to humidify the home. The board is working on a process to help residents know how to spot an issue earlier. He will continue to push the issue of billing and notifying customers of issue.

Motion: Berry made the motion to deny the abatement, Bird seconded.

Vote: U/a

C. 48 Polly Ann MHP - John D. Cassell II

Applicant, John Cassell, stated that when he purchased the home, the previous owner notified him that the meter was broken. He contacted Water Sewer Billing. They arranged to replace the meter on July 7. When he received his first bill, it was estimated for \$687.00. He doesn't understand where the discrepancy came from. He spoke to the previous owner. The previous owner had been behind but he was paying every month.

Boulanger stated the reason there is an issue is because the previous owner never ordered a final reading prior to moving out. Typically, the bill follows the previous owner when they notify the city that they're moving out. This way, the new owner will start out fresh. A final reading was never ordered and money was owed on the old meter.

Discussion ensued on the importance of a final reading prior to a transfer of property.

Motion: Berry made the motion to abate 50% of the amount owed, Munson seconded.

Vote: U/a



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D. 20 Reyner's Brook Drive - Jim Pixley

Applicant, Jim Pixley, stated that he had received a large bill. The average usage for his household, with irrigation, is typically 65 units. During the winter months, the average usage is 30 units. He received a bill showing a usage of 80 units when it should have been closer to 30 units.

Boulanger stated that the bill in question was for a longer billing period. When you look at the billing history, the usage is in line with past usage.

Motion: Davis made the motion to abate \$300, no one seconded.

Discussion: Berry stated that he would like to review the applicant's usage before agreeing to Davis's motion.

Vote: None

Berry stated that the resident turned off their irrigation.

Motion: Berry made the motion to abate \$221.60, Davis seconded.

Vote: U/a

E. 14 Cottonwood Drive - Andrew Raynor

Applicant withdrew their abatement.

5. Reports

A. Abatement Review Team Report

The report was reviewed and discussed by Staff.

B. Utilities Report

The report was reviewed and discussed by Staff.

C. Finance Report

The report was reviewed and discussed by Staff.

Motion: Munson made the motion to approve the reports, Berry seconded.

Vote: U/a

6. New Business

Two drought updates were distributed to each member. (attached)

Boulanger went over the updates.

7. Old Business

8. Areas of Concern

9. Next Meeting Date

April 19, 2021

10. Adjournment

Motion: Munson made the motion to adjourn at 8:11 p.m., Bird seconded.

Vote: U/a