



CITY OF DOVER

DOVER UTILITIES COMMISSION - MINUTES

Meeting Type: Regular Meeting
Meeting Location: 271 Mast Road, Dover, NH
Meeting Date: **Monday, November 14, 2016**
Meeting Time: **6:00 pm**

Members Present: Chairman Otis Perry, Vice Chair Jay Stephens, Bret Carmichael, Dennis Munson, Mark Moeller

Members Absent: Norman Allie

Staff Present: Bill Boulanger, Superintendent of PW & Utilities, Dean Peschel, Environmental Consultant, Jennifer Bretz, Recording Secretary

1. Call to Order

Meeting was called to order at 6:02 p.m.

2. User's Forum

No residents present

3. Approval of Minutes of October 17, 2016

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

Vote: U/a

4. Abatement Requests

A. 21 Townsend Drive - Bhargav Musunuri

Boulanger stated that this abatement had, originally, been heard on August 15, 2016. The recorder failed to record the meeting. This abatement was one that the board wanted to grant relief on pending a meter test. The meter test was completed on 10/28/2016 and tested out at 100.16%.

Carmichael stated that he believes the applicant completed their due diligence. A home inspection was completed prior to moving in and he was on a quarterly billing cycle. The applicant was unaware that there was a leak.

Motion: Carmichael made the motion to abate the requested amount, Moeller seconded.

Discussion: Stephens stated that he is not in favor of abating the entire amount. When the resident spoke of the home inspector, he didn't believe that the inspector would check for the leaking toilet.

Perry stated that it seems that if a property owner hires a professional to inspect the property, then the professional should have found the leak.

Motion: Moeller made the motion to amend the abated amount to 50% of the requested amount, Carmichael seconded.

Vote: Perry opposed; Vote passes 4-1

B. 69 Grove Street - Chris Otash

Boulanger stated that the board voted to rehear this abatement at the October 17, 2016 meeting. The board requested that staff find out the average usage. Part of the vote was to find out the average usage which they found to be 48 units. The applicant had a nasty tenant. He eventually had to evict her. She was using drugs and had kept the water running 24/7. When Staff completed an inspection of the property, they did find that the washer was dripping as well.



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Otash stated that the tenant had lived in the apartment for six years. She hadn't paid rent for four months and she was on heroin. He ended up evicting her through the court system. He was awarded damages but the tenant has not paid. After paying over \$2,000.00 to repair the apartment, he received the water bill.

Motion: Moeller made the motion to abate the difference between the average bill and the amount that was billed (\$1,361), Munson seconded.

Discussion: Perry stated that when the board abates a bill the money doesn't go away, it just means that someone else has to pay it. The someone else he's referring to is the rate payers and the system. The board should be very cognizant of that when granting an abatement.

Moeller stated that he sees their role, as a board, to single out those kinds of exceptional circumstances when there are things going on that are not usually before the board and this one was unusual enough with the tenant on heroin intentionally causing harm to this particular landlord. This is an exceptional circumstance and it warrants the exceptional relief.

Vote: Perry, Stephens oppose; Vote passes 3-2

C. 43-45 Atkinson Street - Matthew Mills

Boulanger stated that a meter test was completed today. The meter tested out at 99%.

Applicant stated that they received an unusually high water bill, neither of the owners live at the property. They paid the quarter one bill and checked unit. He could not find anything that was leaking. Both units had the flaps, in the toilet, replaced and all fixtures checked. They believed that all problems were resolved but then they received the second quarter bill.

Boulanger stated that the inspection completed on 6/3/16 found that one toilet, of the three, was leaking.

Mills stated that with his research he found that all three would have had to have been leaking in order for the bill to go up that much.

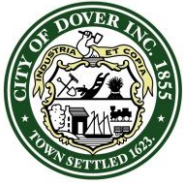
Munson stated that one toilet could have had a large leak.

Carmichael asked when the plumber came to the homes.

Mills stated that the property was inspected in March.

Motion: Stephens made the motion to deny both abatement requests, Munson seconded.

Vote: U/a



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5. Reports

A. Abatement Review Team Report - None

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 accept the reports, Stephens seconded.

Vote: U/a

6. New Business

A. New Meter Discussion - Bret Carmichael

Carmichael stated that the reason for this discussion is that most residents are on a quarterly billing cycle. There is a lot of pain to the resident and a lot of money being lost when residents are not receiving proper notice of a leak. We're trying to conserve as much water as possible so if a couple of months of waste could be saved as well for everyone that seeks an abatement. He proceeded to go over his handout.

Boulanger asked if his goal was to get more people on the monthly cycle. He stated that the board should make a recommendation to City Council to get everyone on a monthly billing basis. That impacts the Water and Sewer Billing office.

Carmichael stated that if they don't change the billing, then there should be a another means of notifying people when they reach a utilization threshold.

Boulanger stated that it would be helpful if that recommendation went to City Council.

Moeller stated that when this is deployed it would allow billing to go out sooner with money coming in sooner.

Discussion ensued on the billing process.

7. Old Business

A. Drought Update

Peschel stated that Director Steele asked him to speak to the board regarding the drought. It is currently in the second class based on the length of time that there has been a shortage of water. There hasn't been a drought like this since the 1960's. It's been almost 60 years since we've had a similar situation. It's important because do not know how long the drought will last. It could last another year. Dover is fortunate because it doesn't utilize a lot of surface water. To give you an example, the town of Durham relies on the Oyster River. There was no water in the Oyster River this summer. The only reason they were able to continue and open the university is because they had done an artificial recharge of the one well they do use.

Discussion ensued on the drought.



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B. Lawn Watering Ban Water

Perry stated that this will not be voted on this evening. Postponed to December meeting.

8. Areas of Concern

9. Next Meeting Date

December 19, 2016

10. Adjourn

Motion: Munson made the made the motion to adjourn at 7:14 p.m., Moeller seconded.

Vote: U/a