

BOARD OF WATER COMMISSIONERS  
MEETING ON: August 21, 2007

Present: Chairman Donald T. Bates, Vice Chairman George Cavanaugh, Director of Water Operations Craig Wiegand, Secretary Kelly Byrnes,

Meeting called to order at 8:15 am.

Abatement approved and signed.

Motion to approve minutes from meeting of July 24, 2007 made by Vice Chairman George Cavanaugh, seconded by Chairman Donald Bates, unanimous vote to approve.

Appointment: **8:30 A.M.-Mr. Bernard Sykes** of 27 Saquatucket Bluffs Road came before the Board to discuss water consumption history occurring over last eleven months. Mr. Sykes described his relationship with the Harwich Water Department over the many years he has lived in Harwich. He currently lives at 27 Saquatucket Bluffs Road and occupies the residence alone. The house has five bedrooms and five bathrooms. Mr. Sykes explained to the Commissioners that he owns several properties throughout the Town and has never had any problems with the water bills. Mr. Sykes gave the Board members and Director of Water Operations Wiegand a brief history of his life and went on to further explain that he is seventy-eight years old and has a multitude of health problems. In 2004, Mr. Sykes had a heart attack and as a result had a pace maker installed. In April of 2006, he had a full hip replacement. Mr. Sykes stressed these dates because it was at these times that no one was occupying the property and for this reason there is no way such high consumption could have been used. The Board was given in their packets a detailed outline of the events and correspondence between the Water Department and Mr. Sykes from October 2006 through June 2006. In October 2006, Mr. Sykes explained that he left for Florida and the house had been unoccupied ever since. He did have a caretaker look over the property periodically, but never had any renters. On October 11, 2006, received letter from HWD explaining that 194,000 gallons of water had passed through the meter. On December 7, 2006 HWD sent representative to check for leaks and at the time no evidence of leaks were found and the no movement showed on water meter. From October 10, 2006 to December 7, 2006 an additional 89,000 gallons had been used. At the time of the spring billing period, 194,000 gallons of water had been used since billing in the fall. An additional 89,000 gallons had been used since HWD went to property in December 2006. On April 3, 2007 water was turned off at the street per HWD until certified letter was received by HWD from plumber verifying there were no leaks at property. On May 24, 2007, letter was received from Stanford Climate Control explaining that after an inspection of property no leaks were found. Director of Water Operations Wiegand explained that if the water was off at the street how could John Stanford find any leaks and that according to Water Department records, the water was never turned back on at the street. It was discussed by Mr. Sykes that someone did turn the water on because he has been living at the property since May, but he does not know who completed the work. The current balance on Mr. Sykes' account is \$1990.50. Vice Chairman George Cavanaugh explained that the Board would like to further discuss

this matter and when a decision has been reached they would notify Mr. Sykes. The Board thanked Mr. Sykes for coming in and in closing Mr. Sykes asked the Board for their nicest consideration being that no one has been at the property at the time the hundreds of thousands of gallons of water have passed through the meter.

Vice Chairman Cavanaugh explained that given the circumstances and that no leaks have been found at the property, that Mr. Sykes' bill be cut in half. Since the reading obtained in March for billing until another read was obtained on August 10, 2007, only 12,000 gallons had been used. Vice Chairman Cavanaugh feels that the problem has been resolved.

Motion to approve cutting Mr. Bernard Sykes' bill in half made by Vice Chairman George Cavanaugh, motion was seconded by Chairman Donald Bates, unanimous vote to approve.

Correspondence; Director of Water Operations Wiegand discussed with Board letter sent to Mrs. Fletcher of 24 Bayview Road. During hydrant replacement project her irrigation system was damaged. Harwich Water Department crews in an effort to help the homeowner in good faith attempted to repair the damaged pipe, but it was unsuccessful. Mrs. Fletcher contacted Director of Water Operations Wiegand last week requesting that she be reimbursed for these damages and for the repairs she needed to have done. In a letter it was explained to Mrs. Fletcher that her irrigation system fell within the Town road layout and therefore, the Harwich Water Department was not responsible for paying for these damages.

Old/unfinished business; Director of Water Operations asked the Board to make a decision regarding the state of Mr. Raymond Sanzone's water bill for 82 Miles Street. Mr. Sanzone met before the Board disputing his bill on June 5, 2007. High consumption was gathered from the fall billing, his meter had been sent out for testing and came back accurate and there were no evidence of leaks found at the property.

Motion made by Vice Chairman George Cavanaugh to send demand notice to Mr. Sanzone, motion seconded by Chairman Donald Bates, unanimous vote to approve.

New business; Lien list was provided to the Board with a list of customers who have owed money for more than one year. Director of Water Operations Wiegand asked the Board to approve and sign the list.

Motion to approve the lien list made by Vice Chairman George Cavanaugh, seconded by Chairman Donald Bates, unanimous vote to approve. List signed by Board members.

September meeting dates have been scheduled for September 11, 2007 and September 25, 2007. Meeting dates to be posted this week by Secretary Kelly Byrnes.

Vice Chairman George Cavanaugh requested that a letter be sent to Mr. Sykes explaining the Board's decision.

Director of Water Operations report was given by Craig Wiegand. He explained that the hydrant replacement project was going very well. There was an article in the Cape Cod Times this weekend about the hydrant replacement projects. Vice Chairman George Cavanaugh said that it was an excellent article and that it positively portrayed the Harwich Water Department. Director of Water Operations Wiegand gave the Board an update on the water tanks. He received preliminary prices for replacing either the Route 39 or Lothrop water tanks. Prices have gone up quite a bit and we are looking at approximately \$5-\$6 million for a new tank. He explained that he is still looking at the numbers and will have the tanks inspected to see what repairs are needed and find out what the life expectancy of the tanks would be after the repairs have been made. A new tank should last 50-60 years. The Route 39 tank is in the most need of repairs and is in the worst condition of the two tanks. The cost right now is \$2.5 million to rehabilitate both the Lothrop and Route 39 tanks.

Director of Water Operations Wiegand advised the Board on a new program that will be installed at the Water Department. It is an automated messaging service that will send automated messages to certain sections of Town notifying residents during an emergency.

The RFP's are being sent out for the cell towers. Director of Water Operations advised the Board that over the next few weeks different vendors may come in to address the Board.

Next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, September 11, 2007.

Motion to adjourn at 9:15 A.M. made by Vice Chairman George Cavanaugh. Motion seconded by Chairman Donald Bates. Unanimous vote to approve.

Respectfully submitted,

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Donald T Bates, Chairman

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Craig Wiegand, Director of Water Operations

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George Cavanaugh, Vice Chairman

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Kelly Byrnes, Secretary

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Danette Gonsalves, Clerk