



GATE CITY SANITATION AUTHORITY MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 14, 2011
156 E. JACKSON ST.
6:00 PM

I. CALL TO ORDER

Dewey Breeding, Vice Chair called the meeting to order at P.M.

II. ROLL CALL –Town Clerk Kathy Riley

PRESENT: Vice-Chair, Dewey Breeding
Council Member, Roger Cassell
Board Member, Daris Hartsock
Board Member, Rodney Baker
Town Attorney, Michele B. Brooks
Acting Town Manager, Mark Jenkins

ABSENT Chairman, Jim Craft

Others present:

III. CONSENT ADGENDA

- Approval of Bills.
Motion made to approve payment of bills for August, 2011.
Motion by: Board Member, R. Baker 2nd by: Board Member, D. Hartsock
VOTE: Yeas, 3
Nays, 0
Absent 1 – J. Craft
- Approval of Sanitation Minutes
Motion made to approve Minutes for August 10, 2011, with correction.
Motion by: Council Member, R. Cassell 2nd by: Board Member, D. Hartsock
VOTE: Yeas, 3
Nays, 0
Absent 1 – J. Craft

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT - None

V. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Board Member, R. Baker – Discusses statement on User Agreement, “It is the responsibility of the applicant to determine eligibility of sewer service. Refunds will not be provided.”

Vice Chair, D. Breeding – Seems like it would take care of it.

Board Member, R. Baker – Agrees.

Vice Chair, D. Breeding – Asks Town Attorney if she fees if it covers it.

Town Attorney, M. Brooks – I do, puts the responsibility on them. They need to find out if they are not, but may have those after the fact but can be dealt with on a case by case basis.

Council Member, R. Cassell – We discussed setting up a \$15 minimum if the sewer ran in front of your house and you didn’t take it, but was never voted on.

Board Member, R. Baker – Asks if there is a process to identify those individuals or do we already know?

Mayor Jenkins – States there aren’t that many.

Board Member, R. Baker – Asks if all meters are read by the Town employees.

Mayor Jenkins – Yes.

Board Member, R. Baker – Asks when employees are out reading meter, they could identify those individual homes.

Council Member, R. Cassell and Mayor Jenkins – State that Stoney could probably tell who do or don’t.

Town Attorney, M. Brooks – Asks if this is something you would want to do if we can identify those individuals?

Vice Chair, D. Breeding and Mayor Jenkins- Discuss R. Cole being exempt.

Council Member, R. Cassell and Mayor Jenkins – Discuss the trooper who requested to be exempt.

Council Member, R. Cassell – States we’re doing it out at Manville, they’re being charged a monthly fee.

Board Member, R. Baker – Situation where people are paying half, would be a decrease.

Town Attorney, M. Brooks- Asks what the average sewer bill?

Town Clerk, K. Riley - \$15.00 if they stay within 2,000 gallon water usage.

Town Attorney, M. Brooks – If you propose a minimum of \$15.00, pretty much is a wash.

Vice Chair, D. Breeding – Most people are above the minimum.

Board Member, R. Baker – What document is the fees established now and can it be amended?

Council Member, R. Cassell – The Sanitation Board sets the rates and it was 100% of water.

Mayor Jenkins – That is reflected on the billing systems, as far as a hard document.

Board Member, R. Baker – Just an additional layer of the fee schedule, wouldn’t take much to make that change.

Vice Chair, D. Breeding – Is there a problem to let it go as is. Do we really need to get into that?

Board Member, R. Baker – Guess what we are talking about is the fairness of how we are charging the fees. Do we want to continue as is, but believes something should be charged because it adds value to property if it is available, hooked or not.

Board Member, D. Hartsock – If they don’t hook up, that is their choice.

Board Member, R. Baker – We’re charging them whether they’re hooked up or not.

Vice Chair, D. Breeding – Those are the one who come in requesting to be exempt and we take it case by case. We exempt them from further payments. We only had one come in for reimbursement of previous payments at last meeting.

Boards Member, R. Baker – Let me understand if someone has water with sewer running past their house we charge them ½ the water anyway if sewer runs past their house.

Council Member, R. Cassell – It's not 100% if it's available?

Mayor Jenkins - Yes, it's billed directly off the water bill.

Vice Chair, D. Breeding – Asks about old contracts.

Town Attorney, M. Brooks – Could not find anything. Some of that was done back in the 70's.

Council Member, R. Cassell – That is why we are charging minimum water out Red Hill and Manville Road. That grant was based on number of users. If money is not charged, not enough to pay the loan each month.

Board Member, R. Baker – So we do have a water availability ordinance? If a water line runs past your house and they don't hook up

Council Member, R. Cassell – They signed user agreements that they would do it to get the grant.

Town Attorney, M. Brooks – Best of my knowledge, there is no ordinance.

Board Member, R. Baker – Asks again, water runs past your house and you don't take it, you get charge minimum water bill and minimum sewer?

Mayor Jenkins – No.

Council Member, R. Cassell – Not available on Manville Road.

Mayor Jenkins – You have no leverage when they decide not to pay it. Can't say you're going to cut the water off when they don't have water. We have had a few that has done that.

Vice Chair, D. Breeding – Do we need to do a motion approve this as policy or accept what we have.

Board Member, R. Baker – Talking about two different things that about sewer as for refunds.

Vice Chair, D. Breeding – This is for new customers.

Board Member, R. Baker – Yes, this is just putting it in writing.

Vice Chair, D. Breeding – From this day forward.

Board Member, R. Baker – Hate to get into too many layers of this, but could that be included on the bill?

Town Attorney, M. Brooks – Print the same thing on the water/sewer bill?

Board Member, R. Baker – Would eliminate the refund issue. If room on bill, not sure how printing of them works.

Mayor Jenkins – You can add text to the bill, can't you?

Council Member, R. Cassell – Preprinted bills as far as the back?

Town Clerk, K. Riley – We just ordered a bunch.

Town Attorney, M. Brooks – Suggests labels.

Town Clerk, K. Riley – Will be sticking 1,200 labels.

Town Attorney, M. Brooks – Forget about that.

Town Clerk, K. Riley – Don't know how much space we have, but can talk to Judy. Is it the highlighted area?

Town Attorney, M. Brooks – I don't want to speak for Mr. Baker, "It is the responsibility of the applicant to determine eligibility of sewer service. Refunds will not be provided."

Council Member, R. Cassell – Could probably do that in two lines on the bottom. I don't think there is room on the back.

Town Attorney, M. Brooks – Asks if Town Clerk could check on that.

Board Member, R. Baker – Could table that till next meeting.

Council Member, R. Cassell – Discusses the bill format.

Motion made to approve modifications to the user agreement to include that language.

Motion by: Board Member, R. Baker 2nd by Council Member, R. Cassell

VOTE: Yeas, 3
Nays, 0
Absent, 1 – J. Craft

Council Member, R. Cassell – Asks about the \$15.00 minimum rate, do we want to do that or leave it as is?

Vice Chair, D. Breeding – Was to table until next meeting, weren't we?

Board Member, R. Baker – It was tabling the notification on the bill till next meeting and further discusses the subject of minimum rates.

Board Member, D. Hartsock - Feels it would be just a few dollars difference no matter which way.

Council Member, R. Cassell – Billed at 100% of water, there's going to be a lot of difference. Sewer policy is it is 100% of water.

Sanitation Authority Board discusses various requests to be exempt from sewer billing.

Town Attorney, M. Brooks – How would you determine that (those not on sewer). Does Stoney know because he has been doing it so long?

Mayor Jenkins – They can identify most of them, but some that are unknown. Three Council Meetings ago, Mr. Ross complained about sewer problems at two houses in their neighborhood. They went and checked and the sewer problems were because they were on septic. We thought they were on sewer and they thought so too. They were still on septic, never hooked to sewer.

Council Member, R. Cassell – Were they paying sewer?

Mayor Jenkins – They were paying sewer.

Town Attorney, M. Brooks – If we do this, concern in a lot of people saying they have been paying for "X" amount of years and we want our money back.

Vice Chair, D. Breeding – Yes, that's right. Don't want to open a can of worms here.

Board Member, R. Baker – Makes suggestion, get estimate of how many people we are talking about and information about their bill. Need to be careful about not having enough money coming in. Should be a factor, maybe \$30 instead of \$15, need to find out what kind of financial affect this would have.

Mayor Jenkins – It will be a negative impact because everyone is getting charged at least \$15 now.

Board Member, R. Baker – Repeats, before any action is taken, get a list of number of people talking about and if possible what they are paying.

Mayor Jenkins – If we identify the household, we can get an accurate calculation.

Board Member, R. Baker – If we can't identify the households now we're going to have a hard to time identify the households if we do this. If you send something out on the water bills saying, "if you let us know if you have water service and no sewer, we will be adjusting your bill", I think they will find out us. That is the only thing I'm suggesting before we take action.

Vice Chair, D. Breeding – May be better off to let it go as is right now and let them come in and complain and take them as an individual case. This way we can identify who has it and who doesn't have it.

Board Member, R. Baker – Thing right now, not much incentive for them to do that.

Vice Chair, D. Breeding – Don't want to stir up a lot of trouble. Don't want to get half the people coming in saying they have been paying their sewer bill, I want my money back. I don't think there are a lot of people out there in Town that is not on the sewer system. We have exempted 3-4 of that I know of. May be better off to wait and let them come in and tell us and we take it case by case basis. What do you all think about that?

Town Attorney, M. Brooks – Would you like to know the number of people before you make a final decision?

Vice Chair, D. Breeding – Would be a good idea, get an idea of how many people we're talking about.

Board Member, R. Baker – I'll just put that as a request if they are able to come up with that information regardless of which way we decide to go. Let's not change our rates until we know how much it costs.

Town Attorney, M. Brooks – Mr. Danko and I are talking to each other machines. He left a message on my machine, sometime last week, saying I had encouraged him to come. Said I would be happy to meet with him and that he was reluctant to come because he wasn't sure we would have a quorum. I sent another message to him saying we have new members, we have quorum

and have new members who have questions and have not received a response. My last phone call to him was last Monday. I will continue to keep after him.

Council Member, R. Cassell – Why don't you tell him we won't pay another bill until he comes.

Vice Chair, D. Breeding – Did Chris get a bill from him?

Town Attorney, M. Brooks – The last one I think he said was a little late.

Council Member, R. Cassell – About 30 days late.

Town Attorney, M. Brooks – Not like it was. I have talked to Sally Kegley and she has encouraged me to try and work it out with him. Doesn't want to be a part of it unless it becomes contingency.

Board Member, R. Baker – Speaks about a water leak at the 911 building and will probably be asking for an adjustment.

Council Member, R. Cassell – Asks the location of the leak, is it outside of the building?

Board Member, R. Baker – Yes.

Board Member, D. Hartsock – Which side of the meter is it on?

Board Member, R. Baker – I'm afraid on the wrong side.

Vice Chair, D. Breeding – Stoney can check that out.

Board Member, R. Baker – Did come, but determined the power lines run close to the leak. Miss Utility was called to mark everything.

Mayor Jenkins – Asks if it was an external leak?

Board Member, R. Baker – Yes, it's out in the yard.

Mayor Jenkins – It's still leaking?

Board Member, R. Baker – Yes, for a few weeks now.

Mayor Jenkins – They have sounding devices and asks if he wants him to bring a headset and find it?

Board Member, R. Baker – May be a good idea. Wasn't aware they could do that.

Council Member, R. Cassell – Asks Town Attorney if she had a chance to see if we were required to have the Sanitation Board?

Town Attorney, M. Brooks – Did you ask me that? I'm sorry I have no recollection of that.

Council Member, R. Cassell – We have discussed several times having getting several members, to dissolve it and letting Town Council take care of it. You said you'd have to check to see if we were required to have a Sanitation Authority. Was kind of the original plan when we signed with PSA that once they would pretty much run everything.

Vice Chair, D. Breeding – That was talked back then, yes.

Town Attorney, M. Brooks – Don't know if the contract requires it.

Mayor Jenkins – Let's not do it now, we have our members now.

Town Attorney, M. Brooks – I'll have to check that Roger and I'm sorry I forgot if you asked me.

Council Member, R. Cassell – We talked about it when we were having so much trouble getting people. A couple of these gentlemen have expressed their time is short.

Town Attorney, M. Brooks – I'll look into it.

VI. NEW BUSINESS - None

VII. OTHER BUSINESS - None

VIII. ADJOURN

Motion for Board to adjourn to next regularly scheduled Sanitation Meeting on October 12, 2011 at 6:00 p.m.

Motion by: Board Member, R. Baker 2nd by: Council Member, D. Hartsock

VOTE:	Yeas,	3
	Nays,	0
	Absent	0

Chairman, Jim Craft, adjourned the meeting at 6:36 P.M.

Dewey Breeding – Vice-Chair

Kathy Riley – Town Clerk