

**BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS
SEWER COMMISSION
STORMWATER COMMISSION
Meeting Minutes**

Monday, March 7, 2022

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT

Patricia Devine, Chair
Jose Garcia, Member

RECEIVED

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COMMISSIONERS ABSENT

None

Holyoke City Clerk's
Holyoke, MA

ALSO PRESENT

Amie Chrzanowski: Acting General Superintendent
Robert Peirent, City Engineer
Kelly Curran: City of Holyoke Personnel Director
Ryan Allen, Board of Public Works Clerk
Mike Williams: Project Manager, Suez North America Co.
Mike Burke: Director of Operations, Suez North America Co.

1. OPENING OF MEETING

Motion was made by Commissioner Garcia and seconded by Commissioner Devine to open the meeting. Meeting was opened by a 2-0 vote at 5:00pm.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion made by Commissioner Garcia and seconded by Commissioner Devine to approve the previous minutes for the 2/23/22 Board of Public Works meeting. Motion passed by a 2-0 vote.

3. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT- Acting General Superintendent Amie Chrzanowski spoke and gave an update on recent and pending hires for the DPW. It was noted that Amie would like to hire three individuals that had submitted applications. Commissioner Garcia made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Devine to approve the three hires. It was also noted that a mechanic applicant had been given an interview and that the individual was impressive and qualified, and that Amie would like to hire the individual. Motion was made and seconded to offer the individual employment: Motion passed 2-0. Amie Chrzanowski gave overview of Holyoke St. Patrick's race and parade prep including street sweeping and permits.

Commissioner Garcia asked how many vacancies there would be with the new hires: It was noted that there would be 3 HMEO (Heavy Machine Equipment Operator) positions open if all goes well with the hires and background checks etc.

Commissioner Devine asked about random drug testing: It was noted that the employees that have been brought up for random drug tests had either retired or the individuals had moved on from the Holyoke DPW. It was noted that the random drug test is drawn from the employee pool that has been submitted. It was noted that because of this, there was no current employee called for testing the last two months.

It was noted that a DPW staff member had noticed that a resident was struggling with chest pains and that the DPW employee, had called for help and assisted the resident, whom was having a heart attack. It was noted that the resident was extremely grateful and that this was a good example of someone in the DPW staff going above and beyond the call of duty. Commissioner Devine requested that a letter be generated and put into the employees file to reflect this action.

A. Abatements:

1. 1780 Northampton Street: accept abatement for 2/3s to have customer pay 581.25 instead of the full metered amount. Resident Laura Perez spoke and stated that she almost fell out of her seat when she checked the bill. It was noted that there was not anything wrong with the meter but that was noted that there was a repair needed and that she paid for a part for about 9 dollars and that she is hoping that the DPW will follow the footsteps of the water department and allow for the abatement. It was noted 2/3rds plus interest had been abated for water bill. Motion made and seconded to abate the account for the disputed 2/3rds and the interest amount: Motion passed 2-0

Mr. Garcia spoke and noted for the record that the DPW commission does not usually grant abatements and noted that the DPW should not abate when the City is not at fault for increased usage.

2. 1735-1737 Northampton Street: It was noted that the resident had just recently asked to attend the zoom meeting. Motion was made by Commissioner Garcia and seconded by Devine to table the abatement hearing to allow the resident to attend the zoom meeting. Motion passed 2-0

3. 354 Hampden Street: Acting General Superintendent Chrzanowski gave overview of the abatement request noting that the Water Department abated $\frac{1}{4}$ of the bill and the interest. Commissioner Garcia made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Devine to match the abatement approved by the Water Department. Motion passed 2-0

4. 131 Beech Street: Amie Chrzanowski gave information on the abatement but

stated that the amount that requested was very small and just about 5 dollars or so. Motion made by Commissioner Garcia, seconded by Devine to table the abatement request. Motion passed 2-0

B. Shut-off program: Acting Superintendent Chrzanowski spoke and stated that the Water Department gave the green light to DPW to begin shut offs on cycle 1. It was noted that there were accounts outstanding and that arrears accumulating over 200 dollars would trigger the shut-off notices. Chrzanowski estimated that there would be around 140 letters that would be sent out. Chrzanowski also gave overview of the how the shut off system works, and how the various notices are incrementally given out to the people on the shut-off list. Motion made and seconded to make the shut off at 200 dollars or more owed. Motion passed 2-0

PUBLIC WORKS COMMISSIONER DISCUSSION TOPICS

Commissioner Devine (Chair):

4. Suez: It was noted that Mr. Burke had put together service fee breakdowns that was discussed at the previous meeting. It was noted that Mr. Burke had done three years of the breakdowns. Amie Chrzanowski spoke about projections of where the City should be with sewer fee, it was noted that Bill Fuqua had given analysis supported by City Engineer, Bob Peirent, that fee adjustments need to be somewhat continuous to change to meet new financial realities. Commissioner Devine asked Amie to draft a thank you letter to Suez for their presentation.

Commissioner Garcia: No discussion items

BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS - OLD BUSINESS

5. Jourdain Order: Board of Public Works Chair Devine spoke and stated the Commission had done its due diligence on the order and that it was taken up for consideration but that after discussions between the Board and City Engineer Bob Peirent and that it looks like it would not be a good fit and that the program would not be viable. Commissioner Devine asked that a letter be drafted to Councilor Jourdain to spell out the various reasons that the program was deemed unviable. Robert Peirent stated that there are some private companies that offer insurance for these kinds of things in a 3rd party system.

BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS - NEW BUSINESS

Board of Public Works Commissioner Patti Devine spoke and announced that she would be resigning from the Board of Public Works effective April 1st.

Commissioner Garcia spoke about potholes, and made a suggestion that trash men could also report potholes and that this would be a great way to keep an updated inventory of the potholes. Mr. Garcia stated that the trash men could have pad and paper and write down the pothole locations. Motion made and seconded to implement the policy and have trash men report potholes: Motion passed 2-0

SEWER COMMISSION - OLD BUSINESS - None

SEWER COMMISSION - NEW BUSINESS - None

STORMWATER AUTHORITY - OLD BUSINESS – None

STORMWATER AUTHORITY - NEW BUSINESS – None

REQUEST FOR EXECUTIVE SESSION – None

ADJOURNMENT.

Motion made by Commissioner Garcia and seconded by Commissioner Devine to adjourn the meeting. Meeting adjourned at 5:29pm by 2-0 vote.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ryan Allen: Principal Acct. Clerk Holyoke DPW