

**Town of Shaftsbury**  
**Water Board Meeting**

Monday August 7, 2023

In person at Cole Hall and remotely via Zoom

1. Call to Order

The meeting came to order at 5:30 p.m. Present were board members Art Whitman (chair), Mike Cichanowski, Martha Cornwell, Naomi Miller, and Tony Krulikowski. Also present was town administrator David Kiernan. Mr. Whitman asked that an executive session to discuss legal matters be added to the agenda. Ms. Naomi moved to enter executive session. Mr. Krulikowski seconded the motion, which passed 5-0-0. The board entered executive session.

2. Conflict of Interest

No one reported a conflict of interest with any item on the agenda.

3. Minutes

There were none.

4. Abatement Request – Elinor Hyjek

Ms. Hyjek did not appear. Mr. Kiernan said he'd left her three messages.

5. New Service Line - Residence Billing

Mr. Whitman posed a question: When a water line connection must be made across a road, and the road must therefore be dug up, who is responsible for the cost making the connection and of digging up and repairing the road? Mr. Kiernan said the bylaws are ambiguous.

Joshua Brace, water superintendent, described such a situation for a lot next to the cemetery on Grandview upon which a house is being built. There is no connection point, or "curb stop," on the side of the road nearest the house. He said the Town would lay a new water line from the nearest water line to a new curb stop for the new house, at a cost of at least \$2000 for materials and an additional amount for the digging by Mike Slavin. Two or more sections of sidewalk and the road will have to be repaired. Mr. Kiernan said he would like the Select Board to decide what to do in this case, and then to amend the bylaw to remove the existing ambiguity should such a case arise in the future. Mr. Cichanowski moved to have the water department bill the landowner for the costs incurred to install a curb stop on the property of the landowner in question. Ms. Miller seconded the motion. Mr. Brace described the process of laying the new main. He noted that there is no way to detect the location of asbestos cement piping to which the new line will connect, so he will be making a best guess as to where the main is located. The motion passed 5-0-0. Mr. Kiernan will pursue the bylaw change.

6. Billing Issues Fees –Treasurer

Ms. Dexter, treasurer, said that at the last Water Board meeting the board voted to vacate the most recent penalty on all late water bills. She said she tried to figure out how find a way to forgive it in some situations but not in others, but decided that it would not be possible nor would it be fair. However, she has two exceptions. Two late bills, including penalties, were recently paid by a federal program. They will not, therefore, be vacated. Mr. Cichanowski moved to eliminate the most recent late penalty for all rate payers, excepting the two accounts referenced by Ms. Dexter. Ms. Cornwell seconded the motion. Mr. Brace said he has been notifying rate payers of the new federal program. Notice has also been placed on the website. Ms. Dexter said we should be doing our best to get the

word out about the program. Mr. Kiernan said no 1099 is sent out at the end of the year. The program is truly no strings attached.

Ms. Dexter described the status of the water budget (that portion not already discussed in executive session). She reported that the department has a negative \$12,000+ cash position in the water savings account. It has been that low before and will be that low again but can be an issue if it becomes, not a cash flow number, but a real number. She said the water meter rate will probably not cover the water department expenses this year. Mr. Whitman noted that for the last few billing cycles, the department had billed an additional \$37.50 to account for a possible legal decision requiring that Shaftsbury pay a larger water fee. That decision wasn't enacted, so Shaftsbury owes those sums to each rate payer. Mr. Brace noted that the new master meter, recently installed, will likely read higher than the old one and that bills will therefore be somewhat higher.

Ms. Miller moved to enter executive session. Mr. Krulikowski seconded the motion, which passed 5-0-0.

Mr. Brace said the UV system at Howard Park froze last year. Mr. Brace has been sampling and reported that the water is back up again. Frost Co. had installed a new system that won't freeze. Mr. Kiernan reported that a well overflow system has been rerouted at Howard Park as well.

## 7. Adjournment

Mr. Cichanowski moved to adjourn at 6:15 p.m. Mr. Krulikowski seconded the motion, which passed 5-0-0.