



BOARD OF WATER COMMISSIONERS

Cotuit Fire District

Water Department

4300 FALMOUTH ROAD, P. O. BOX 451
COTUIT, MASS. 02635

04/16/2019

The Cotuit-Santuit Civic Association was host to the Cotuit Fire District, Water Department for a public meeting held at Freedom Hall at 7:30 p.m. Chairman Tom Hoppensteadt, Commissioner Don Campbell and Commissioner Mark Robinson were present, as was Superintendent Chris Wiseman and Office Manager, Jen Nash. Also present was Ryan Neyland from Tata & Howard to present the results of the Cost of Service and Rate Study and explain the new rate increase and billing schedule that is proposed for implementation effective July 1, 2019 (FY2020).

The meeting is being video recorded by Jared Cole so that the presentation can be posted on the district website for residents who are not able to attend the presentation. All documents from the meeting will also be posted on the district website.

Chairman Hoppensteadt opened the meeting by recapping the timeline of the project and the purpose and goal of the study. Each commissioner gave their thoughts on the project and restated the directive by the former treasurer, as well as DEP regulations for Public Water Services to be self-funding, and noted that the last rate increase in the district was in 2005.

Ryan Neyland reviewed how they calculated the current expense of the Water Department (operating, maintenance, payroll, employee benefits, debt service, administrative costs, etc.) and how they allocated a portion that was directed related to fire suppression vs potable water usage. Using this ratio, they calculated a portion of the budget to be covered by water rates and projected the usage and expenses for the next 5 year period. Using this information they then calculated the rate tiers necessary to cover the projected expenses. He also briefly covered a proposed fixed per meter fee that will go into a stabilization fund specific for Water Department use to help defray the cost of future capital projects.

After the presentation, the meeting was opened for public comments and questions. The following is a summary of the questions or statements made:

- Reading meters more than once per year will aid in leak detection.
- Rates are the same for both residential and business customers.
- Great presentation, logical and clear.
- New rates closely align with surrounding districts.
- Is this the proper time to be raising the rates given that the district has not yet disclosed the prior year financial statements?
- Will the district tax change? Commissioner Campbell noted that it is reasonable to expect that it will, and to the best of his knowledge, it will not decrease in the first year as the district tax rate is assessed based on the prior year's revenue.
- Gratitude given for a clear presentation of a complicated matter, and especially for highlighting the importance of shifting the cost from the tax payer to the water user. It is important to be educated and encourage friends and neighbors to do so as well so that they can make informed decisions and actively vote at the annual district meeting.

The Water Department portion of the meeting adjourned at 8:25pm.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tom Hoppensteadt". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Tom Hoppensteadt, Chairman