

**Lancaster Selectboard Work Shop Public Meeting Minutes
February 20, 2024
Lancaster Town Hall, Second Floor**

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 PM by Chair Leon Rideout.

Roll Call:

Present: Leon Rideout, Kathy Jean Lavoie, and Shane Beattie

Others Present: Town Manager Benjamin S. Gaetjens-Oleson, Land Use Coordinator Robin Irving, Water/Sewer Superintendent Timmy Bilodeau, John Garrison, Rob Christie, Ryan & Erika Canales, Teri Anderson, Lee Ann Potter, Finance Director Michael Nadeau, Town Clerk/Tax Collector Charity Baker, Police Chief Jon Woodworth, Fire Chief Randy Flynn, and Alan Savage

Work Session: Water/Sewer Rates

John Garrison distributed copies of a rates analysis presentation (attached to minutes) to the Selectboard and began sharing the information. Timmy Bilodeau clarified by explaining that the Water Treatment Plant does not run all three beds simultaneously. He stated there are usually always two running while the third rests. He also stated that the Town has no asbestos pipe and that our cast iron pipe is lead-jointed, which is an issue for DES now.

Robin Irving stated that DES has set an affordability index of 1.5% for a community to qualify for grant money. The consensus is to focus on adjusting consumption rates, not the base fee. Maybe even reduce the base fee.

Benjamin Gaetjens-Oleson stated he had 5-year averages of cumulative consumption for residential, commercial, and agricultural. Mr. Garrison asked about getting the average by household as well. Kathy Jean Lavoie stated the annual revenues and expenses for water and sewer were displayed in the audit in Exhibit 2 and asked to get the information from the 2020,2021 and 2022 audits.

The Board stated they would like to continue the conversation at the March work session utilizing additional information Mr. Gaetjens-Oleson would provide, and to develop a reasonable rate increase for water and sewer with a potential decrease to base rates.

As there was no further discussion, the meeting adjourned.

Meeting adjourned at 6:20 PM

Respectfully Submitted

Lancaster Selectboard

Benjamin S. Gaetjens-Oleson
Town Manager

Chair, Leon Rideout

Shane Beattie

Kathy Jean Lavoie