

Water Board Meeting  
February 14, 2018  
9:00AM

Members in Attendance: Administrator, Chair  
Council Cerreta, Vice Chair  
Finance Director Brown  
Director of Law Fox

Also in Attendance: Rob Graham, City Engineer, Brian Hill, and Operations Manager of Water Distribution.

Patrick DeOrio: I'd like to call the meeting of the North Canton Water Board together. It is 9:01 a.m. on Wednesday, sorry, February 14, whatever day of the week it is. Um, in attendance is myself, Patrick DeOrio, Laura Brown, member of the committee, Mark Cerreta, member of the committee, Tim Fox, member of the committee, a number of city department heads, and residents. Uh, have an agenda you can pass out. You guys wanna just take one and ... pass it around. And then I'm also gonna pass around for just the members of the committee at this time, are the minutes ah, from the last uh, Water Board meeting, uh that was held on December 21st. And so we would like to, uh, take a minute, kind of look through those, and then we would want to uh, entertain a motion to either approve or adjust, if there's something in there. Uh, but ... this is part of our, the City's efforts to try to uh, do a verbatim minutes for every meeting, so we concluded, uh, the Water Board is part of that. Uh, so if we can, if we would entertain a motion to uh, approve the minutes, uh, as presented, we can do that. Uh, once we would approve those then, be uh, a form that could be available for public, uh, records disclosure.

Tim Fox: I move to approve as presented.

Patrick DeOrio: Moved by Mr. Fox, is there a second?

Mark Cerreta: Second.

Patrick DeOrio: Second by member Cerreta. Uh, all those in favor of approving the minutes as presented, please signify by saying, "Aye."

Group: Aye.

Patrick DeOrio: All those opposed or abstaining? The ayes have it. Okay. Thank you for that. Alright, just, uh, if it relates to the Water Board, and, and matters that may come before it, uh, we end up, at times, getting requests for various things. Uh, this is, uh, a board that meets as needed. So it's not like we schedule one every month, there may

not be anything that needs to be discussed. So, it just so happens that we've had a couple issues come up that would be appropriate for the Water Board to discuss. Uh, so, uh, one is for uh, consideration for, yeah, this will be kind of a standard agenda, but ... if there's a request for residential water service that's out of the city, that would be on the agenda. It's ... the Water Board also deals with the sewer service outside the city, so that could be a standard item that would be on here. And then anything, as far as re ... requests by someone for a rebate, uh, as a result of overages, or over-charges that they feel that they've, uh, incurred. So, in not in any particular order, that's just the way they were, but uh, as we've taken them in, so we can go in any particular order, I think, that we would like. But, uh, the ... we'll just start at this first one, it's ... but again, it's not ranked in any order, it's just the ... the way we typed up the agenda, so. Uh, there was a request, uh, made for residential water service outside the city by a uh, individual, uh, who owns a lot that they want to build a house on. Uh, the other, uh, neighbors in that street, on Stratavon, uh; do have water service with the city. Uh, this is just an empty lot that was looking to be built upon. And there was a request made for that. So I don't know if, if that individual is here? Uh, on that? Okay. Um, and in some conversations with him yesterday, it appeared that he still didn't have all his ducks in a row, uh, to move forward. So, uh, being that they're not here, we'll probably just uh, we'll take no action on that particular one until we actually have somebody either here or a piece of paper from 'em, so.

Mark Cerreta: Was that inside the city, or outside?

Patrick DeOrio: That's outside, on Statavon, in Plain Township. Rob, was there another one that ... that came in?

Rob Graham: There was a second one, it was from uh...

Patrick DeOrio: But-

Rob Graham: I don't know exactly. Again, it was a home builder. So, Rembrandt Homes is the builder and the address is in...

Patrick DeOrio: Yeah?

Rob Graham... it's in, uh, St. James Place subdivision. And it's uh ... uh, the newest phase out there, put in a year or so ago. And Rembrandt would like to uh ... building a home for someone.

Patrick DeOrio: Is it a vacant lot?

Rob Graham: It is a vacant lot.

Patrick DeOrio: Are ... are the other mems ... are the other places in the ... that St. James subdivision uh, water customers?

Rob Graham: I believe the previous phases are tied in.

Patrick DeOrio: Brian?

Brian Hill: Yes.

Patrick DeOrio: ...that's correct. And they ... they requested ... Rembrandt is requesting that they want to hook up to the water-

Rob Graham: Yes.

Patrick DeOrio: And they're gonna pay all the ... they're gonna pay the outside rates.

Rob Graham: Yes, we were able to give them an agreement to fill out.

Patrick DeOrio: Okay.

Rob Graham: It hasn't come back yet to my knowledge.

Patrick DeOrio: All right.

Mark Cerreta: So when that happens, is there any cost to us whatsoever? Hooking up and everything? They pay all fees and hook ups and everything?

Rob Graham: Yes, they would have to pay our fees and the tap fees, or ... actually the tap fees are already in. They're already paid because the developer did the taps. They would have to pay the, uh, meter fees and inspection fees.

Mark Cerreta: At no cost to us, then?

Rob Graham: At no cost to the city.

Mark Cerreta: Yeah.

Rob Graham: Both have returned, the individual has returned on February 9<sup>th</sup> their executed copy of the water agreement. It would need signed if this board would approve it, by myself and the rest.

Mark Cerreta: So how do we want to motion that, do we bring this in to okay that or how are we working that?

Patrick DeOrio: We would be, uh, voting to extend water service to that particular parcel, is what the motion would be.

Laura Brown: I'll make that motion to extend water service to that empty lot.

Mark Cerreta: I'll second.

Chuck Osborne: You gonna take ... public comments?

Patrick DeOrio: I'm sorry?

Chuck Osborne: You gonna take public comments?

Patrick DeOrio: No.

Mark Cerreta: I'll second it.

Patrick DeOrio: Okay. The motion is seconded to extend residential water service to the vacant lot in St. James subdivision uh, at the, uh ... full cost to be borne by the applicant. Uh, all those in favor signify by saying, "Aye."

Group: Aye.

Patrick DeOrio: All those opposed?

Tim Fox: Abstain.

Patrick DeOrio: Abstain. One abstention, Mr. Fox. Uh, next request is uh, for sewer service, uh, outside the city. And, uh, this was for uh, on Hyacinth Street. Uh, the property is, uh, Plain Township. Uh, other, uh ... properties on Hyacinth Street that are in Plain Township are also on our city sewer service. And this is just another one that would like to, uh, uh, be hooked up to that. Uh, the ... as I understand it, Rob, the ... the last engineer there ... the costs on this, the County ends up getting the bulk of the fee that's assessed here, is that correct?

Rob Graham: Right, yeah. Our ordinance requires that we charge them whatever Stark County tap-in fee is, which is \$2,000, and then another \$500. So \$2,500.

Patrick DeOrio: \$2,500.

Rob Graham: \$2,000 goes right away, to the county.

Mark Cerreta: Okay. At no cost to us again?

Rob Graham: At no cost to us.

Mark Cerreta: I make the motion we go ahead and, uh, approve their request for our sewer service.

Laura Brown: I second that.

Patrick DeOrio: The... movement is in, uh, seconded to extend uh, the sewer service, uh, to the property on Hyacinth Avenue, uh, in Plain Township ... allow them, at their full cost, to tap into the city sewer service. Uh, all those in favor of that, please signify by saying, "Aye."

Group: Aye.

Patrick DeOrio: Aye. All those opposed or abstained?

Tim Fox: Abstained.

Patrick DeOrio: Uh, Mr. Fox abstains. Uh, Item three, a residential request regarding uh, overages. Uh, this would have to do with the utility billing, so ... uh, member Brown, can you, uh, give a little information on this, please?

Laura Brown: Sure, thank you. Uh, this is what I would refer to as Water Board 1.0. What we traditionally use Water Board for. Um, before this ... this past year, we had a request come in from a resident who is a landlord. Um, she has a property that has twenty units. And, back at the beginning of January ... January 5th, the water line to a washer in one of those units froze, and broke, which caused some high water usage at her property. Um, so she wrote in to us and asked if there was anything that we could do to, um, help forgive some of that cost. Um, and that, we've had that many times in the past, where someone has usage, they write a letter, and then we consider their request. Um, she also made note that the ... when the drain line broke, that it's completely frozen, that it was very low temperatures at the beginning of January, so no water went down the sewer. Um, that really doesn't impact this situation because this property pays a flat sewer fee each month based on the number of units. So the sewer cost did not change on her bill from what she traditionally had paid. Her water costs went from ... a typical bill is about \$220 a month, up to about \$420 a month. So an extra ... it was about \$205 over her typical bill. Um, so we can just consider if we would give her any relief on that bill due to the situation, or if we'll just have her pay the bill in full. Uh, one other thing that we would typically offer a water customer, would be that ... if they have a high usage, we would have them only pay all of those gallons used at the minimum rate. However, in this case, this customer already pays the minimum rate. Because of the number of units that she has, it's not hitting that minimum. So, we couldn't go with that option. Um so, this would just be a, you know, if we would choose to forgive a portion of her bill. I will say that that January bill has already come due, and she has paid that bill in full. When I talked with her on the phone to let her know we'd be having this meeting in February, she said she wanted to ... to show good faith that, you know, she was going to pay the bill, but it was a hardship on her and her ... you know, small business to do so. So, any discussion on that?

Mark Cerreta: Well I ... I don't necessarily know the reason why things broke, or if someone had the heat off, or whatever, but there'd have to be something there, but... If we go by it ... you know, this could happen to five or six people all at one time. If we do that for every five or six persons, we're already setting a precedent for that for the

future, when all of these people happen all at one time, to go back and look at this and say, "Well, you did it for them, why aren't you going to do it for us?" The cost of this is ... is double, I, I understand that, it's not like it's in the thousands. Um ... I'm more inclined to not allow this, just for precedent for the future, um ... and I don't know what the reason why it broke. It could be the problem of the actual person who did not heat it, or who did not fix something. So who's at fault? I mean, I don't know that. That reason. But, look ... looking, you know, at the ... the whole picture from what I know, um ... we can't just keep doing this for everybody. Nobody else does it. The gas company doesn't do it, the electric company doesn't do it. Sometimes you have to be responsible. Again, I'm not saying this person's not responsible; I have no idea who they are. But uh ... in my opinion right now, I ... I don't really feel that we should be giving this type of thing to people when a mistake has been made ... not on our part (inaudible).

Laura Brown: Well, I can tell you in her letter she doesn't address, you know, where the location of the line was-

Mark Cerreta: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Laura Brown: ... or why it froze, just uh, said due to the cold weather. Um, I can tell you in the past, since I've been here, in a year and a half ... what we do, I said, typically we go with that minimum rate, that would be a first option. A second option would be to offer the customer a payment plan. It was a hardship on them getting their bill paid. We often do that over time.

Mark Cerreta: Interest?

Laura Brown: Uh, no, no interest, or anything like that. However, in this case, she's already paid the bill, so that ... that doesn't really-

Mark Cerreta: So what we're doing here, is we're asking the ... the other people of our community to pay her bill because of a mistake. And ... in my opinion, I don't ... I don't think that's typically fair. So. That's what I have to say about that.

Patrick DeOrio: I would agree with him. Uh, with member Cerreta's comments. I ... Uh, so, um ... uh, I guess, we could do this one of two ways, in my mind is ... we could take no action, which in effect would mean that ... I mean, I don't think a discount or a payment plan that's already been paid. Or, the board could take formal action and ... and deny the request. So.

Tim Fox: I ... I would recommend since you have received an application, that, uh ... to be fair to the applicant, we have discussed it, we have made recommendations, so thinking, no action kind of leaves the applicant in limbo, if you would.

Laura Brown: And historically what we've done before is we've made a decision, and then I've responded to the person in writing. So, in order to do that I need to have a decision to give to her.

Patrick DeOrio: Okay.

Mark Cerreta: I think a payment plan would be ideal, if it was this large, and it broke that person, so I think it's a great idea for the future.

Patrick DeOrio: Well I guess at this time the Chair would be looking for a motion uh, to deny this request for uh, return of overages.

Mark Cerreta: I'll make that motion uh, to deny the request.

Laura Brown: And I would second that.

Patrick DeOrio: Moved ... moved by member Cerreta, seconded by member Brown. All those in favor signify by saying, "Aye."

Group: Aye.

Patrick DeOrio: Opposed or abstain?

Tim Fox: Abstain.

Patrick DeOrio: Ayes have it. Um, nothing else on the agenda.

Tim Fox: Mr., Mr. Chairman?

Patrick DeOrio: Yes sir?

Tim Fox: Um, one just slight recommendation for the meeting minutes ... the only copy, after we had discussed, just recommend, uh, uh, a heading, with uh, perhaps the date and time of the prior meeting, if that's what's easier to identify-

Patrick DeOrio: Mm-kay, we can-

Tim Fox: That's all I-

Patrick DeOrio: ... make sure that's incorporated therein-

Tim Fox: It doesn't change anything subjective. Just easier to identify.

Patrick DeOrio: Uh, nothing else coming before the board, uh, would move it ... look for a motion to adjourn.

Mark Cerreta: Motion to adjourn.

Laura Brown: Second.

Patrick DeOrio: Moved to second. All those ... signify by saying, "Aye," if you're in favor?

Group: Aye.

Patrick DeOrio: Those opposed or abstained? Ayes have it. Meeting's adjourned.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "P. DeOrio". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letter of each word being capitalized and prominent.

*Patrick A. DeOrio*

*jaa*