

Shelburne Water Commission

January 2, 2024 meeting minutes

Called to order 5:00pm. Jennifer Martinez chaired the meeting, with Chair Craig Wooster absent. Dennis Barton, Steve Smith, and Pete Gadue attended for a quorum. Matt Lawless and Peter Frankenburg attended for staff.

Pete Gadue made the motion to approve the present agenda and the past minutes for Dec. 12. Steve Smith seconded, and the motion carried on voice vote.

There were no public comments.

Peter Frankenburg shared a financial report. The fiscal year is 50% complete, and revenues are at 52% of budgeted amounts, with spending also at 52% of target. One Miscellaneous Revenue line has an unusual recurring charge, which staff will investigate. Frankenburg reviewed and explained each budget category and any variance. Gadue asked about state minimum wage increases which took effect January 1. Lawless answered that Town staff make more than that the minimum wage. Barton asked about revenues related to the meter replacement project. Superintendent Sherman will need to share more details about sources of funds.

Town manager report. Lawless shared updates on the general fund budget process, noting the Selectboard goals for staff compensation and capital planning. The Water staff wages were recently corrected to market parity. The Water Fund capital plan appears side by side with General Fund capital. Design work is continuing for the wastewater plant consolidation, and the Water Commission's work on improved rate structures will be helpful and important for the wastewater project financing, as well.

The Commission discussed the rate analysis project now underway. Town staff have sent the basic financials to the University of North Carolina team. They will respond with any further data needs. The timeline for specific Commission work is uncertain. Commissioners are eager to take this on. Barton encouraged a general public communication about the project. Martinez asked if the rates project had a consulting cost, and Frankenburg confirmed that it did not: state grants help the Town.

Dennis Barton asked about compliance or complaints connected to the recently increased water rates. Lawless has heard no substantial concerns. Frankenburg agreed, that customer service and delinquency work have proceeded normally.

Pete Gadue shared status from the Champlain Water District. Barton asked about a long-range capital plan for CWD. Gadue answered that there was one, and Frankenburg confirmed that CWD does strive to level their capital spending, so as one loan is paid off another begins.

The Commission expressed concern for the absence of Superintendent Bart Sherman.

Pete Gadue moved to adjourn at 5:32, and Dennis Barton seconded. The motion carried on voice vote.