

**COUNTY OF GREENE
TOWN OF NEW BALTIMORE
TOWN BOARD SPECIAL MEETING REGARDING WATER DISTRICT NO. 2
SEPTEMBER 23, 2013 - page 1**

DRAFT

OPENING OF MEETING

Supervisor O'Rorke called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm and the Pledge of Allegiance was said. Also attending: Councilwoman Benway, Councilman Norris, Highway Superintendent Jordan, Town Clerk Brooks, and 19 members of the public who signed the attendance sheet. Absent: Councilwoman Finke and Councilman Meredith.

Supervisor stated this is not a public hearing; the Town Board wanted to hold this as an informational meeting for users to hear history, discuss, and learn the process. Village of Coxsackie notified Supervisor that they would have a public hearing for water rates, a lot to do with their new water plant and first loan payments due of \$175,000/year, benefiting the people in the two districts.

Supervisor said the anticipated Water District No.2 increase is \$165/year; she reviewed that in 2009 the Village of Coxsackie had a water rate increase, the first in 20 years; no one seems to know why the Village did not pass that increase on to Water District No. 2 or the Town of New Baltimore, the Village's website shows that WD2 is paying a higher rate than what they are, the mayor doesn't know why, and now we are needing to play catch-up.

Reviewing the original 1974 contract which is still in effect, Supervisor met with the mayor and Delaware Engineering; the contract provides that the Village may charge 180% of the Village's rate to Water District No. 2 users, 200% to the Town of Coxsackie users, and 250% to the Kalkberg Commerce Park/Water District No. 3 users. When the Village figures out their Village of Coxsackie rates, they include infrastructure, new plant, lines, hydrants and we hear about water main breaks in the Village; but WD2 pays 180% of that and their infrastructure, it doesn't seem fair to Supervisor. The only other way to get around this is for the Town of New Baltimore to buy in bulk from the Village; they wouldn't meter, we would buy quantity, and then go around and meter it; but one large bulk meter will cost \$100,000. The downside of renegotiating the contract is the realization that the Town of Coxsackie users are paying more than the Town of New Baltimore WD2 users and then WD3.

The Town Board is open to suggestions, the mayor believes they will vote on it tomorrow; once they vote and pass the rates to New Baltimore, New Baltimore must hold a public hearing; not great news. Also, the December 2012 water main break caused a \$2000 shortage in the Water District's fund balance and must be added to the increase.

Sharon Hillman asked where was the break and whose main; Scheller Park, off Twisted Tree; Supervisor answered under NYS Thruway is original line; she and mayor thought it broke under the Thruway, a sleepless night, luckily on the other side. Needing more fund balance, and used part of fund balance to get the district definition 'cleaned up', defining some who were in or were supposed to be inside the district; Supervisor added a hydrant might have been next, but it was Town of Coxsackie's hydrant. Town of Coxsackie's hydrants are roughly same age as ours; 3 replaced at \$3000 each in recent time. There are 29 users in Water District No. 2, a very limited number to pay the cost.

Councilwoman Benway asked would it be beneficial to go to the meeting tomorrow; could contact the village. Supervisor waited for this informational meeting to send the letter to the Village; what may be gained. Current increase \$167/yr; Village of Coxsackie will begin billing Town to send out quarterly for 29 users; Water District No. 3 pays quarterly.

Regarding the \$2000 December main break, Don Hillman asked to pay it; Supervisor answered it would be divided by 29 users and added to water bill; currently borrowed from the General Fund, that should be paid back to General Fund by year's end, but the Town isn't losing out on much interest. This is being put on District users; nothing changed in District water pressure. Sharon Hillman said the line is the weak link in the system; old lines are still bringing the water to the new lines. Supervisor reminded that with more buildup in Kalkberg and on US 9W, could bypass the line under the Thruway, bring it over US9W and into Scheller Park that way, but \$200,000 is still divided by 29 users.

Sharon Hillman would like to see the quarterly bills; Town now bills, was covering with a sticker, but for us to collect and bill, now tax collector Diane Jordan sends out our own bills; users will still read meters and self-report to the Village. If there is a discrepancy, the Village will go and read. Town gets made whole; if one or two do not pay, Greene County reimburses us

**COUNTY OF GREENE
TOWN OF NEW BALTIMORE
TOWN BOARD SPECIAL MEETING REGARDING WATER DISTRICT NO. 2
SEPTEMBER 23, 2013 - page 2**

DRAFT

for that. Fund Balance accumulates from the late payment fee that stays within the District. Councilman Norris asked re the \$115/quarter, how much water does that include? Minimum 20,000 gallons is \$146.50/twice a year.

Donald Hillman asked regarding the 'per thousand gallons' over the minimum, will that rate change? Supervisor sees no indication that will change; \$293 to \$460 annually. Don asks if 180% over the current?

Supervisor reports they are going back to work with NYS Corrections for more money; if more, that may help in future, Supervisor will check whether 180% x overage.

Regarding the additional line on Roberts Hill Road, one user is hooked up and one has the line, they will be added and make 30; New Baltimore had not accepted the line, they've been billed by the Village.

Tax collector Jordan found the rates for billing over the 10,000 gallon minimum will remain the same rate.

Supervisor commented that Serta Mattress uses the same as the average household, by not using water in the processing facilities. Empire Merchants, in the Town of Coxsackie, we get their water rates due to the billing back of the SD2 pump station, they are distributing not processing.

Lisa Lydon said she's lived in both sides of New Baltimore; appreciating that Scheller Park has water coming through the pipes, in the hamlet of New Baltimore water is often a big issue.

Sharon Hillman felt a pressure pump will increase the usage; forced conservation. There's a lot of people who pay more for water than we do, it is a big increase; too bad it has to come all at once. Supervisor asked to step into this but there are two big bites.

Regarding other area water users, Supervisor quoted yearly for Ashland \$620; Athens \$388; Cairo \$542; Catskill \$440; Greenville \$562; Hunter \$360; Ravena \$225; Saugerties \$475; Tannersville \$300; Fleishmanns \$302. Estimated is \$460. Ashland probably has smaller user base. Sewer District No.1 in the hamlet has 212 users.

[Delaware Engineering's Brock Juusola arrived.]

Supervisor reminded Brock that the users from Scheller Park were in attendance; he and Mary Beth Bianconi had worked on Water District No. 2 last year. Supervisor reminded that the district faces a significant rate increase, also a water main break in the past to take care of. Delaware Engineering did the work for Ashland, \$620/yr, relatively small but brand new, really good water. Cairo pays \$542.

Sharon Hillman feels we undervalue good water, and appreciates what the Board is doing for the district and there is much to be grateful for. Supervisor believes the Village will vote on rates, 1 person at their public hearing. Councilman Norris calculates a \$14/month increase, but spoke of making sure a 'big bump-up' doesn't happen again, going forward with small 1% taxes each year to build fund balance.

Supervisor reminds that the Town can charge what the Town Board wants, hold it in fund balance, and, if we had one, we could have used a little of that to soften this blow, all subject to public hearing. She continued that the fund balance also helps with a fire hydrant, infrastructure, just by tacking on an 'operation and maintenance' onto both of the bills. This new increase will appear on the bill received in January; the new plant was up and running in January. Supervisor reminded that further questions, all in attendance know how to reach her and the Board.

Councilman Norris asked how folks get word of Boil Water alerts; all on CODE RED. Lisa Lydon reported receiving a phone call for coliform; another call when it was clear. Clerk Brooks asked whether using the 756-6600 recorded info is needed; no, all have CODE RED.

ADJOURNMENT

**COUNTY OF GREENE
TOWN OF NEW BALTIMORE
TOWN BOARD SPECIAL MEETING REGARDING WATER DISTRICT NO. 2
SEPTEMBER 23, 2013 - page 3**

DRAFT

Hearing no more from the Board or the public, **Supervisor moved and was seconded by Councilwoman Benway.** The adoption of the foregoing Motion was duly put to a vote, and the vote was as follows:

**BENWAY-AYE FINKE-Absent MEREDITH-Absent
NORRIS-AYE O'RORKE-AYE
Motion Carried**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:01pm.

Respectfully submitted

Janet A. Brooks
Town Clerk