

## Minutes of the September 14, 2023, Hingham Town Council Meeting

The September 2023 Hingham Town Council meeting was called to order by Mayor Thomas Peterson on September 14, 2023, at 7:30 am. Present at the meeting were Thomas Peterson, Sandi Peterson, Dave George, Roger Haas, Dillon Lipp, and patron Ray Lipp. August minutes were reviewed. The treasurer's report was covered. Dave made a motion to approve both minutes and treasurer report and Dillon seconded. Motion carried.

**HEARING OF PATRONS:** Ray discussed that he has an upcoming refuse board meeting, but he would like to step away from the board soon and that it might be time for Sandi to be appointed to be the person for Hingham.

### **OLD BUSINESS:**

Lagoon Operator – tabled. Refuse Board- tabled. Gravel/grader - ongoing. Rules and regulations – on going. Revisiting the town ordinances- ongoing. Resolution stating that any vacant property must continue to pay the monthly water and sewer fee or pay for shut off/reconnection fee- ongoing. Street sign replacements- ongoing. Arborist-Sandi informed the council that there is no one in Havre so she has contacted Tree Service Pros in Great Falls, waiting to hear back. Pumphouse at the park-need to fix leak and rebuild small shed.

### **NEW BUSINESS:**

Thomas discussed the zoom call that he and Sandi were on with Julea (Bear Paw Development) and Chris (RPA) about the upcoming deadlines for the wastewater project. Thomas stated that he stressed to them that we cannot increase rates anymore. When we received the spreadsheet from Julea for funding scenarios it showed rate increases from \$120.23 to \$246.58 a month, to apply for certain funding and/or loans. The council agreed that this is not feasible. Sandi will talk with Julea and see what our other options are. Sandi informed the council that the 5-month CD with Independence Bank matured and was rolled into savings. Sandi explained the reason for the correction to the budget is the amount of payments that we will receive from MT Department of Transportation for Gas Tax and previous BARSAA has increased for FY24, and we need to show it on the budget. The budget was going to show \$16,000.00 and it will now be \$62,000.00. These were increases according to MCA 15-70-101 City Allocations. Due to this change the date for Resolution 210 and the Budget certification will be 9/14/2023. Roger made a motion for the change, Dave seconded, and the motion carried. Sandi will complete the Budget and upload it to the OKTA site next week. Sandi informed the council of the overcharges to our bulk customers and how it affected August water billing. The mistake was from the spreadsheets we received from Hill County Water District. Sandi explained the amount of time the credits to the accounts of 11 customers and the survey took to complete billing last month. Sandi talked about the park bathrooms and that the ladies' room was constantly running but she thinks it is fixed for now. It was also mentioned that the light in the ladies room will not shut off. Ray expressed that both bathrooms need new toilets. The council would like to replace them in the spring so we will check prices for new toilets for both. Dillon will verify when the trees for the park will be delivered. 6 have been ordered and should have them by the end of the month. We also discussed that when the water restriction has been lifted, we need to saturate the park. Thomas talked about the weeds around the lagoon and that we need to mow if possible. Sandi shared with the council that ClerkBooks is working on a new program that

will eliminate the need for QuickBooks and that at this time if we are part of the BETA test it will save the town over \$1000.00 for the download next year. Sandi told the council she would be willing to do the double work to save the town money. We received a ballot for voting for Triangle Communication, the council would not like to submit a vote. The council talked about dogs still roaming the town, we know that one resident is trying to keep her dogs in and when she is informed, they have gotten out she deals with it. She is working on her fence to secure them. We have another dog roaming, and we will send a certified letter to the owner explaining the possibility of a lease law fee.

**DELINQUENCIES/NOTICE TO DISCONNECT:** One customer's delinquent bill for sewer was sent to Hill County to add to the taxes. Thomas will also be giving one customer a notice to disconnect.

**MAYOR'S REPORT:** Thomas talked about hydrants and that we will order another 2 for next year and the council discussed that when the fall season is over, they will start cycling the fire hydrants and Ray suggested that might be a good time to decide for sure which ones need replacing this year. As stated, in the previous meeting we will replace 2 hydrants a year and that at the time of replacement each hydrant will have a shutoff so that when a hydrant needs work, we will not have to shut off all or part of the town water. Thomas also informed the council he spoke with PACE and they will be here this fall to clean one half of the sewer lines as agreed by the council previously.

Claims for June- #6108-6117 were read. Roger made a motion to accept the claims, Dave seconded the motion, motion carried. Next meeting is October 12, 2023 @7:30pm. Dave made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Dillon seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned.

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Mayor

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Clerk