

**VILLAGE OF CHAGRIN FALLS
UTILITIES COMMITTEE
January 27, 2020**

Members present: Newell, Evans, Rockey
Also present: Mayor Tomko, Bloom, DeBernardo, Grube, Rogoff, Wyville,
Knauff, Elliott, Markowitz, Lannon, Jamieson

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Chairman Jim Newell.

WASTE WATER RATES

Mr. Newell explained that the Utilities Department is funded solely on the quarterly revenue from water and sewer bills. That money is intended to run the daily operations of both the water plant and the waste water plant and also cover the bulk of the cost of infrastructure for new water and sewer lines. Back in 2014-2015 we saw that the funds were getting very low. We burned through about a million dollars in Capital Improvement Funds and the village was struggling with the loss of the inheritance tax. We didn't want to raise the rates but we did a rate study in 2015-2016 and it was inevitable. The water department's fees that they collect from the quarterly water billings are in good shape. The 2015-2016 rate increase was a small one; we tried to keep the cost to a minimum. The water department is in good shape solely because the Mayor was able to renegotiate the contract with Cleveland City Water. Before that we were paying a fixed amount and now we can pay an amount that we actually use. We supplement our water for the community with our well fields, which is a much less expensive source of water. The sewer department is another situation. We actually had to transfer some money over to help it out last year. The Mayor and the village's engineer have been working on this, along with Glenn Elliott, and the Mayor has a spread sheet.

Mayor Tomko explained the schedules, the spread sheets, and the reasons why they are proposing another rate increase for sewer. He said they are proposing a 5% increase effective April 1, 2020, a 5% increase in 2021, and a 3% increase in 2022.

Mr. Newell said we have a 50-year old waste water treatment plant that needs some upgrades; we have talked about the filters and the generators. We are exceeding our capacity at the waste water plant during heavy rain events and the EPA has taken attention to that and they don't like it. We have proposed to replace or reline the sanitary sewers up on East Washington Street and that knocks out some of the extra water that happens during heavy rain events and it gets the EPA off our back.

Mayor Tomko said my recommendation to Council would be to recommend these rate increases by the next Council meeting. Mr. Newell said I would like to make a motion on that. Mrs. Evans said I agree, Mr. Rockey said I agree, and Mr. Newell said I agree.

The meeting adjourned at 6:58 p.m.

Jim Newell, Chairman
lgb