

**VILLAGE OF RED HOOK**  
**WORKSHOP MEETING**  
**1/18/2018**  
**7:00 P.M.**

PRESENT: Mayor Blundell, DM Kovalchik, Trustee Laing, Trustee Norris, Trustee Trapp,  
Assistant Clerk Drewes

Mayor Blundell opened the meeting at 7:02 p.m..

Mayor Blundell introduced discussion of the Community Water Cost Graph prepared by Trustee Laing, based on results from the NYCOM Water & Sewer Rate Survey of 2017. Somewhat local communities with similar populations were examined and compared to the Village water rate. Trustee Trapp asked what it actually costs for the Village to pump one gallon of water. Blundell indicated that the budget reflects the costs to operate. DM Kovalchik added that costs depend on potential repairs, operators, personnel, etc.. Mayor Blundell reminded the board that infrastructure upgrades place us ahead of the curve and required rate increases in 2016 & 2017. Mayor Blundell stated he thought the NYCOM data seemed skewed and questioned the base rates being used by NYCOM for comparative data. Trustee Laing was asked by Mayor Blundell to review his graph based on new calculations done by the board – discussion will resume at another meeting.

Mayor Blundell discussed water operations with the board. He explained that the Village's current water operator contracted through C.T. Male, Bret Smith, is still being retained at a flat \$1500 per month. Changes at CT Male and the departure of Smith are creating difficulties. Mayor Blundell wants a fully insured and licensed operator, who will be available 24/7 – but would still like to see more responsibility put on our staff. He shared an e-mail received by Fernando Dongo, the Director of Operations at VRI Environmental Services, Inc. which was a contract proposal. Mayor Blundell feels that the Village should terminate its water contract with C.T. Male for Water Department Operations and contract with VRI but for a supervisory level only with certification. Chris Coon is a highway department employee during the day but works with water operations as a "junior operator" after 2 p.m., and has thus far been paid by C.T. Male. His pay and overtime contracting for the Village would need to be specially calculated. DM Kovalchik commented that Chris receives no benefits while working specifically as the water operator. Trustee Trapp asked whether or not he could be paid with a 1099 as a contractor. Mayor Blundell wants a fully insured and licensed operator, who will be available 24/7 – but would still like to see more responsibility put on our staff. Mayor Blundell feels that the Village should terminate its water contract with C.T. Male for Water Department Operations and contract with VRI. Trustee Norris inquired as to whether a trial period would be possible. Mayor Blundell suggested doing a 4 month trial-period to align the full length contract with the Village's fiscal year. Trustee Laing would like to be involved with the transition and have a walk-through of the system. DM Kovalchik & Assistant Clerk Drewes stressed the importance of communication between the contracted water operators and the Clerk's Office/Water Department to ensure maximum efficiency.

Mayor Blundell made a motion for the Village of Red Hook to terminate its current contract with C.T. Male for Water Department Operations effective February 1<sup>st</sup>, 2018. On this date, the Village will enter a 4 month probationary period with VRI Environmental Services, Inc. in accordance with the terms stated in their proposal submitted to the Village Board dated January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2018.

DM Kovalchik seconded the motion. All were in favor.

### **SEWER ASSESSMENT MODELING**

Mayor Blundell reviewed the financials for the sewer project at an estimated \$4.9 million dollars for complete project cost, at 1.875% interest. He stated when the public hearing was held, an accurate figure was given before the grants were awarded. Now the cost is estimated to be lower, so this should be considered for rate calculations. DM Kovalchik stated that the Village should err on the side of caution – the Hillsdale system was an example of setting a rate too low. Mayor Blundell will hold a public hearing for explaining the basis for the rate, and the assessment of the system. Clerk Chiarella will be submitting public hearing notices. Right now, the cost is \$780 per unit.

### **ZRC UPDATE**

DM Kovalchik and Trustee Trapp received letters of appointment at the beginning of the week. No meetings have yet been held. Mayor Blundell stated that Ray Towle has also been appointed – the first meeting date is TBA.

At 9:06 p.m. Mayor Blundell made a motion to enter into executive session for personnel. Trustee Trapp seconded the motion.

At this time, Assistant Clerk Drewes left the meeting.

At 9:17 p.m., Mayor Blundell made a motion to enter back into regular session. Trustee Laing seconded the motion.

At 9:17 p.m., DM Kovalchik made a motion adjourn. Trustee Norris seconded the motion.

Meeting was adjourned.

Submitted by,

Arie Drewes