

**PUBLIC HEARING
MEETING MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 12th, 2016
7:00 p.m.**

The Stevensville Town Council came together for a public hearing at Town Council Chambers for the purpose of hearing public comment on the Proposed Termination of Water/Sewer Reduced Rate Program.

Mayor Crews called the hearing to order at 7:00 pm. Present were Councilmember's Barker, Freeman, and Michalson. Councilmember Holcomb was absent due to illness. Also present were several members of the public. (See Sign-in Sheet)

Mayor Crews introduced the proposal to terminate the water/sewer reduced rate program. He then read written comments submitted as indicated below:

Written Comments

- Email from Darlene and John Grove, 615 Tamarack, requesting Council to continue collecting this fee/donation on the utility bills to help fund replacing and repairing the Town's sidewalks.

- Email from Stephanie Mapelli, 203 St. Mary's Drive, commenting on the reduced rate program being created to help those on a fixed income /senior citizens and the fact that only 12 people are signed up is a failure on the Town's part to market the program.

The hearing was then opened for public comments.

Public Comments

Pat Groninger, 518 E. Third Street, commented in favor of terminating the program, refunding the money raised back to the rate payers and that the program was improper and illegally created.

Karen Wandler, 311 6th Street, commented in favor of terminating the program, refunding the money raised back to the rate payers, people in need of help can find it other ways, and the program being created illegally.

Pat Groninger further commented the history of water and sewer rates, the rates being based on gallons usage including thousand gallons of leaks and the leaks were fixed, the water usage would be reduced and ratio of cost per household should go down.

Mel Cook, 210 Park Avenue, commented in favor of terminating the program, the program being illegal and suggested Council look into making this a voluntary donation. He then commented on the poor water quality since the meters were installed.

There were no additional public comments.

Mayor opened the hearing for question and answers.

Pat Groninger inquired about the over-collected funds and requested the money be refunded back to the rate payers.

John Anderson inquired what the total water and sewer bond amounts are and commented on the amount of money loaned to the airport that could have paid to reduce the bonds.

Mel Cook commented on finding resources to reduce the water and sewer bonds to reduce the rates and on the amount of lawns not being watered are a black-eye to Stevensville.

Pat Groninger further commented on the history of the sewer treatment plant and refunding the money back to the rate payers.

Karen Wandler inquired about the money being put into the Airport.

Mayor reviewed the Airport project and funding for that project.

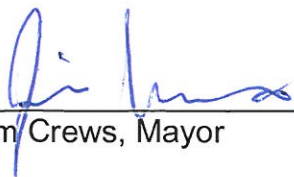
Mel Cook asked the Town Clerk what the response from the rate payers on this program has been. Town Clerk Bartlett commented that only a handful of residents have expressed opposition or in favor of the program and that the majority of ratepayers having been paying the fee without saying a word.

Further discussion ensued with regards to the Airport until Mayor Crews reminded all that the hearing was regarding the water/sewer reduced rate program.

Councilmember Freeman made a motion to adjourn. Councilmember Barker seconded the motion and all voted "aye". Motion carried 3-0.

The hearing adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

APPROVE:



Jim Crews, Mayor

ATTEST:



Stacy Bartlett, Town Clerk