



**Minutes of Public Hearing on 2019 Rates, Fees, and Other Charges
and Budget Meeting
Niagara Falls Water Board
December 10, 2018 5:00 PM at
Michael C. O’Laughlin Municipal Water Plant**

- 1. Call to Order & Pledge of Allegiance**
- 2. Roll Call: *Meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m.***

Larkin P Leffler P Kimble P Forster P
O’Callaghan P

3. Public Hearing

- a. Introduction by Chairperson**
- b. Presentation by rate consultants Drescher & Malecki LLP**

Dreher & Malecki led a presentation regarding the financial projections and user rates, with their goal of providing independent cash flow estimates sufficient to meet the debt-service coverage ratio (1.15). Their analysis of projected amounts was performed in accordance with historical trends and audited data from the prior years, along with current information and year-to-date actual reports per the financial software.

Dresher & Malecki states what is being proposed is sufficient to cover the debt service and they would not recommend going any lower.

Contractual expenses- consisting of chemicals, sludge removal, utilities, maintenance, insurance, parts and supplies; 2016- \$9.3 million and 2017- \$8.9 million – respectively.

c. Staff and Board Comments

The Board discussed the various reasons for increases in expenses for things like sludge removal, chemicals, settling collective bargaining agreements, and filling

needed vacant positions in 2017 and 2018 from prior years. Debt service also takes a lot of the budget.

Dresher & Malecki stated that the Board should anticipate needing to increase rates next year.

The Director of Financial Services discussed efforts to cut expenses, and efforts to have a 0% increase. Ultimately, the 2% increase will add about \$8 per year to the average ratepayer's bill.

d. Public Comments/Oral and Written, if Any (All speakers must register with the Chairperson prior to roll call and are limited to three minutes per person.)

Ruth Knepp, 17th St., Niagara Falls NY, 14304 states that she has been a resident of Niagara Falls since 1980 and believes that she pays too much for water service.

Terri Kline, Cayuga Dr., Niagara Falls NY, 14304, expressed concern about the sewer rate and compared NFWB sewer charges with other municipalities. She questioned several lines in the budget, including undesignated services and supplies, consultants, and advertising.

Robert Dusen, Falls St., Niagara Falls NY, 14304, questioned the budgeted revenue from the Town of Niagara. Mr. Dusen states that he believes minimum charges are unfair, giving the example of residents who do not live in the City year-round.

4. Motion to Close Public Hearing and Open Budget Meeting

Motion to close the public hearing and open budget meeting at 5:39 p.m.

Larkin __Y__ Leffler __Y__ Kimble __Y__ Forster __Y__ O'Callaghan __Y__

Ms. Larkin questioned undesignated services line. Ms. Walker explained that these figures come from department heads, and gave examples of possible charges against this line and consultant budget lines.

5. Adjournment (Water Board Working Session to Follow)

Motion to adjourn at 5:48 p.m.

Larkin __Y__ Leffler __Y__ Kimble __Y__ Forster __Y__ O'Callaghan __Y__