

COMMITTEE ON ORDINANCES, CHARTER & RULES
MONDAY, APRIL 25, 2022, AT 6:13 P.M.
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
WOBURN CITY HALL

Voting members present: Chairman Joseph Demers, Councilor Richard Gately, Councilor Lou DiMambro, Councilor Robert Ferullo, and Councilor Darlene Mercer-Bruen

Non-voting members present: President Michael Concannon, Councilor Jeffrey Dillon, and Councilor Charles Viola. Absent: Councilor Joanne Campbell

Also present: Mayor Scott Galvin

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Reading and approval of previous meeting minutes: Motion made by Councilor Ferullo and seconded by Councilor DiMambro to approve the minutes of the meeting of April 11, 2022; in favor, 5-0.

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Order amending Title 13 of the Woburn Municipal Code § 13.2.14 Water: Chairman Demers said he will accept a motion to accept and make part of the permanent record a letter from Christopher Kisiel, Executive Director of the Woburn Chamber of Commerce, 10 Tower Office Park, Suite 416, Woburn, MA, regarding the order. Motion made by Councilor Mercer-Bruen and seconded by Councilor DiMambro to accept and make part of the permanent record the aforementioned letter from Mr. Kisiel; approved, 5-0. Mayor Galvin said this is the companion ordinance change to the appropriation that was endorsed by the Finance Committee earlier in the evening. He said the proposed change will allow the city to bill commercial entities for new water meters. He said this is a very common approach. He said the ordinance was changed a few years ago and he is asking for it to be restored now. Motion made by Councilor Mercer-Bruen and seconded by Councilor Ferullo to suspend the rules to allow any member of the council not on the committee to address the proposed order. President Concannon asked if there is an intention to do this for residential meters. Mayor Galvin said there is not. He said this proposed change is strictly for commercial entities. He said the ordinance will revert to its original version from 2008. Councilor Dillon said he would feel more comfortable if the mayor provided the council will a range of costs. Mayor Galvin said he will provide that information to the council prior to its next meeting. He said some meters may cost as little as \$500 and others for larger businesses are much more expensive. Councilor Gately said commercial water meters are manufactured in different sizes and can run into thousands of dollars. He said the meters also have to be calibrated and checked. He said regular calibration could have the city millions of dollars. He said 15 years is a long enough life span for commercial water meters. He said the new meters that will be installed are better than the existing meters. Mayor Galvin said the meters do have to be calibrated every year, by ordinance. Councilor Gately said the best thing the city did was going to commercial water meters. He said the enterprise account started paying for itself. He said he is 100 percent behind this. President Concannon asked if townhouses and condominiums have commercial water meters. Mayor Galvin said townhouses and condos have residential meters. Councilor DiMambro asked if apartments buildings have commercial meters.

Mayor Galvin said apartment buildings have residential meters. He said congregate living facilities have commercial meters in common areas, with a pool, and with sprinkler systems. He said otherwise the meters are residential. Councilor Viola asked who pays for the calibration. Mayor Galvin said the commercial water meter users pay for the calibration. Councilor Mercer-Bruen said she remembers when the council changed the ordinance. Mayor Galvin said the ordinance was changed in 2016 to accommodate residential meters. Councilor Mercer-Bruen said this is not really new. Chairman Demers said to be clear, residents did not pay for meters. Motion made by Councilor Mercer-Bruen and seconded by Councilor DiMambro that the order “ought to pass;” approved, 5-0.

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MOTION made by Councilor Ferullo and seconded by Councilor Mercer-Bruen to adjourn; in favor, 5-0. Chairman Demers adjourned the meeting at 6:18 p.m.

A TRUE RECORD ATTEST

Gordon Vincent
Clerk of Committees