



City of Cambridge

19.

IN CITY COUNCIL

November 7, 1994

COUNCILLOR DUEHAY
COUNCILLOR BORN
VICE MAYOR RUSSELL
COUNCILLOR SULLIVAN
COUNCILLOR TOOMEY
COUNCILLOR TRIANTAFILLOU
COUNCILLOR WALSH

ORDERED: That the City Manager and the City Clerk be and hereby are requested to make arrangements for the City Council and others designated by the City Manager to have access to Massachusetts Local Net, the computer bulletin board and electronic mail service of the Massachusetts Municipal Association focusing on municipal issues.

In City Council November 7, 1994
Adopted by the affirmative vote of nine members.
Attest:- D. Margaret Drury, City Clerk.

A true copy;

ATTEST:- *D. Margaret Drury*

D. Margaret Drury
City Clerk

Duehay

That the City Manager and City Clerk be and hereby are requested to make arrangements for the City Council and others designated by the City Manager to have access to Massachusetts Local Net, the computer bulletin board and electronic mail service of the Massachusetts Municipal Association focusing on municipal issues.

That the City Manager be and hereby is requested to inform the City Council of whether public health and environmental concerns have been adequately taken into consideration in the use of toxic chemicals near the soccer field on the Cambridge Common and near the children's playlot at Raymond Park.

Whereas the November, 1994 publication of the Massachusetts Municipal Association, The Beacon, carries a report on the overhaul of the water and sewer meter-reading and billing system in Revere;

Whereas two years ago Revere estimated that 30 percent of the water being used within city limits was not being paid for due to aging mechanical meters and an antiquated meter-reading and billing system;

Whereas some meters were under-recording, some hadn't been read in years, and some customers had no meters at all;

Whereas many customers were repeatedly paying estimated bills because a meter reader could not gain access to the meter;

Whereas, rather than tracking down each faulty meter for replacement or repair, the city undertook a \$1.2 million project, now 98 percent complete, to replace every one of the 10,000-plus meters citywide and to install a new computer billing system;

Whereas one goal of the change was to make water and sewer bills fair and equitable;

Whereas one immediate result was a 6 percent reduction in water and sewer rates for the current fiscal year, now that all customers are being billed accurately;

Whereas the new meters can be read with an electronic device from outside, eliminating the need for daytime access to each customer's basement and for estimated bills;

Whereas the reading devices download the information to the computer automatically, eliminating the need for data entry;

Whereas the new meters are calibrated in gallons - as opposed to the former 100 cubic feet - so customers can better understand their water use;

Whereas the new system will soon allow for monthly billing, just as with any other utility, thus improving cash flow for the city and smaller payments for the consumer;

Whereas another result of the system overhaul is that customers no longer have to pay automatic sewer charges on water that never enters the sewer system - water used for washing cars or watering lawns, for example - because for \$56, customers may now purchase from the city a meter for their outdoor faucets;

Whereas, meters were installed on city buildings so that every drop of water could be accounted for;

Resolved that the City Manager be and hereby is requested to direct the Water Department to review this project and similar innovations in other communities and to report to the City Council within two months as to whether improvements in the meter-reading and billing system can be made in Cambridge



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Born, Russell, Sullivan
Tommy Trantafillou
Waldh

CM-390

Consent Order #19
Councillor Duehay re:
Investigating the possibility of obtaining
Massachusetts Local Net, the computer
bulletin board.

In City Council November 7, 1994

Order adopted