

MEMORANDUM

TO: Jonathan Freedman, Chair, Select Board

FROM: Jamie Errickson, Deputy Town Administrator, Operations

CC: Melissa Malone, Town Administrator

DATE: October 13, 2020

RE: **Water/Sewer abatement request:** Yu (anna) Zhang – 5 Pumpkin Pine Rd.

This memo provides additional context and explanation regarding the recent abatement request made by Ms. Yu (Anna) Zhang for property at 5 Pumpkin Pine Rd. Ms. Zhang received a quarterly water/sewer bill on August 1, 2020 for \$6,432.64 (usage 268 units) and applied for an abatement on August 3, 2020, noting that they are not sure why the water/sewer bill was so high. Upon review of the abatement request, Town staff reached out to Ms. Zhang on a number of occasions to try to help determine what may be the cause of the usually high water bill. Unfortunately, no obvious cause was identified.

To provide additional background, Ms. Zhang noted seeing work being completed by Town crews proximate to her property during the quarter, which was confirmed by the DPW department to be unrelated. Further, 5 Pumpkin Pine Rd. has a pool and while the pool was cleaned during the billing quarter, according to Ms. Zhang water was delivered by a private water provider to refill the pool. Further, according to the Water/Sewer division, there is no meter malfunction at the property and the bill was not provided in error.

In reviewing historic usage for the property at 5 Pumpkin Pine Rd., there is a history of seasonal water fluctuations around the summer months. For this property, these fluctuations range from between 40 to as high as 95 units. A bill as high as 268 units is abnormal for this property, but unfortunately, there is currently no identified cause on which to determine if an abatement is possible.

Per Section 2 of the Water and Sewer Bill Adjustment/Abatement Policy, the Deputy Town Administrator can only abate a water/sewer bill under certain identified causes. In the case where no identified cause is known, the Deputy Town Administration is not provided with an abatement mechanism. As such, this abatement request was denied and the ratepayer appealed the decision to the Select Board.