

## Donna Conkling

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**From:** Mayor  
**Sent:** Monday, April 23, 2018 10:14 AM  
**To:** Donna Conkling  
**Subject:** FW: Water privileges?

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From: Melissa Chepuru  
Sent: Saturday, April 21, 2018 11:17 AM  
To: Mayor  
Subject: Re: Water privileges?

You are fierce and unrelenting. I admire that. Take care of yourself, it can take a lot out of a person's fight these battles. You are able to absorb these punches better than me and better than most, but I'm sure it takes some energy. I will contribute what I can for the sake of fairness and truth.

Melissa

Sent from my iPhone

> On Apr 21, 2018, at 11:08 AM, Mayor <mayor@scarsdale.com> wrote:

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> Melissa

> There is a lot more complex situation on this issue and I'll share some of what the Board and Staff are dealing with.  
> About 10 years ago, the Village and NYC were in court and negotiated an agreement that included a rate for excess use of 3.5X the base rate and that NYC would charge the Village 3.5X the rate for usage beyond the collective amount of 50 units per "customer" Currently, NYC charges 2.94X the base rate for excess usage. If those who use excess amounts were to substantially reduce their usage, the base rate would need to be doubled. The cost of the water Scarsdalians use is a little more than a third of the cost to run the Village's Water Department. What you are hearing from people who don't have the complete picture is, at best, misleading. The Board and Staff make the decisions that, to the best of our knowledge, are the decisions that best serve the people who have put their trust in the Board and Staff.

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> The Staff has looked at whether the 3.5X rate has had an impact on usage and in aggregate, it hasn't shown any.

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> Another factor regarding the excess rate is that currently NYC is again in court, this time with some of NYC customers. There is a concern that the outcome of that case may force NYC to increase its excess rate and I believe the Staff will recommend, and the Board will agree, that any increase in cost of water beyond the base amount, should be passed on to the excess users.

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> As I mentioned at the last Board meeting, the Staff has almost cut the amount of leakage in half from the level it was only a few years ago. That has saved we residents far more that the increase in the base rate. The Staff continues to work to decrease the leakage and thus save all of us more.

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> I'm disappointed that you could even imagine that there is any corruption on any issue the Board considers. We dig into all aspects of any issue and try to find the best solution from the perspective of all residents.

> Dan

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From: Melissa Chepuru

> Sent: Friday, April 20, 2018 10:46 PM

> To: Mayor

> Subject: Re: Water privileges?

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> Dan,

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> I wrote to you before I read the press release by Brice. It explains

> the water billing in detail and I understand that I wasn't clear on

> how things were being skewed. It could be true that the excess rate

> is 3x's the base rate, and also that the base rate has been raised while the excess rate has been lowered. What is clear is that the change in rates is benefiting those who use more water, actually. It's not that hard to understand.

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> I raised other points regarding water usage and conservation in this

> town, and the ability of the water department to enforce crucial rules rather than just adding easily met financial demands for over-usage, a toothless threat, that you didn't respond to.

> Your response is simply "not true" about the one point, and with that I guess I would have to take your word for it, despite the evidence to the contrary.

> If that is what you want to go with, you are essentially dismissing my

> concerns. Are we to leave it there? If residents have questions and

> concerns it seems fair to expect a response that acknowledges the points raised at the very least, and better, to give information to clarify, or direction to someone who can.

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> I could have, of course, just not responded to you, and take my

> thoughts and go home. That was one option I considered as I it took a

> couple of days to think on it, but is that the political environment

> we want, where residents are dismissed, or encouraged to drop it if

> they don't tow the line? I have feared this might be the environment, as a quiet resident here for the last 19 years,

and is reason for people not to want to get involved in local government. As the mayor, is it enough to defend your

position with a simple denial, even when there is information that is easily seen by the public, and then not say more on the matters that effect all of us. It's disappointing, actually.

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> Melissa Sepe Chepuru

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> On Thu, Apr 12, 2018 at 7:42 AM, Mayor <mayor@scarsdale.com<mailto:mayor@scarsdale.com>> wrote:

> Melissa

> What you have been hearing is absolutely incorrect. Everyone who exceeds the base rate of water consumption is charged 3X the base rate for water consumption beyond the basic amount. There have been a number of statements made by residents who don't have the facts correct.

> Dan

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> From: Melissa Chepuru

> Sent: Wednesday, April 11, 2018 11:10 PM

> To: Mayor

> Subject: Water privileges?

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> Dear Mayor,

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> I am hearing that the increase in charges for water after a certain amount is used during a billing period are not being levied equally and that some people, for unknown reasons, are being given discounts on their excessive water consumption. Is this true? This is the kind of thing, along with the Ryan revaluation, that makes ordinary citizens of this town doubt the integrity of those who govern and run the business of the town, having the appearance of favoring those with more resources. One has to wonder who is benefitting, besides those who are receiving such favoritism.

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> Corruption has a way of seeping in where the light isn't shining. Thanks to some politically active and savvy residents in town, these irregularities are coming to light and must be addressed by those of you in positions of power, to the satisfaction of those of us who are not receiving such privileges. Water is a precious resource, one that is becoming more endangered worldwide. I have heard anecdotes from employees in our water department that people with financial resources push the envelope of regulations by, for example, building homes that have larger capacity pipes that use more water, and of course, require extensive lawn irrigation systems, which seem to ignore the crisis we all face. We have personally felt the pinch during droughts in summer due to increased building in our neighborhood. One summer recently we had no, that's right, no water pressure on Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings due to all the sprinkler systems that were being run, despite the water department's request that they be restricted. When I asked the water department to check our system they admitted that our water pressure issues were being caused by all the new homes that had been added to the already stressed system and citizens' non-compliance with restrictions, and that they had no authority to do anything more than request homeowners to do their part. It seems that in this town a green lawn is, sadly, more important than my neighbors' well being. Had we had a fire in our house on one of those mornings I doubt there would have been adequate pressure to extinguish it. Not long after that, the increase in water charges were implemented, and if I go over the amount and have to pay an increase, I am and have been, happy to do that.

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> Is there adequate pressure that can be put on our fellow citizens who already have more, to pay their fair share, if they won't, in fact, do the right thing on their own? And are those in positions of power being pressured by the more wealthy citizens to have special privileges, loopholes to the regulations designed to curb overconsumption? Can you, as the mayor, assure your citizenry that we are all being billed fairly for the share of resources we consume? (The Ryan revaluation has revealed that all is not fair in our village, and there needs to be more transparency. ) And furthermore, shouldn't the water department have the authority to enforce regulations that are preserving our communal resources and the safety of all, especially since we know that water is an increasingly threatened resource?

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> We have questions that need to be addressed.

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> Melissa Sepe Chepuru, LMSW

> Yadagiri Chepuru, MD

> Dickel Rd

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> Sent from my iPhone

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