

## TESTIMONY OF BOB NEAL, NEW SHARON SELECTMAN

Good morning, Senators and Representatives:

My name is Bob Neal and for the past 32 days I have been on the New Sharon Select Board. I am here today because the two selectwomen are at work and out of state. That leaves this job up to the new kid on the block.

The New Sharon Select Board fully supports the full town assuming responsibility for the finances and operation of the New Sharon Water District. Consolidators always promise to reduce costs. They don't always do it. But it appears the town could save as much as \$13,000 a year by taking on the billing of the 100 or so customers of the water district. That's \$130 for each water customer.

In the view of the select board, town taking responsible for the water system since the water district plays a vital role for the town in providing water to fire hydrants in the village and for several hundred yards along some roads. The district appears to have worked through its worst financial problems, so this may be the opportune for the town and the district to combine efforts.

The town might well be able to help the water system upgrade and update. I was on the select board when our fire company became a town department, and I can see the result now in better equipment, better training and better service. If we repeat with the water district our experience with the fire company, everyone in town, whether or not a water customer, should benefit.

I will defer to Ed Fereira and Mark Deden for answering questions because, as I said, I am only 32 days into the job and still have a lot to learn.

Thank you for your attention.

The Town of New Sharon Board of Selectmen hereby orders as follows:

2, That the Town of New Sharon Board of Selectmen hold a public hearing on said referendum question on May 13, 2025 and a Notice be issued to meet to hold that public hearing.

Dated this 8<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2025.

Jul 1877

Edward Ferreira

Left Bracket

James Reio

Kathleen Reis

Paula Nava

Robert S. Neal