



CITY OF WASILLA

290 E. HERNING AVE.

WASILLA, ALASKA 99654-7091

PHONE: (907) 373-9050

FAX: (907) 373-9085

COUNCIL MEMORANDUM 96-80

From: John T. Felton, Public Works Director/City Engineer

Date: August 20, 1996

Subject: Eileen Johnson's Water Service

I have received the attached correspondence from Ms. Johnson concerning her water service at 501 Knik Goose Bay Road. The letters were delivered to City Hall in two separate envelopes. One letter deals with thawing and a tank installation I will refer to this as the first letter. The second letter deals with the water service. The purpose of this memorandum is to seek guidance in dealing with this situation so that no more resources are spent towards resolving this issue.

There is precedence for assisting a customer in thawing a service line. The water utility is able to reimburse Ms. Johnson the \$65.00 she requests for the additional thawing for this service. The thaw wire in question was in-place, it was just buried. I was not aware that monies were spent on the tank and pump referred to in the second part of this letter. In a final offer of settlement, the water department would be willing to reimburse this expense.

As to the second letter, I feel that I have made my position perfectly clear. There is a statute of limitations or at least a reasonable time for an implied warranty on workmanship. This water service was in good service for ten years before it froze. I have made it a firm policy that the Public Works crews do not work on private property. Further, I have offered to pay for any faulty work that was done by the City. Ms. Johnson has refused this offer and again demands that we perform the construction on her property. Doug Abbas has prepared a cost estimate to "fix" this service. It is attached for your review. As you can see, there is almost no difference in price from replacing the whole service to only replacing a portion of it.

I have not discussed any of the following recommendations with Ms. Johnson. I will not do so until the Council gives me direction. Once I have that direction, I will take the appropriate action.

RECOMMENDATION:

The Public Works Department recommends that the Council direct the department to complete any or all of the following actions:

- A.
 - 1. Reimburse Ms. Johnson \$65.00 to help defer thawing costs and reimburse Ms. Johnson \$160.00 to help defer tank and pump costs.
 - 2. Reimburse Ms. Johnson nothing to help defer thawing costs and nothing to help defer tank and pump costs.
- B.
 - 1. Offer Ms. Johnson a grant of \$1,300.00 to help defer costs of replacing her water service and direct the source of funding for the grant.
 - 2. Offer Ms. Johnson nothing to help defer costs of replacing her water service.

These offers are made only as a single and final offer of settlement. If accepted, it is understood that Ms. Johnson would execute a release holding the City harmless from any claims arising from her water service. The Administration would have the City Attorney approve any documents. The City would not enter on to Ms. Johnson's property other than to perform normal inspections. Ms. Johnson would not be required to perform any construction, only to sign the release. All construction on her property would be solely at her discretion.



John T. Felton
Public Works Director/City Engineer

APPROVED

DATE: 8/26/96 A1 + B1

BY: [Signature]

City of Wasilla
John Feltor
Public Works Director

Aug 12, 1996

RECEIVED

AUG 12 1996

CITY OF WASILLA, ALASKA

Dear Mr Feltor

I note that the thaw line has been installed from the key box to my property line.

However, we know this does not resolve the problem. Until the connection is properly done I will not be able to thaw my water line again, should it freeze up.

I am asking again that the hook up be corrected.

When a city utility company sewer bursts and contaminate a residential well, so as to have it condemned, it certainly behooves the Co to be responsible enough to assure both a proper connection, as well as an asbuilt.

This is a permit for my digging required to remedy the problem.

I also remind you that this was my escrow property, at the time of contamination and hook up to the city water line.

Sincerely
Eileen O Johnson

501 KVA 6005 RD Hwy 601

373-1139

WA 5114 A 1454 99654



READING

CITY OF WASILLA

290 E. HERNING AVE.
WASILLA, ALASKA 99654-7091

Area Code (907)

Administration
Ph: 373-9055
Fx: 373-9085

Clerks Office
Ph: 373-9065
Fx: 373-9085

Finance
Ph: 373-9070
Fx: 373-9085

Library
Ph: 376-5913
Fx: 376-2347

Museum
Ph: 373-9071
Fx: 373-9072

Planning
Ph: 373-9074
Fx: 373-9085

e
373-9077
Fx: 373-9051

Public Works
Ph: 373-9095
Fx: 373-9085

Ph: _____
Fx: _____

April 9, 1996

Eileen O. Johnson
501 Knik Goose Bay Road
Wasilla, Alaska 99654

Dear Ms. Johnson:

Re: Repair of water service line

Several weeks have lapsed since we last discussed your water line freezing problem. It is my understanding that you were going to excavate your water line, near the house, to see if you could determine where the line was frozen and where the copper service line ended. Once the line was exposed, you were going to notify my personnel so that they could inspect the work. If we determined that the City's portion of the copper service was not constructed properly, the City would pay for the excavation and the required repairs. However, if there are no construction errors, then you would be responsible for the excavation and repair work.

The standard areas of responsibility are defined by the location of the key box. The City is generally responsible for operation and maintenance from the main water line to the key box. The property owner is responsible from the key box to the structure. The City did install this service, for a different owner, from the key box to the old well. This construction took place approximately ten years ago and the service has been performing adequately ever since. Regardless of who installed the service, the responsibility for operation and maintenance from the key box to the structure remains with the home owner.

After review of all of the information that we have, we feel that your service is frozen. Both you and the City have tried to use electrical current to thaw the service line. This cannot be accomplished as there is no continuity from the key box to the pipes inside your home. This could be due to either a break in the water service line or a break in the electrical path. The break in the electrical path may be due to the placement of a dielectric coupling to connect the copper service line to your galvanized iron line. If this is the case, the City does not feel that the installation of a dielectric coupling would constitute improper or faulty construction. We also feel that neither the absence of a thaw wire nor the absence of as-built drawings are contributing errors to your freezing problems. The thaw wire could be bypassed by using a key on either the main line valve

Eileen O. Johnson
April 9, 1996
Page 2 of 2 pages

or your key box. The City did supply the equipment and personnel to use either of these connection points when your thawing contractor was present. As for the as-builts, no one more than I wish that we had them. The City has made considerable effort, including a law suit to obtain them. They may have told us where the problem was, but we still would have had to work with the same frozen ground in dealing with your situation.

According to our agreement, the City has left your service connection open. This was done to allow you to have immediate access to water if the stoppage could be relieved. Please inform your contractor that the service is "live" and will need to be turned off if there is any breaking of the line. I strongly recommend that you extend the copper service into your home so that there is electrical continuity from the key box to your basement.

It is the City's responsibility to replace the thaw wire for your service. This will be done this summer at no expense to you.

If you have any questions, please contact me at anytime at 376-9055.

Sincerely,



John T. Felton, P.E.
Public Works Director/City Engineer

c: Mayor Stein
Councilman Carney
Councilman Lockwood



CITY OF WASILLA

290 E. HERNING AVE.


WASILLA, ALASKA 99654-7091

PHONE: (907) 373-9050

FAX: (907) 373-9085

INTEROFFICE MEMO

TO: Jack Felton
Public Works Director/City Engineer

FROM: Doug Abbas 
Water Technician

DATE: August 19, 1996

RE: Eileen Johnson's Service Line
Kennedy Block 3 Lot 8, 501 Knik-Goose Bay Road
Estimate for Contractor to Do All the Work

The distance from the well to the house is unknown, but guesses (from Peter Curtis) are approx. 10' from the house. Following is the breakdown:

Five pieces high density foam	\$13.11	\$ 65.55
60' Roll "K" Copper 3/4"		106.20
Five hours backhoe and operator	\$125.00/hr.	625.00
Delivery and pick up	\$85.00 each way	170.00
Five hours laborer	\$20.00/hr.	100.00
1 3/4" 3-part Union		<u>6.83</u>
Estimated Cost from Well to House		\$ 1,073.58

NOTE: No landscaping included.

From key box to house is 40'. Following is the breakdown:

Fifteen pieces high density foam	\$13.11	\$ 196.65
Sixty foot roll "K" Copper 3/4"		106.20
Five hours backhoe and operator	\$125.00/hr.	625.00
Delivery and pick up	\$85.00 each way	170.00
Five hours labor	\$20.00/hr.	<u>100.00</u>
TOTAL		\$ 1,197.85

Both prices include one layer 2" X 2' insulation and one layer 4' x 2" insulation. No plumbing in the house is included.

Kennedy Block 3 Lot 8, 501 Knik-Goose Bay Road
August 19, 1996
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The reason these prices are so close is that finding the service line splice and digging by the foundation will be the most time consuming. Also, the natural gas service is alongside the water line and a set of outside steps needs to be removed. Please be aware that her foundation is breaking apart very close to where her service line enters the block basement (less than 10' away).

DA:bg

c: File
Correspondence File
Jack Felton/Reading File

Gen Corr 1-a:\water\cont-est.mem