

Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Water Commissioners
Monday, April 12, 2010
North Brookfield Water Treatment Facility
14 Bell Road
North Brookfield, MA 01535

Present: Tim Nason, James Kularski, John Thomasian, Stephen Jones and Shiela LeBlanc - Recording Secretary

Absent: None

Guests: None

Meeting Opened: 6:05 PM

1. Mr. Nason made and Mr. Kularski seconded a motion to approve the minutes of the March 8, 2010 meeting as written. So voted.
2. **Low Pressure Area Update** - As discussed at the last meeting, DEP has instructed us to increase the pressure at any location that does not have the required 20 psi. The options are either to install a new main with a booster system or to install individual booster pumps.

Both Mr. Kularski and Jamie McNeaney have brought to Mr. Jones's attention a new all in one type system made by Grunfus. Grunfus makes a pump that has a small storage tank built into it. The model he has looked at is the MQ3-35, which increases the pressure in the house by 35 psi over what is already there. He has included the cut sheet for the pump in the packet. Mr. McNeaney provided the phone number of a plumber that uses these type pumps, Dave Frapatino from Douglas. Mr. Jones contacted Mr. Frapatino to ask him about this system and he informed him that he has used this pump a number of times, most recently in North Attleboro where they were installed in a new development built near the water tank that had low pressure problems. He used these pumps because they were quieter than the jet type booster pumps and overall it was less expensive to install. He also mentioned the warranty, which is 2 years.

Mr. Jones asked McNeaney for a quote to install this pump on 16 Sunset and we visited the house last week to plan the installation. Mr. Jones asked him to design in a bypass just in case the pump goes down in the middle of the night and we are planning on installing a dual check directly after the meter for containment. Mr. McNeaney has also recommended an expansion tank be installed to take up the pressure from the hot water tank. Mr. McNeaney's quote to install this pump is \$1,984. This is quite a bit higher than Mr. Jones had planned on. He called Roger Charpentier to ask him to update his quote that Mr. Davis had brought to this board. Both quotes were supplied to the Board Members.

Mr. Jones has also done a survey of the low pressure areas in town. All houses on Mt. Guyot and Mt Pleasant Place have over 20 psi at street level. On Witt Drive there is one house that has pressure below 20 psi when the tank goes below

18'. On Sunset Drive there are 4 locations where the pressure is below 20 psi, three of them all of the time and one only when the tank drops below 17'.

During regular run times the tank may not get below 18', but during heavy draw times, during main breaks, flushing, and when we do not pump on Sundays, the tank can get as low as 15'. It is unrealistic to think that we can keep the tank above 17' at all times. He has included the survey results in the packet.

Bottom line is that there are a total of five houses that have pressure below what is called for by DEP. Four of them do not have booster pumps, one does.

Mr. Jones's recommendation is to write up a set of specs, send them to the two plumbers who have already sent quotes to make sure they are quoting on the same thing, and also to send them to a third plumber. Mr. Kularski suggested that we send it out to a couple other local plumbers as well.

Mr. Jones noted that we have two issues still to resolve. One being what we do with the person that already has the tank and the other is a policy that needs to be added to the Rules and Regulations and submitted to D.E.P.

Mr. Jones suggested as follows: "The North Brookfield Water Department will supply 20 psi as required by MA state laws. This will be done by installing a booster system in the low-pressure location, all costs borne by the water department. All future repairs will be the responsibility of the owner of said location."

Mr. Nason made and Mr. Kularski seconded a motion to accept the recommendation of Mr. Jones regarding this addition to the Rules and Regulations and to also submit a letter to DEP regarding this matter. So voted.

Mr. Kularski suggested sending a letter to the one water user that already has a system and inform them that should something fail we are willing to supply a booster system at our discretion.

3. Set Back Violation Update - As we have discussed in prior meetings, Jim Mendala had been keeping horses in a field that allows the horses to graze within the 100' of the North Brook Canal, one of the two tributaries for the Horse Pond Reservoir. State Law reads that no animals may graze within 100' of a drinking water tributary. The idea being we don't want bacteria from the horse manure washing into the tributary and then the reservoir. We have written 2 letters to Mr. Mendala to notify him of this infraction and he finally removed the horses from this area 3 weeks ago. He stopped at the Doane Pond Gatehouse when they were working on it and verbally informed Mr. Jones and Mr. Kennan that he had moved the horses. On subsequent watershed inspection they have not seen any horses in this area.

4. **Budget 2011 Update** - We have received no communication from the Finance Committee or Board of Selectmen regarding the budget. Mr. Kularski noted that he read in the newspaper that the Selectmen would not be hiring until the 2012 budget period.

Mr. Jones noted that this is the second time we have made reference from a newspaper and he feels sometimes the papers are wrong. Mr. Thomasian asked if there was some way we could have by-passed them to get this on the town meeting.

Mrs. LeBlanc informed him that we could have submitted an article with 75 signatures before and they would have had to put it on the town meeting warrant.

5. **Horse Pond Dam Update** – Mrs. LeBlanc has been working with Lenard Project manager Scott Charpentier to correct any deficiencies & changes in the USDA Application. Scott has also told us that the Office of Dam Safety has not accepted the repair design, they probably haven't gotten to it yet.

The Board of Selectmen's Administrative Assistant has told us that the meeting on April 20th is not an official Public Hearing as it has been written in the newspaper. It will be an informational section for the dam repair during the selectmen's meeting. Mr. Jones plans on giving a short history of the project, Lenard Engineer Karen Fung will be there to describe the actual repairs, and he assumes the Board of Selectmen will explain why they chose the financing plans. Members of the Board of Water Commissioners can chime in whenever they would like to.

Mr. Kularski asked if Lenard needs pictures for a power point? He has some available if they would like to use it.

6. **Minimum Billing** – The Board discussed the different options of the minimum billing.

Mr. Nason made and Mr. Kularski seconded a motion to adopt a minimum billing basis for the water billing beginning fiscal year 2011. The minimum fee to be \$45.00 for the first 5,000 gallons and a cost per gallon for every gallon over and it will be determined that same way that we have done in the past. So voted.

The Board opted to not have a Public Hearing regarding this but to issue a notice in the CCR and to also put a letter of explanation in with the first billing in July.

7. **WARN Update** - MAWARN president Mike Knox held a meeting in Spencer last month to start organizing his plan to cross train water operators between

towns in case of emergency. Rob McNeil and Bruce Guyon from Spencer, Bob Allen from East Brookfield, and Mr. Jones also attended. At this time the thought is to exchange operators once a month for training. The next meeting is scheduled for the end of April, in Spencer, and we are to have an Operations Flow Chart available for all attendees. The one we had was really bare bones and Mrs. LeBlanc has improved on it considerably. This was included in the packet.

8. **Unaccounted for Water** – Mr. Jones and Mrs. LeBlanc have been working on the statistics for the amount of Unaccounted for Water in 2009. The final figure for 2009 is 12% unaccounted for water and that is lower than the 14.7% that we had last year. The good news is that we are under the 15% UAW and the 80% RGPCD that was required for the 2009 calendar year by DEP. If we hadn't gotten below these numbers we would have had to develop and implement an annual compliance plan designed to meet the required numbers. The bad news is that this decrease is solely from the calibration of the flow meter that was conducted last year. We hadn't been able to correctly calibrate the effluent meter in the past but through a class with David Liston Mr. Jones was taught how MWRA calibrates their meters through a company that uses a pitot tube connected to a laptop. This calibration costs \$1,000 but was able to find a 3% discrepancy in the flow meter.

Our next compliance date is for the calendar year 2012 and calls for an RGPCD of 65% and an UAW of 10%. We are well below the RGPCD but it may be a problem to get to 10% UAW. The UAW chart was included in the packet

9. **Internship** - Linda Laine, DEP Training and Outreach Specialist, has approached Mr. Jones regarding an Intern working with us. The program is through the Worcester Schools Night Life program. It has been set up to try to bring more people into the water industry. It is a well known fact that there will be a shortage of trained operators in the near future as the present generation of operators retires.

The program consists of 300 hours working at a water utility. All expenses are paid by the NEWWA with money they receive from EPA. Mr. Kularski asked about liability and Mr. Jones forwarded the question to Linda. Linda recommended that he get in touch with Rob McNeil in Spencer because they have had 2 interns and have developed a liability waiver form for the interns to sign before they start. Mr. Jones contacted Mr. McNeil and he sent over the form, which was provided to the Board. The work can be pretty much anything and there is a person from North Brookfield in the program this year. Linda has asked if we would be interested in having this person spend his 300 hours with us. The funding is only good until the end of the fiscal year but they expect it to be renewed. She has suggested interviewing the person to see if it would be a good fit and working a couple of days a week.

Mr. Jones feels that if the liability were covered then it would be a good thing. It would give us an extra pair of hands to help in what we do and it would help the big picture regarding the shortage of operators.

Mr. Nason made and Mr. Thomasian seconded a motion to adopt Spencer's liability waiver. So voted.

The Board further asked that a letter be sent to the Selectmen informing them of our decision to take on a water intern.

10. **Ethics Training** – Mr. Jones informed the Board that all employed by and Commissioners of the Water Department have completed the Ethics training.
11. **Billing Issue** – The Board reviewed a question regarding a billing issue for a residence on East Brookfield Road. After much discussion it was concluded that no abatement is necessary due to the turning back and reprogramming of the ERT which will then show the savings in their next billing. It was noted that Mr. Keenan would need to obtain a visual reading as well as a remote reading in July.
12. **Superintendent Report** – Main Breaks - We had one water main break this past month. A section of 8" AC ruptured on March 17th at 1:00 PM. between the transfer station and the old Chase precast complex. We closed a valve below the WWTP to isolate the break. Knowing that the Chase location was not being used and that the transfer station wouldn't open the next day, Mr. Jones contacted the BOH and Leo Egan, who takes care of the Chase buildings to make sure it would be okay to fix the break the next day. Both gave their approval. We were able to set up for the break on the 17th and fix it during the day on the 18th.

Beaver Removal - While we were up at the Horse Pond Dam to cut brush Mr. Kennan and Mr. Jones saw a beaver in the reservoir. Mr. Jones called Water Department Administrative Assistant Shiela LeBlanc and asked her to start the paperwork to ask permission from the BOH to remove the beaver from North Brookfield's drinking water supply. She completed the paperwork and dropped it off at the BOH that afternoon. The signed form was returned the next day. Mr. Jones called our trapper shortly afterwards and he was able to start on Friday. Within one week he had trapped out two beavers from the water supply. We have established an excellent working relationship with the BOH and it really helps in situations such as this. There is a bill before the legislature that would remove the beaver permitting from the BOH and transfer it to the DFW. We hope this does not happen, as it would increase the time that it would take us to remove beavers from the water supply.

Annual Statistical Report - The annual statistical report this year is to be done electronically through the eDEP system. This will be the first time that everyone will have to submit it electronically instead of on paper. Mrs.

LeBlanc has registered us on the eDEP network and she attended a class at the Worcester Public Library regarding the new submittal procedures. DEP is over 2 months late in getting the program to the water suppliers but it finally opened last week. The final report is due in June.

Valve Replacement - As mentioned last month, we had replace a 12” butterfly valve on the effluent side of the #1 filter that had been leaking by. Mr. Jones was able to buy a rebuild kit for this valve, Mr. Kennan and Mr. Jones rebuilt it, and have since used this rebuilt valve to replace the 12” butterfly valve on the effluent side of the #2 filter that had started leaking recently.

Part time help - Joe Flamand started working on April 5th, 19 hours a week, same as in previous years.

Upcoming Vacations – Mr. Jones will be taking some vacation time in April, from the 21st to the 25th. Mrs. LeBlanc is also taking vacation time this month.

Cross Connection Testing - Ryan Toomey, Toomey Water Services, tested all the backflow devices last month. This is first of the semiannual testing of all the devices in town. There are 41 devices in town and it takes most of the day for Ryan and Rich to get into all the buildings and conduct the testing.

13. **New Business** – The question has come up regarding the age limit to be required to have a Horse Pond Fishing Permit. The Board feels that due to the fact that it is a one time fee that we should check on the state age requirement and follow that and for anyone younger the parent would have to sign.

Meeting adjourned: 7:10 PM

Respectfully submitted:

**Shiela LeBlanc,
Recording Secretary**

