

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Water Commissioners  
Water Treatment Facility  
14 Bell Road  
North Brookfield, MA 01535**

**Present:** Tim Nason, James Kularski, Stephen Jones – Water Superintendent,  
Shiela LeBlanc – Recording Secretary

**Absent:** John Thomasian

**Guests:** Wayne & Sarah Carter – 115 Summer Street

**Meeting opened:** 6:01 pm

1. **Mr. Nason made and Mr. Kularski seconded a motion to approve the minutes of the August 9, 2010 meeting as written. So voted.**
2. **Abatements** – Wayne & Sarah Carter were present to request an abatement for their apartment house on 115 Summer Street. Mr. Carter explained that on January 12<sup>th</sup> they received a call from one of their tenants who thought they heard water running. Mr. Carter went to the residence to check this out. After some investigation he found a broken pipe in a wall. He had to pull open the wall and repair the pipe.

Mr. Jones explained that he went to the residence and verified that the meter and Ert are in agreement. There were no leaks appearing while he was there. He did note that from January through June the usage was approximately 1,710 gallons per day and on September 7 was down to 922 gallons per day and as of the 17<sup>th</sup> the usage was 958 gallons per day. That is a lot of water being used. They will be facing another big bill coming up.

Mr. Kularski verified that there was no problem with the meter. Mr. Jones informed him that the meter was fine and there were no leaks showing while he was there.

Mr. Carter showed the Board the picture of the broken pipe in the wall. It was in a hallway that is not commonly used by the tenants.

Mr. Kularski noted that the water use is still high. With only 6 people in the residence it comes out to 153 gallons a day per person. Mr. Carter noted that for a least a year there was one apartment empty. It is now fully rented.

Mr. Nason noted that we had a customer in the past whose tenant had a toilet running and never told the landlord and the bill was huge. Mrs. Carter noted that we had given her the dye tabs and they will get them out to the tenants to make sure there is no problem with the toilets. Mr. Kularski noted that a lot of times it is just a flapper that gets stuck and they get used to hearing it and they jiggle the handle every now and then.

Mrs. LeBlanc informed the Board that according to their abatement policy the maximum abatement would be \$1,603.34. The bill is currently past due and the Board cannot waive the interest and demand fees. Their total due will now be \$1,416.17.

**Mr. Kularski made and Mr. Nason seconded a motion to approve an abatement in the amount of \$1,603.34. So voted.**

The Board questioned how we would replenish the abatement account. Mr. Kularski noted that if we were doing quarterly billing we would have caught this sooner.

Mr. Kularski recommended that they use the dye tabs in the three apartments and also get on line for a drip calculator. Mr. Jones noted that someone is using serious amounts of water here.

(The Carters left the meeting at this time)

**Abatement Request – 206 North Main Street** – The Board reviewed the abatement request of 007 Limited for a water leak at their property of 206 North Main Street. According to current policy and this being a two family home the minimum bill amount would be \$900.00 making them eligible for an abatement in the amount of \$6.42.

**Mr. Nason made and Mr. Kularski seconded a motion to approve an abatement in the amount of \$6.42 for a water leak at 206 North Main Street. So voted.**

3. **Horse Pond Dam** – Mr. Lalashius and Mr. Jones went to the Wachusett Expo in August and they attended a class on Capital Funding. One of the speakers was Dan Beaudette, USDA Director of Community Programs and the main money man for the USDA Loan & Grant program for our area. Mr. Jones asked him about the delay in hearing about the application for the Loan & Grant for the Horse Dam Repair Project. His answer was that USDA has spent all of its grant money for this year, there is none left. He told Mr. Jones that this has not officially been released yet, in fact he wasn't supposed to tell him what he did. Mr. Jones has since emailed James Fritz, who is the USDA Area Specialist that is working on our application, regarding the status of our application. His answer was that he has heard nothing. The application has gone in, but is now at the Central Office and they have not gotten back to the local office. He mentioned that there are three other projects in the same situation as ours and that he would let him know when he hears anything. Mr. Jones takes this to mean that Mr. Beaudette, being at the top of the administration in the area has heard that the money is all gone but that they have not officially let the local offices know yet. He then emailed Mr. Fritz about whether our application would then carry over until the next fiscal year.

His response was that it would carry over to the fiscal year for consideration. Key word there is consideration. The USDA fiscal year begins on October 1. Although we had received preliminary approval of a 45% grant, that may now change.

Speaking to some USDA people from the MRWA, the feeling was that USDA had oversold the stimulus money, too many projects applied for it, too much money was given out too fast, and USDA ran out of this money back in June or July. It seem probable that everyone in USDA knows this but the Head Office is not making it official so nothing has gone out to let us know.

He has emailed another 6-month extension request to the Office of Dam Safety. If this is approved, the completion date becomes July 30, 2011. If it is not approved the town will have to seek alternative financing.

Mr. Jones stated that he is hoping to hear from the Office of Dam Safety this week. If we don't get the extension the dam has to be done by January 2011.

4. **New Operator** - Andy Lalashius started as the new secondary operator on August 17<sup>th</sup>. He has worked out well so far, showing knowledge in the lab area and a willingness to learn everything else. Mr. Jones has concentrated training on the treatment plant and he has learned enough to run the plant. We have started some training within the distribution system. His computer skills are a plus and he has started developing and printing SOPs on the subjects that he is being taught. Andy seems like a good fit.
5. **Low Pressure Area** - Roger Charpentier completed the final installation of a booster pump to increase the water pressure at a house on Witt Drive. This is the fourth location that a booster pump was installed to bring the residual pressure up past the DEP mandated 20 psi. The total cost for this project was \$5,238.33, which came out of the System Improvement Account.

The only one was Lavallee that was not done but they had installed their own.

6. **Re-schedule – October 11, 2010 Meeting – Mr. Nason made and Mr. Kularski seconded a motion to change the October meeting to October 18<sup>th</sup> due to the Columbus Day Holiday. So voted.**
7. **Superintendent Report** - The past month has been taken up with either running the plant or with training. Mr. Jones would expect this to carry on for another month or two.

Mr. Jones ended up working 54 days straight between July and August, which breaks his personal record of 31 days straight, that he worked last year when Richie Kennan was sick. He has been able to start taking Saturdays off now that Mr. Lalashius can run the plant but he cannot go very far in case something comes up that he hasn't been trained for.

**Sunday Pumping** - We have stopped pumping on Sundays, a schedule that we restarted in 2008 when the demand dropped. This allows us to have more time off, saves the department in overtime pay, and allows the storage tank to drop around 25% before we start the pumps on Monday morning. Allowing the water level to drop this much helps prevent stale water during times of low draw. We will continue this practice until next April if the demand permits.

**Hydrant Flushing** - We started flushing the system today. This is a semi-annual housekeeping chore for water departments that helps keep the pipes cleaner and flushes out stale water from the dead ends in town. We schedule 4 weeks to flush the whole distribution system, flushing during weekdays only.

**Intake** - The intake was cleaned in August. Since Tim Bachelor has moved west for the summers we have used Brad Gannon to clean the intake. This year's cost was \$250.

8. **New Business** – Mr. Jones will review the abatement account and let them know how much remains in there after these abatements.

**Meeting adjourned: 6:35PM**

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Shiela LeBlanc,  
Recording Secretary**