

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Water Commissioners  
Monday December 8, 2014  
Bell Hill Water Treatment Facility  
14 Bell Hill Road  
North Brookfield, MA 01535**

Present: **Tim Nason, John Thomasian, James Kularski, Steve Jones  
& Kristen Thacker (Secretary of the meeting minutes)**

Guests: Jim Haupt, Peter Dupell and Wayne Granat

**The meeting opened at 6:00pm.**

**Review and Approve the Minutes**

James Kularski made a motion and Tim Nason seconded the motion to approve the minutes of the November 10, 2014 BOWC meeting. The vote to accept these minutes was unanimous.

**Valley View Hydrant use Request**

Jim Haupt from the Valley View is requesting to use one of their new fire hydrants to fill a skating rink on their tennis court for their students.

Mr. Jones stated that the hydrants are for the fire department only, not to fill a skating rink and for that reason Mr. Jones would normally not approve this request. Mr. Jones stated that this case is somewhat different. Reasons being, this is a private hydrant, owned by Valley View School and is located on their property. This hydrant was added when the main building was rebuilt this past summer (2014). The tennis courts are located right beside the hydrant so there will be no hoses crossing roads. Mr. Jones stated that he is in favor of allowing Valley View using their hydrant to fill the skating rink with the following conditions. 1. The hydrant must be metered; the Water Department and the Fire Department both have hydrant meters. 2. There must be a tested backflow device attached near the hydrant, the North Brookfield Water Department does not have one so Valley View will have to supply this. 3. Valley View would have to pay labor costs for Water Department personnel to connect the meter and monitor the process. Mr. Jones believes that two (2) hours will cover the time needed at \$40.00 per hour. 4. The work should be done Monday through Saturday, between 8:30 and 3:00. Mr. Haupt has talked about having a fireman available to help, if this is the case, Mr. Jones would allow it to go longer in the day and the fireman can monitor and close the hydrant.

North Brookfield Fire Department Chief Brad Gannon has offered to use the Fire Department meter and backflow device, run the hydrant and monitor the process for Valley View School. Mr. Jones would also be in favor of this proposal. James Kularski made a motion and Tim Nason

seconded the motion to approve the use of the fire hydrant by Valley View School as long as the Fire Chief, Brad Gannon and/or the North Brookfield Water Department are involved with the entire process.

### **Peter Dupell**

Mr. Dupell lives at 6 Bell Road, his father in law, Wayne Granat, has cleared some land at the bottom of Mr. Dupell's property with the intention of building a new home. Mr. Dupell stated that Bell Road only has a sewer line and no water line. Mr. Dupell does however have town water through an easement from years prior to him purchasing his home. Mr. Dupell asked if there was a way to tap a water line into his so that his father in law, Mr. Granat, could have town water and not have to drill a well. Mr. Jones and Mr. Thomasian stated that the North Brookfield Water Department does not allow anyone to tap into an existing service line. Mr. Dupell then questioned if he could give Mr. Granat an easement to run a new water line to Mr. Granat's lot. The Board of Water Commissioners and Mr. Jones were not aware of the legalities of Mr. Dupell's said question. Mr. Dupell then inquired about running a water main from Route 67 to Mr. Granat's lot. Mr. Thomasian told Mr. Dupell that it was possible; however it would cost a substantial amount of money to do this. Mr. Dupell understood but he stated that he was exploring every option to get town water to his father in law's lot. Mr. Kularski and Mr. Thomasian stated that they believed drilling a well would be the best way (financially) to go.

Mr. Dupell had another question regarding the purchase of some of the land behind his home. This said land is currently owned by the Town of North Brookfield. This section of land does not affect the watershed and the Water Department does not use it for the Treatment Plant and has no plan to use this land in the future. Mr. Dupell stated that he wants to do nothing with this said land; Mr. Dupell wants to protect this land from being developed. Mr. Dupell asked the Board of Water Commissioners if he wrote up a formal proposal to present to the Board of Selectman would the Board of Water Commissioners support him. The Board of Water Commissioners and Mr. Jones stated to Mr. Dupell that as long as the proposal asked the town for a covenant to just protect this said land they are all in agreement.

### **Hiring Time Line**

Mr. Jones stated that at the last meeting on November 10, 2014 the Board of Water Commissioners had agreed to send a letter to the Board of Selectmen asking to meet with them at their meeting on January 6, 2015 to discuss the approaching Superintendent position. The Board of Selectmen have gone to an every other week schedule for their meetings, therefor the Board of Water Commissioners will not be attending a meeting on January 6, 2015. Mr. Thomasian has requested to be added to the agenda at the January 13, 2015 for the Board of Selectmen meeting. Mrs. Thacker has written up a letter to be signed by the Board of Water Commissioners tonight and will be sent down to the Board of Selectmen tomorrow, December 9, 2014.

## **Budget FY16**

Mr. Jones, Mr. Kennan and Mrs. Thacker have been working on the FY 2016 Budget and have the draft budget finished. Mr. Jones has been working with both Mr. Kennan and Mrs. Thacker in developing the budget and showing them how he and Mrs. LeBlanc have been doing it for the past fourteen (14) years. In the increasing category, the Water Department has raised the amount for electricity by \$8,600.00 to reflect the increase in costs.

The North Brookfield Water Department has budgeted for the new operator to join with a family health insurance plan which will increase indirect costs by over \$9,000. If the new operator takes a single plan or no plan, this will change; the Water Department will not know the answer to this until the new operator is hired.

The Water Department has budgeted \$1,000.00 for consulting fees in the Other Salary Account for either Shiela LeBlanc or Mr. Jones, if it is needed.

Insurance costs like auto, property, general liability, have gone up by \$500.

The Water Department has budgeted a leak detection survey for \$4,500.00 and a storage tank cleaning at a cost of \$5,700.00.

Also budgeted is a three year maintenance checkup for the Water Treatment Plant generator and new batteries for both generators, all of which will cost \$2,300.00.

The North Brookfield Water Department is also planning to get a quote to replace the F350 utility truck. This truck has 93,000 miles on it and is over 14 years old. The front drive shaft failed during the last snowstorm. The frame has lost a lot of metal and now has a small crack in the rear section. Huck's has added a support but it is time to replace it. Mr. Jones's thought is to transfer money from Retained Earnings to pay for it so it wouldn't be part of the budget itself. The North Brookfield Water Department has \$267,000.00 in Retained Earnings at this time. \$234,000.00 of this money will be paid out for the DWSRF principle payment in July of 2015 which leaves \$33,000. The North Brookfield Water Department may need some of this for the System Improvement account this year depending on any distribution problems that may arise before July 2015. Mr. Jones and Mr. Kennan have been discussing the purchase of a new truck and are going to look into purchasing an F250 truck next time. Mr. Jones and Mr. Kennan have also discussed keeping the utility body that is currently on the F350 and just purchasing the chassis. Mr. Kennan will be putting together the requirements and contacting MHQ for a quote.

## **North Brook Canal Repair Update**

On November 14, 2014, Ed Thibault and a couple of his employees repaired the breach in the North Brook Canal. Mr. Thibault and his employees had cleared a few small trees and were able

to drive the excavator along the canal bed to the repair location. The original culvert pipe bridge was pulled apart so the excavator could get through. Mr. Thibault was able to find a couple of large rocks to add to the banking and has compacted the added soil regularly. Mr. Jones had previously purchased a culvert pipe of the same size, 38" high x 57" wide x 8' long and this was used to rebuild the bridge on the way out. The work was completed very well and all in one day. Thanks to E.M. Thibault for the plan to complete this repair and for executing it in the best way possible. Mr. Jones and Mr. Kennan have seeded the disturbed areas with a contractor's mix and winter rye. Both were covered with hay as required by the Conservation Committee. The Water Department has not opened the diversion yet as the excavator tracks disturbed the stream bed and Mr. Jones feels it would be better to wait awhile. The rainstorms we have had since the repair have added enough water for the stream to run with the runoff from the uphill areas, but it has been slow enough so there hasn't been a problem. After the second storm Mr. Jones and Mr. Kennan checked the turbidity levels in both brooks and they were both the same. Mr. Jones will wait and see when there is a good time to open the diversion this fall or wait until next spring.

### **Payment Plan Update**

The North Brookfield Water Department had three customers who had made arrangements with the Board of Water Commissioners to have a payment plan in place for their water service. Two of the customers have held their end of the agreement. One customer has not adhered to the agreement they made with the Board. The North Brookfield Water Department cannot shut off any water service November first (1) through April first (1). Mr. Jones stated that closer to April 1, 2015 Mrs. Thacker will send this customer a statement of the balance owed. Mr. Jones stated and Mr. Thomasian agreed that if their balance does not get paid in full by April 1, 2015 their water service will be shut off.

### **Superintendent Report**

On November 13, 2014 the North Brookfield Water Department fixed a leak in the copper service line for 46 Lakeview Road. The North Brookfield Water Department had started this repair thinking there would be one leak in the pipe but when the Water Department uncovered the service line they ended up finding four (4) or five (5) holes in the pipe along a 5' stretch. The Water Department ended up replacing the entire line. Mr. Jones had mentioned at last month's meeting how much less the Water Department is pumping and by fixing this leak has brought the pumping amounts down to levels Mr. Jones has never seen. The North Brookfield Water Department also repaired a curb stop at 26 Willow Street the same day.

With the number of repairs lately, the North Brookfield Water Department's System Improvement account is getting low, there is \$17,551.00 left in the account. The Water Department is going to keep this in mind and will most likely ask to transfer \$10,000.00 from Retained Earnings into the System Improvement account at the next Town Meeting.

Annual maintenance on both generators was completed. All hydrants have been checked for water, pumped out if needed and potable antifreeze added if the Water Department felt the ground water was too high.

Mr. Jones and Mr. Kennan attended a class in Brookfield entitled Pipe locating and Leak Detection and how it can be tied to Assets Management, put on by the Massachusetts Rural Water Association. Beside the knowledge Mr. Jones and Mr. Kennan also received six (6) Training Credit hours.

**New Business**

No new business.

Meeting adjourned at 7:10 pm

Respectfully Submitted  
Kristen Thacker-Administrative Assistant