

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Water Commissioners**  
**Monday March 9, 2015**  
**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: **Richard Kennan, Jon Keegan & Christopher Connolly**

**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 February 13, 2015 Board of Water Commissioners meeting. The vote to accept these minutes was unanimous.

**Interviews for the open Operator position**

John Thomasian, Jim Kularski and Tim Nason conducted the interviews with Mr. Keegan and Mr. Connolly for the Water Operator position. Mr. Thomasian stated that both interviewees had good qualifications. Mr. Keegan did not have any computer knowledge which is crucial in working at the North Brookfield Water Department. Mr. Connolly has previously worked with the Southbridge, MA Water Department which is almost identical to the North Brookfield Water Department. Therefore, Mr. Connolly is familiar and has worked with the same analyzers and SCADA computer system that the North Brookfield Water Department uses to run the plant. Mr. Kularski stated that in hiring Mr. Connolly the transition would most likely be a smooth one in regards to training Mr. Connolly. Mr. Kularski made a motion to recommend Mr. Connolly to the Board of Selectmen as the next Operator for the North Brookfield Water Department. The vote was unanimous.

**Water Superintendent**

Mr. Jones stated that the Board of Water Commissioners met with the Board of Selectmen and recommended Richard Kennan as the next Water Superintendent. Mr. Jones stated that the Board of Selectmen agreed with the recommendation. The Board of Selectmen voted to hire Mr. Kennan as the next Water superintendent, the vote was unanimous. Mr. Jones stated that the salary was also discussed and all agreed that the present salary should be continued.

### **Administrative Assistant six month evaluation**

Mr. Jones stated that Mrs. Kristen Thacker started employment as the Administrative Assistant with the North Brookfield Water Department on August 11, 2014. Mr. Jones stated that Mrs. Thacker's probationary period was over on February 12, 2015. Mr. Jones has evaluated Mrs. Thacker for this period of time and found that she has worked out very well. Mrs. Thacker has done all the work that has been required of her, done it well, and with an excellent attitude.

### **Superintendent vacation pay**

Mr. Jones stated that his retirement date is June 12, 2015. This is the same date that Mr. Jones was hired in 2000. With this being Mr. Jones anniversary date Mr. Jones looked into whether he would be due the 4 (four) week vacation that comes on the anniversary date as stated in the town's Personnel Handbook. Mr. Jones stated that at that time the North Brookfield Water Department was advised to include it in the budget to be paid out when Mr. Jones retires. Mr. Jones stated that there are varying viewpoints on whether Mr. Jones should get this vacation payout or not. Mr. Jones stated that the way the handbook reads is "Vacations must be used in the fiscal year and are effective according to the employee's initial date of employment. No vacation time shall be carried forward into the next fiscal year". Based on the said handbook Mr. Jones would get the four week vacation as of June 12, 2015 however it would need to be used up by July 1, 2015, the beginning of the next fiscal year. Mr. Jones would like to ask Town Counsel what the right way to do this is so the North Brookfield Water Department can make sure the right thing is done. Mr. Jones stated that it will cost but Mr. Jones feels it is worth it to get this right.

### **Algae Management of Horse Pond**

Mr. Jones stated that each year there is a water taste and odor potential in Horse Pond due to the excess of algae that occurs in the spring from the nutrients that are washed into the reservoir from the spring rains. The North Brookfield Water Department has learned that a May treatment of copper sulfate destroys the excess algae and brings the ecosystem back into balance. Mr. Jones stated that the North Brookfield Water Department has found that this is also true in the mid to late summer. The North Brookfield Water Department has received this year's contract from Lycott Environmental. Mr. Kularski, Mr. Nason and Mr. Thomasian reviewed the contract and agreed to accept Option B of this contract from Lycott to treat the reservoir during 2015. Mr. Kularski made a motion and Mr. Nason seconded that motion to request from the Selectmen a signature for the said contract. Mrs. Thacker will write a letter to the Board of Selectmen

recommending Lycott. Mr. Jones stated that Lycott's contract is for \$1,650 per treatment which is the same as last year.

### **Superintendent Report**

Mr. Jones stated that there were two service line breaks this past month. The first one was on the 2" line that supplies water to the North Brookfield Fire and Highway Departments. Mr. Jones stated that the other was on the line that supplies water to 11 East Brookfield Road. Mr. Jones stated that both of these service lines have been repaired.

Mr. Jones stated that Mrs. Thacker and Mrs. LeBlanc have worked the 2014 SERC Tier 2 report and it has been completed and submitted. Mr. Jones stated that the Massachusetts facilities covered by the Federal Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act requirements must submit Tier II reports to their Emergency Planning Committee, Local Fire Department, and the State Emergency Response Commission (SERC) annually. Mr. Jones stated that report includes any hazardous with a gross weight of 10,000 pounds or more. Mr. Jones stated that the North Brookfield Water Department has to report coagulant, polyaluminum and chloride. Mr. Jones stated that Mrs. Thacker and Mrs. LeBlanc have been working together on the Annual Statistical Report. Mr. Jones stated that this report was completed and submitted this afternoon.

Mr. Jones stated that the North Brookfield Water Department has replaced or repaired numerous frozen meters. Mr. Jones stated that the North Brookfield Water Department has worked with local plumber Jamie McNeaney to thaw out one frozen service line. Mr. Jones stated that there have also been many other calls regarding frozen water lines. The North Brookfield Water Department investigates all of these calls and points the homeowner in the right direction.

### **New Business**

No new business.

**Meeting adjourned at 7:30 pm**

Respectfully Submitted  
Kristen Thacker-Administrative Assistant

