

Minutes of the Board of Water Commissioners Meeting
Monday, April 14, 2014
North Brookfield Water Treatment Facility
14 Bell Road
North Brookfield, MA 01535

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

Absent: None

Guests: None

Meeting opened: 6:00 PM

1. **Mr. Thomasian made and Mr. Kularski seconded a motion to approve the minutes of the March 10, 2014 Board of Water Commissioner's meeting as written. So voted.**
2. **Bonnie Eaton – Crowley Fuel invoice payment request** – Mr. Jones explained to the Board that last October we had a pressure regulator problem which we didn't know about to begin with. Our pressure regulating valve was malfunctioning erratically. The pressure coming into the valve on Old East Brookfield Road is about 150 psi and it brings it down to 45 psi. This house is located about 100 yards below the valve so her pressure might be about 50 or 60 psi.

We started receiving calls about pressure valves blowing off occasionally. The pressure valve on the hot water heaters would blow off. On this particular house she said she could hear water coming in through the water service so Mr. Jones went down to look at it and you could see water on the floor but when he looked at the valve it appeared to be working fine at that time. It happened again and the valve appeared to be fine. She called Crowley down to check the furnace to see if there was something wrong with the furnace. Mr. Jones was present while the technician from Crowley checked the furnace. At first he thought it was the furnace but after checking everything he decided that it was not the furnace and it must be the water pressure.

We had gotten other calls, the next house down had called, their hot water heater had blown off and water had gotten into the basement. They had a contractor there refinishing the walls at the time. We had gotten a couple other calls as well. Mr. Jones checked our pressure regulating valve and everything appeared alright.

Mr. Jones ended up calling Ross Valve, the company that maintains our pressure regulator. They suggested he run a few tests. The final test was for Mr. Jones to be in the pit and Mr. Lalashius go down stream and open a hydrant. When Mr. Lalashius opened the hydrant the 4" valve opened up wide but when he closed the hydrant the valve did not close so it pressurized the system down below and that is a lot of pressure. That is when we realized our pressure valve was not working correctly. We shut the 4" valve at this time and we were able to use the 8" valve. Ross Valve came and made the repair to the 4" valve.

This problem of hers was caused by the malfunctioning pressure regulating valve on Old East Brookfield Road. Mr. Jones noted that we have a section in our Rules and Regulations that addresses the pressure issues. Mr. Thomasian noted that we supply water but we cannot always control the pressure. We maintain our devices but unfortunately things malfunction.

Mr. Thomasian made and Mr. Kularski seconded a motion to deny the request of Bonnie Eaton for payment of this invoice of Crowley Fuel. So voted.

3. **Special Town Meeting Article** - The First part of the Annual Town Meeting will be held on Friday, May 9th at 7:30 PM.

There will also be a Special Town Meeting on the same day beginning at 7 PM. This may be the last opportunity for FY14 business. The deadline to submit all articles was Friday, April 4th.

As Mr. Jones stated in a prior meeting, the estimate for the repair of the North Main Street water main break is approximately \$30,000.00. We budgeted \$26,000 in system improvement for water distribution repairs and supplies in FY14. We actually started the year with \$54,000 in system improvement since we hadn't fully spent the account in previous years. However we have had four other water main breaks so far this fiscal year, numerous water line leaks that we have repaired, one broken fire hydrant has been replaced, and we completed the turnover from regular brass to low lead brass fittings. This has emptied the System Improvement account and we still have three months to go. This past Friday we repaired a leak in the 16" cast iron water main on North Main Street which will put the account further in the red. We have submitted an article for the special town meeting to transfer money from retained earnings to the system improvement account that will cover the shortfall. The article does not have an amount yet, we can submit this amount shortly before the meeting.

Due to this latest leak we had to use two officers for traffic detail which has emptied our detail account. Mrs. LeBlanc has spoken to Leslie Scott-Burton regarding placing another article on the warrant for the special town meeting to cover the detail costs and any more going further.

Mr. Kularski made and Mr. Nason seconded a motion to request an article to transfer from Water Retained Earnings to Water Salary Other be placed on the warrant of the Special Town Meeting on May 9th. So voted.

4. **Lycott Environmental** - 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. We have learned that a May treatment of copper sulfate destroys the excess algae and brings the ecosystem back into balance. We have found that this is also true in the mid to late summer. We have received this year's contract from Lycott Environmental and Mr. Jones recommended that the Board accept Option B of this contract from Lycott to treat the reservoir during 2014 and to further write a letter to the Board of

Selectmen recommending Lycott so they will sign the contract, just like last year. Lycott's contract is for \$1,650.00 per treatment, the same as last year.

Mr. Kularski made and Mr. Thomasian seconded a motion to write a letter to the Board of Selectmen recommending that they accept the contract with Lycott Environmental for the copper sulfate treatment of the Horse Pond Reservoir Option B \$1,650.00 per treatment. So voted.

5. As was mentioned last month, Pioneer Valley Planning posted the Request for Qualifications for the East Side Neighborhood Infrastructure Planning Project. Five (5) engineering firms submitted RFQs. The Community Development Action Committee met this afternoon to choose one of these firms. Only three of the six committee members filled out the evaluation forms so they went over those and decided to give the other members another week to go over the evaluations.

At the last meeting Mr. Thomasian had asked what our role would be. Mr. Jones is not sure if he answered it completely enough so he reviewed what our role would be. He has been attending meetings of the Community Development Action Committee as this project has progressed. All of the meetings so far have been in the Selectmen's office in the afternoon. Today the meeting started at 2:00 because we had to go over all the engineering firms. Once the firm that is chosen starts the work we will work with them if they need information on the water distribution system in this area. We will also probably have to walk the area with them to go over the hydrants and gate valves within this area. Flow tests will need to be run to determine the condition of the pipe and the fire flow. He feels that the flow tests will be the biggest part for us. The flow testing will be covered by the grant. He doesn't think this is a heavy commitment and the possible rewards would be well worth it. The Representative from Pioneer Valley has been very good and run this entire process.

6. **136 Ward Street** - Tony Woodman of Woodman Excavating replaced the service line for 136 Ward St, eliminating the leak that was found there. The curb stop was old and we got involved to change the curb stop so we will be paying for two hours of Woodman's time. The condition of the copper pipe and brass was poor and we will probably be down there doing our side of the service in the near future.
7. **North Main Street Leak Repair** - The leak in the 16" cast iron main on North Main St was completed on Friday, April 11. We found a spiral type circumference crack in the next pipe downstream from the one that broke in December. We cut this break out and replaced it with a new piece of pipe that actually connected to the repair we made in December. As a result of closing the gate valve in front of the car wash it is now leaking again. During the winter it took 2 months before it stopped on its own. We won't wait that long this time, if it doesn't stop in a week we will set a date to repair it. We now also have a leak on Elm Street that Mrs. LeBlanc spotted. We have not had a chance to specifically locate it. Mr. Jones believes that it a service line.

Mr. Jones noted that when we talked about police details coming up this leak repair will be one of them and the paving on Main Street and the gate valve on Main Street will all require police details.

We pay the Police detail rate because if we only pay the town rate then no one but Churchey will take it. If we have to get an officer from out of town we need to pay detail rate for them so we pay the detail rate in order to get officers.

8. **Hydrant Flushing** We will start flushing water mains on April 28th through May 23rd. A notice will be published in the local papers, a notice will go on the cable local access station, and we will put a notice on the signboard in the center of town and will have our daily schedule posted on the Water Department Facebook page. Flushing is a housekeeping chore that we do for the distribution system semiannually to keep the water mains clear and the water fresh at dead ends.

Mr. Nason noted that the Selectmen have also been reading our notice.

9. **Annual Water Quality Report (CCR)** - The Annual Water Quality Report, also known as the Consumer Confidence Report or CCR, is completed. Mrs. LeBlanc did most of the work this year and the report was very well done. Once again we will be delivering it electronically as we did last year. Mrs. LeBlanc has sent it to North Brookfield webmaster Priscilla Johnson who has posted it on our web page. Mrs. LeBlanc then printed up post cards to send to all of the customers of the municipal water system to let them know the web address where the report can be found. We will also be posting it locally and we will send paper copies by mail or email to anyone who wants it delivered that way.
10. **Superintendent Contract** - On Thursday April 4th Mr. Jones was called by the Selectmen's Administrative Assistant and asked to attend the next meeting to discuss my next contract in Executive Session. Mr. Jones emailed the board about this. Mr. Kularski and Mr. Jones met with the Selectmen at their next meeting and we agreed on a contract that would carry through until Mr. Jones is done next year. There was no pay raise although chairman, Mary Walter did say they are working on getting raises for non- union employees. Mr. Jones noted that he doesn't have the final contract yet to sign. There was a couple of changes that needed to be corrected one being the payment of all sick time should he die on the job.
11. **Superintendent Report – No Trespassing Signs** - We purchased five (5) No Trespassing signs to install on town property that surrounds the North Brook Canal. Mr. Kularski had made up stickers for two (2) of them that read Per Board of Selectmen so we used them and installed two (2) of the signs. We have three(3) more signs left, and Mr. Jones asked Mr. Kularski to make up three (3) more sets of stickers.

Heating Expense - We will be going over the amount we budgeted for heating this fiscal year. We budgeted \$13,000.00 for heating and have spent \$610.00 over that so far. We would like to transfer \$610.00 from chemicals to the heating fuel account to cover this amount.

Mr. Nason made and Mr. Thomasian seconded a motion to request a transfer of \$610.00 from Water Chemical Expense to Water Heating Expense. So voted.

Frozen Meter - There was one frozen meter this past month which we repaired, tested and replaced.

Solar Project at Abbey - There was an article in the Worcester Telegram about the solar installation at the Spencer Abbey. The company that is building this is the one the town picked to sign up with that would cut our electric bills by 30%. The project is still in the permitting stage and is a year or more away from producing electricity if gets approved by the various Spencer committees.

Valley View School - The Valley View School will be installing new water lines and Mr. Jones has been working with the engineer and contractor doing the work. The school has been told they need a bigger line than the 2" that has fed it up until now for the domestic water. For the domestic water they will be installing a 4" line that will connect with the existing 2" line so it is looped. They also are installing a sprinkler system which will need a 6" dedicated main. We have received the plans and they have paid the tap in fees required. They are hoping to install these lines soon.

Plant Tours – Mr. Lalashius has given tours to the Cub Scouts and the younger Girl Scouts on successive Saturdays in April. According to him, both tours went well.

The Board asked that Mr. Jones thank Mr. Lalashius for conducting these tours.

PT Help – Mr. Jones noted that Joe Flamand is back working with us again this year and his first day was today.

The Board welcomed Mr. Flamand back.

Most of this past month has been spent here at the treatment plant and preparing to fix the water main on North Main Street which was a huge undertaking.

12. New Business – None

Meeting Adjourned: 6:40PM

Respectfully submitted,

Shiela LeBlanc
Recording Secretary