

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

Present: James Kularski, Tim Nason, Superintendent, Steve Jones and
Administrative Assistant, Erika Rivers (Secretary of the meeting minutes)

Absent: Chariman, John Thomasian

The meeting started at 6:05pm.

Review and Approve the Minutes

James Kularski made a motion and Tim Nason seconded the motion to approve the minutes of the June 9, 2014 BOWC meeting. The vote to accept these minutes was unanimous.

Doug Blood-Request to add repeater to antenna

Mr. Blood was unable to attend tonight's meeting. He asked that he be put on the agenda for the August 11, 2014 BOWC meeting.

Administrative Assistant-New Hire

The North Brookfield Water Department is looking to hire a new Administrative Assistant. Superintendent, Steve Jones spoke with Selectman Bob Smith to see if he could go down the list of interviewees since this was done recently, Mr. Smith gave him the permission to do so.

Mr. Jones contacted Amy Toomey and Melissa Tremblay. Ms. Toomey declined the job offer however Ms. Tremblay was very much interested in the position. A motion was made by James Kularski and second by Tim Nason to recommend Melissa Tremblay as the new Administrative Assistant at the Board of Selectman meeting that will be held on July 15, 2014.

Former Administrative Assistant, Sheila LeBlanc has played an active role in assisting the Water Department with training and additional support when needed. Superintendent, Jones has been paying Ms. LeBlanc the Administrative Assistant hourly wage. Mr. Jones was contacted by the Town Accountant, Nancy Nykiel. Ms. Nykiel informed Mr. Jones that he has to pay her overtime because she is already working 40 hours for the town of North Brookfield or he can pay a flat

hourly consultant's fee. The Town Accountant suggested paying a consultant fee of \$25.00 per hour. Ms. LeBlanc has agreed upon the consultant's fee.

For FY 2014, Ms. LeBlanc was paid out of the Administrative Assistants salary, there was money left over for this, due to the time that the position was vacant. For FY2015 Superintendent Jones plans on taking the Consultant's Fee out of Salary/Other. The North Brookfield Water Department did not budget for the Consultant's Fee so Mr. Jones may have to transfer money at some point during the year.

North Brook Canal Update

Superintendent Jones brought Ed Thibault up to the North Brook Canal so that he could see the problem and come up with a plan. Mr. Thibault thinks he can drive his excavator along the brook bed, over Mendala's bridge to the breach and be able to fix the breach in one day using material from the sides of the bank. Mr. Jones is assuming that the pipe under the bridge might collapse and it will have to be replaced, if this does happen the project at hand will take more time. Superintendent Jones, will have to contact and meet with Concomm and talk with Jim Mendala about driving over the bridge. There will be more information on this at the next BOWC meeting.

Shutoff Update

Chairman, John Thomasian had set up a payment plan for Michelle Houlle of 47 Summer Street after she had already been shut off for non-payment. The plan called for ½ down and the rest paid by June 15, 2014. Ms. Houlle never paid the ½ down so her water was never turned back on. Ms. Houlle contacted the Water Department at the end of June and asked if she could pay ½ the bill now so that her water could be turned on. Unfortunately, Superintendent Jones was out on vacation that week and Administrative Assistant, Erika Rivers and Town Collector Donna Gauthier did not know of this agreement so they accepted the ½ down and turned her water back on. When Mr. Jones returned to work he was told of this event and he immediately contacted Ms. Houlle by email to let her know that these were not the terms that were agreed upon and if the rest of the amount was not paid in full by July 11, 2014 her water would be shut off again. Payment has not been received. The BOWC were in agreement to shut off Ms. Houlle's water. Superintendent Jones, will be turning the water off on July 15, 2014.

Budget Update

One week before the continuation of the ATM, the BOS told Superintendent, Steve Jones to include a 3% raise into the FY15 budget. Mr. Jones was told to take it out of the FY15 budget and not out of retained earnings. At the same time the Administrative Assistant of the Water Department decided not to enroll in the Health Insurance coverage, which saved the Water Department \$16,000. Mr. Jones used the \$16,000 to pay for the raises. Mr. Jones also lowered the amount that was to be transferred from retained earnings to pay for the new superintendent from \$51,000 to \$37,000.00

However if the new Administrative Assistant takes the health insurance coverage, the water department will have to go to the next Special Town Meeting sometime in the fall and transfer money needed to pay for the insurance.

Mr. Jones added 3% to the pay for the Superintendent, Operator, Administrative Assistant, Laborer, 3 BOWC, Town Accountant, Town Treasurer, Town Collector and Town Collector's Clerk. The Medicare and retirement figures were adjusted upward also. The Water Department's budget passed unanimously at the Town Meeting.

Superintendent's Report

The Water Department repaired a leak on the service line for 17 Bell Street and a leak on the service line for 30 Lakeview in June. The Bell Street leak was a crack in the $\frac{3}{4}$ copper at the corporation and the leak on the Lakeview service was a hole in the $\frac{3}{4}$ copper pipe.

Valley View School has installed both a 4" domestic service line and an 8" fire service line and they were pressure treated and chlorinated recently as called for in our rules and regulations. The pressure test passed but the fire line did not pass the coliform test and has to be re-chlorinated. The domestic line was turned on last week after the meter and backflow devices were inspected and tested. The fire line passed the coliform test on July 14, 2014 but they have not filed the correct paperwork for the double check valve that is necessary with a fire line.

Mr. Jones has been informed by Highway Superintendent, Gary Jean that he is the only Highway Department person that is trained in using the mower and that he would not have time to mow for us this summer. This means that the Water Department will have to go back to hiring a private company to mow the areas around the Treatment Plant, Pump Station and the Reservoir. Mr. Jones called Phil Richardson, the man who used to do the mowing for the Water Department before the Highway Department bought their mower, but Mr. Richardson is now retired. Mr. Richardson sold all his equipment to Richard Phifer, he suggested that Mr. Jones call Mr. Phifer to see if he was interested in doing the mowing for the Water Department. Mr. Jones was able to contact Mr. Phifer, he said that he was interested in doing it; he just didn't know when he would be able to start. Mr. Phifer's hourly rate is \$95.00.

Last year the Highway Department spent 24 hours mowing and did not finish. If we use 24 hours the new cost to mow will be \$2,300.00 and if it takes another day the cost will be \$3,040.00. In the past the Water Department budgeted \$600.00 in overtime for the Highway Department employee so our budget will be short. The Water Department will have to pay for this difference out of the System Improvement Account this year and then budget for the expense for the FY16 budget.

The Meters were read at the beginning of the month and we have been following the Administrative Assistants SOP s to locate the high and low readings and have been letting the town residents know. Former Administrative Assistant, Sheila LeBlanc will be coming up to work with us on mailing out the water bills.

Respectfully Submitted

Erika M. Rivers-Administrative Assistant