

Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Water Commissioners

September 8, 2014

Bell Hill Water Treatment Facility

14 Bell Hill Road

North Brookfield, MA 01535

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

Absent: Tim Nason

Guests: Doug Blood, Scott and Margaret Nishan and James Wilson

The meeting opened at 6:02pm.

Review and Approve the Minutes

James Kularski made a motion and John Thomasian seconded the motion to approve the minutes of the August 11, 2014 BOWC meeting. The vote to accept these minutes was unanimous.

Doug Blood

Doug Blood wants to add another antenna to his existing antenna on the roof of the Water Department at 14 Bell Road. Mr. Jones question was why put a private antenna on a public building. The company is AA Transportation Company in Shrewsbury, MA. and they service the children in the North Brookfield School system. Mr. Blood stated that there is a law that all bus companies must have a two way radio in every bus. Mr. Blood and Mr. Wilson have looked into placing the antenna at other sites. One of the sites was the elementary school but there were spots in the radio communication that couldn't be picked up. Mr. Kularski asked if they had looked into possibly putting the antenna on the cell tower in town. Mr. Wilson said that in the past he has tried to place antennas on cell towers but there has been too much interference. The Water Department at 14 Bell Road would be the most ideal place for the antenna because it is the highest point in town. A decision was made to bring the final decision to the Board of Selectmen

so that a contract can be prepared and the appropriate steps can be taken to put the antenna on Mr. Blood's existing antenna he already has on the roof of the Water Department on Bell Road.

Margaret Nishan

Mrs. Nishan called on August 19, 2014 about her water bill being much high than the previous bill. Mr. Jones set up an appointment to have someone come out and check the meter. Andy Lalashius, plant operator, went to Mrs. Nishan's home on Friday August 22, 2014. Andy checked the meter and the ERT and found that they both matched. Andy read the meter using the reading from July 1, 2014 and found that Mr. and Mrs. Nishan were using 99 gallons per person per day which is high but was in line with what they had used the previous six months as seen in the reading history. Andy and Ms. Nishan found a toilet with water flowing into the overflow pipe which is the probable reason for the high reading. Mr. and Mrs. Nishan couldn't understand why their bill was so much higher because it is only the two of them in the house and they have had that toilet since the day they moved there and they haven't changed anything so why is their bill over \$300.00. Mrs. Nishan said they have never had a water bill over \$300.00. An abatement cannot be done seeing Mr. and Mrs. Nishan's bill was in the amount of \$367.00 and an abatement is only lowered to \$450.00. Mr. Nishan has since fixed their toilet and in the 17 days Mrs. Nishan has been calculating the usage per day per person and she is getting 53 gallons per person.

Water Operator's Position

Water Operator Andy Lalashius has accepted a position with Veolia, a private company that runs the Sturbridge treatment plant and distribution system. His last day is September 17th, Andy has vacation time to use up so his last full day is this Thursday, August 11, 2014 and he is working a ½ day on Saturday August 13, 2014. Mr. Jones posted an employment advertisement for a new operator on the Massachusetts Water Works Association website. This is the same route that was used to hire Andy four years ago. If Mr. Jones gets a response this week the BOWC can schedule a meeting for Monday September 15, 2014 and present the applicants to the Board of Selectmen on Tuesday September 16, 2014.

Change the meeting date to 10/06/2014 or 10/20/2014 due to the holiday

Mr. Kularski and Mr. Thomasian decided to have the BOWC meeting on Monday October 6, 2014 due to Columbus Day falling on the second Monday in October 2014.

North Brook Canal Update

On August 12th Mr. Jones met with the Conservation Committee and explained the problem with the breach in the banking of the North Brook Canal. Mr. Jones explained the plan to repair the breach and they agreed with it. The Conservation Committee said if there is any water flowing in the brook at the time of repair the Water Department is to place hay bales in front of the culvert on Barnes Rd to catch any silt and seed and add hay/mulch on the repaired area. Mr. Jones has notified Ed Thibault that the project is a go. Mr. Thibault is working on water main project in Spencer and the Abbey in Spencer coming up so he doesn't know when he will be able to start on the repair.

Supt Report

The Highway Department was unable to do the mowing at the reservoir, pump station and treatment plant this year. Mr. Jones hired Rick Phiffer who has purchased Phil Richardson's tractor. Phil used to do the mowing for the Water Department before the Highway Department purchased a mower. Rick mowed the area last week and did a good job. Mr. Jones has also hired Bennet Landscaping to brush cut the areas around the dam that the mower could not reach. This work had not been budgeted for this so it will be paid out of System Improvement for this year. The Water Department will have to add this to the budget next year. Most of this past month was spent working on the jobs done by the administrative assistant and training Kristen. This is moving along well. Flushing is scheduled to start on September 15th, running through October 10th.

Respectfully Submitted

Kristen Thacker-Administrative Assistant