

Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Water Commissioners

Monday May 13, 2013

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: Paul Menard – 88 Old East Brookfield Road

Meeting Opened: 6:00 PM

1. **Reorganize Board** – Mr. Kularski made and Mr. Thomasian seconded a motion to nominate Tim Nason for Chairman. So voted.
2. **Minutes Approval** – Mr. Thomasian made and Mr. Kularski seconded a motion to approve the minutes of the April 8, 2013 meeting as written. So voted.
3. **Horse Pond Dam Update** - We have received the Certificate of Completion from the Conservation Commission. Mrs. LeBlanc is going to wait to register it on the deed until we hear from the Office of Dam Safety so she can do both at the same time.
4. **Foot bridge Fencing** - Mr. Jones met with Jeff Morrison of Morrison Fence on Friday, April 12, 2013. He described what the Board wanted and asked for separate quotes which were included in the packets. Mr. Jones had asked for separate quotes because he wasn't sure there was enough money to pay for it. Mr. Morrison also gave us a combined quote because it will be cheaper if he only has to go to the dam once. The quote to do it separately is \$2,756.00. If we do both jobs at the same time the cost would be \$200.00 less bringing it to \$2,556.00. We have money left over in the chemicals account that can be transferred to pay for this project.

Mr. Thomasian made and Mr. Nason seconded a motion to accept the \$2,556.00 bid of Morrison Fence as submitted. So voted.

5. **Budget Transfers** - We have included a letter in the commissioners' packets that will allow us to transfer money between accounts in our budget. We have money left over in the chemicals account and would like to transfer \$2,600.00 from this account to the Building & Equipment Account to pay for the fencing at the dam. We also want to transfer \$6,000.00 from the Chemical Account to the Materials & Supplies Account. This money will be used for more no lead brass, in particular no lead brass water meters. Mr. Jones will also purchase a manhole cover lifter and a bin storage rack to hold PVC pipe fittings with this money. (Manhole cover lifter \$1216.00, Storage bin \$580.00, Meters \$ 4169.00)

Mr. Thomasian made and Mr. Nason seconded a motion to approve the budget transfer letter as written. So voted.

6. **Paul Menard – 88 Old East Brookfield Road** – Mr. Menard was present to discuss his water being shut off for non-payment. He explained that someone has been tampering with his mail. He has called the Post Office and they have referred him to the North Brookfield Police Dept. He stated that three people in his area of town have had problems with their mail.

Mr. Thomasian noted that we have no control over the mail system. Mr. Menard stated that he has received no mail in the last two weeks. Mr. Nason noted that this is his third time up regarding his water shut offs.

Mr. Menard stated that some days he gets mail and others he doesn't. Mr. Kularski suggested that he get us a copy of the police report. Mr. Menard stated that he had put the payment for \$88.00 in his mailbox on March 13 for pickup by the postal carrier. Apparently some of his mail was found by a woman who walks in the area and she turned it into the North Brookfield Post Office and they sent it on to Shrewsbury. He stated that he must go to the Shrewsbury Post Office to get his mail.

Tim Nason made and John Thomasian seconded a motion to allow Mr. Menard to pay \$88.48 and his water will be turned on Tuesday morning and to further waive the \$100.00 turn on fee. So voted.

7. **Special Town Meeting Article** - Due to a water main break on Waite Corner Road two weeks ago, our Overtime Account is low in money. Figuring in the rest of the fiscal year, there will be \$176.00 left in the account at the end of the fiscal year if there are no more problems during off hours. This is cutting it too close, hopefully we won't have any more problems on off time but we can't be sure of that. Mrs. LeBlanc has written up an article for the Special Town Meeting that will be held before the continued Annual Town Meeting on June 21st. This article, which was included in the packet, asks for a sum of money to be transferred to the Water Salary – Overtime from the Water Expense -Miscellaneous Account. We have \$1,800.00 in the abatement line item that can be used for the transfer if necessary. If there is no more overtime, we will ask that the article is passed over at the meeting. This is to make sure we don't run out of money for the overtime account.

Mr. Kularski made and Mr. Nason seconded a motion to approve this Special Town Meeting Article as written to request a transfer from Water Expenses to Water Salary – Overtime if needed. So voted.

8. **North Brookfield is Boston Strong Request** – The Board reviewed a letter from Crystal Caron, organizer of North Brookfield is Boston Strong requesting to have the gates opened for their

walk/run event on May 25, 2013. Mrs. LeBlanc noted that she will be attending the event and will take responsibility to open and close the gates.

Mr. Kularski made and Mr. Nason seconded a motion to have Mrs. LeBlanc open and close the gates to the pond road for this event on May 25, 2013. So voted.

9. **Net Metering** - Mr. Jones has attended two meetings at the selectmen's office regarding the net metering proposal. All three companies were asked to come back with a better proposal for the town, which they did. The credit percentage didn't get any better, but one of the companies did lower the floor amount. One of the meetings was attended by town council via speakerphone and he had recommended going with a lower floor if possible.

There was an article on the warrant for the annual town meeting that was approved that allows the Board of Selectmen to participate in the net metering proposal. This was needed due to the contract being over three years.

Discussion of the proposal will continue to make sure the town gets the best deal possible and to make sure it is for the good of the town departments.

10. **Forestry** - Joe Holway called about the forestry plan that he had been working on. He said that the land near the pumping station would yield approximately \$3,000 worth of lumber. He said that that money would be going to the water department. If it does work out that way, it would probably go into retained earnings. He said Ross Hubacz would be getting in touch with me to discuss the actual forestry work.
11. **CCR** – Mrs. LeBlanc purchased post cards, addressed them and sent them out to all water users informing them of the internet address that the Annual Water Quality Report could be found. The notice also informed people that we can send them a copy in the mail if they rather read it that way. The post cards completed the requirements of the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection for internet delivery of the report
12. **Bates Observatory** - Linda Grace sent a copy of the Historical Society meeting minutes from their meeting held on December 10 2012. During this meeting they discussed the Bates Observatory. They agree with this board that the \$90,000 is not enough money to fix the observatory and they have also recommended building a historical marker or memorial. The minutes were in the packet.
13. **Superintendent Report – Back Flow Testing** - The backflow devices in town were tested on Friday, April 11th. As usual we hired Toomey Water Services to conduct the testing. Either Mr. Lalashius or Mr. Jones, accompany Ryan Toomey during the testing and sign the forms as witnesses of the test. There was one failure this time around which has already been corrected and is awaiting a retest. We surveyed two buildings, the Second Chance Animal Shelter, Inc. building and the Pillsbury Funeral Home. We hadn't surveyed Second Chance since it opened. They do medical procedures there which can be a reason to put a testable Reduced Pressure Device on the line but Mr. Toomey and Mr. Jones agreed that there were no locations in the building where backflow could occur. We have decided to survey this building annually to see if

anything changes that would require the testable device. Mr. Toomey did tell them to add hose bib vacuum breakers to their outside faucets. We surveyed the funeral home because the DEP requires separate testable reduced pressure devices on aspirators. This serves to protect the water supply in the building itself. They do already have an RP on their line by the meter that protects the water system. We sent a letter out to them regarding this addition. The new devices have been installed and inspected and are awaiting testing. DEP requires us to test most devices twice a year, six months apart. The backflow devices are an important part of protecting the water supply. This year we are also taking digital photographs of all the testable devices in town to keep with the files that we have for them.

Shut offs - Shut offs for nonpayment of bills started today and will continue tomorrow. As of this morning we had 30 locations that had not been paid.

Flushing - Water main flushing is just about complete; it ends later this week when we flush the interconnection with East Brookfield. Once again Mr. Jones is struck by how much the mains have cleared up since the Bell Hill Water Treatment Plant went on line. He knows he has mentioned this before but he thinks it bears repeating. Flushing Oakham Road used to stir up a considerable amount of particles in the main. The hydrant near the Pump Station used to run brown when it was flushed for up to an hour or more. Each hydrant after on Oakham Road would also run brown for a while. He flushed Oakham Road when the flushing began and he didn't see any off colors at all. Of course there are minor particles that do get flushed out making it still worthwhile to do the flushing, but the difference between 10 years ago and now is simply amazing to him.

Water Leak/breaks - We had one leak and one break this past month. The leak was at the curb stop for the service that goes to the Gillette Restaurant Equipment building. We repaired this on the morning of April 17th by replacing the curb stop. The break occurred Sunday afternoon, April 28th, on Waite Corner Road. The ductile iron pipe cracked in front of the old Bennett farm. We started work around 3 PM and finished up by 10 PM by cutting out a section of pipe and replacing it.

Geese peace - We once again practiced the Geese peace philosophy of keeping the goose population from escalating in the area near the reservoir. We found one nest, the same nest that has been used since we started this practice in 2007. The nest was observed daily and an estimate of the timing of the egg laying was calculated. When the time was right we went to the nest and checked the age of the eggs. The timing was correct and so we covered the eggs with corn oil so they would not hatch. We do this so goose droppings do not become so prevalent that they foul the water in the reservoir.

ATM – Mr. Jones attended the first part of the Annual town meeting last Friday. The one water department article on the warrant passed with no discussion. The second part of the annual town meeting, the one that includes the budgets, will be held on Friday, June 21.

Server - As was mentioned before, our server was approaching old age, so we had budgeted to replace it before problems occurred. David Smith purchased the new server and installed it this past month. There are problems with the Server software which has delayed the completion of the installation.

Black top –Mr. Jones hired Ed Thibault to repair the black top that was removed during the Thanksgiving water main break on Elm St; the sidewalk in front of 119 South Main St from the leak we repaired in February; the sidewalk on Maple St from the Gillette service line leak, and Waite Corner Rd from the break there. All have been completed. He also hired Newfound Landscaping to repair the lawns at 80 Elm St and 119 South Main St. These have been completed also. In the past these were jobs that we did ourselves or worked with the contractors to save money. Increasing regulations from DEP have us spending more and more time dealing with these requirements instead of working on the distribution system.

Monthly Reservoir levels – Mr. Jones had mentioned that we are reporting the reservoir level monthly to DEP as part of their drought watch group. He included the spreadsheet that DEP uses to record the reservoir level in percentages in the packets.

Rural 11 – Mr. Jones was invited to, and attended, a meeting on Thursday night, April 25th, along with various townspeople and a representative from CMRPC regarding the Rural 11 Prioritization Project. This project will develop Priority Development Areas, Priority Protection Areas, and Priority Infrastructure Investments. The last goal is why he went. Water distribution infrastructure is one of the concerns of this project and he was able to fill them in on the condition of the infrastructure for North Brookfield's drinking water. If you want to know more about this, he has the information that was handed out.

14. **New Business – None.**

Meeting adjourned: 6:50PM

Respectfully submitted,

Shiela LeBlanc
Recording Secretary