

Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Water Commissioners
Monday, August 13, 2018
Bell Hill Water Treatment Facility
14 Bell Hill Road
North Brookfield, MA 01535

Present: **Jim Kularski, Tim Nason, Shiela LeBlanc, Rich Kennan and Administrative Assistant, Kelly Valeri**

Absent: **None**

The meeting opened @ 6:00 PM

Review and approve the minutes

Mr. Nason made a motion and Mrs. LeBlanc seconded the motion to approve the minutes of the July 9, 2018 Board of Water Commissioners meeting. The vote to accept these minutes was unanimous.

Mr. Kularski made a motion and Mrs. LeBlanc seconded the motion to approve the minutes of the July 16, 2018 Board of Water Commissioners meeting. This meeting was held to interview candidates for the available Water Operator Position. The vote to accept these minutes was unanimous.

Discuss and vote on final read fee

Mr. Kennan and Mrs. Valeri explained to the Board a need for a final read fee. The fee would cover the cost associated with the time, paperwork, etc. in supplying final water reads to lawyers and/or real estate agents when selling a property. This fee can be applied in the new Point billing software. After a brief discussion, Mr. Nason made a motion to implement a final read fee on future final water reads. Mrs. LeBlanc seconded the motion. The vote to apply the fee was unanimous.

Discuss and vote on changing minimum usage fee from 1 to 0

Mr. Kennan explained to the Board that there were a handful of properties in town that still had the water turned on to the house even though the houses are empty. He felt this could lead to issues down the road especially in the colder months. For example, if a pipe were to freeze and burst no one would know as the house is empty and that could be very costly to both the homeowner and the water department. This would not affect houses that have services shut off at the curb stop. Only the homes with the water still on or live to the home. After a brief

discussion, Mrs. LeBlanc made a motion to change the minimum usage from 1 to 0. Mr. Nason seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

Superintendent Report

- **North Common Project** – The North Common Street project is almost complete. Mr. Kennan has spent more time down at the site than expected, despite Mr. Dunphy's email stating otherwise. Mr. Kennan and the department were always available if any questions or concerns arose.
- **Installation of gas mains**–Gas mains are being installed on School Street and Mt. Guyot requiring the water department to mark out the main and service locations.
- **Billing cycle**- Mr. Kennan informed the Board that Point was used for billing and things went relatively well. There were a few minor issues which are expected but nothing major which is good. Our administrative assistant, Kelly Valeri explained she felt the conversion went better than expected and she is very happy so far with how user friendly the application is. Point is currently working with Aquity to have the server moved to the Collector's office.
- **Rob Peterson**- Rob Peterson has started working for the Water Department and Mr. Kennan is very pleased with him, as is the whole department. His work ethic and intelligence is a tough combination to find these days. Everyone is very happy he is here!
- **High usage customer complaint**- Mr. Kennan informed the Board of an irate customer that became abusive with him when discussing the high usage in the home. The water department went back to the residence to obtain another read. At that time it was determined the usage (gallons per day) had returned to normal use. The customer was notified of this but still did not believe the water had been used. The customer was informed to pay the bill to avoid penalties, interest and possible shut off of service.

There was also a residence where the meter had been removed by the owner. Mr. Kennan worked with the tenant of the home to get a new ert/meter installed as quickly as possible.

New Business

- **Water regulations and by-laws** – Mr. Kennan suggested reviewing our current water regulations and by-laws. More specifically the rules and regulations on hydrant use. A copy of our current regulations and by-laws will be provided at the September meeting for review.

- **Abatement**– Mr. Kennan explained to the Board that there was a customer who had high usage due to broken pipes in their basement. The homeowners were filing a claim with their insurance company therefore the abatement process would not be an option if there was an open claim. This may need to be addressed in the future depending on the outcome of the claim.

Meeting Adjourned at 6:56 pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Kelly Valeri
Administrative Assistant