



OFFICE OF THE
WATER DEPARTMENT
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Water Commission Minutes
Wednesday, October 30, 2019

Approved: 11/26/19

Chairman Karl Huber called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm
Other members present: John O'Brien, Scott Wilkins
Meeting held: At the Dunstable Town Hall, 511 Main Street, lower level
In attendance: Harold Simmons, Advisory Board

Reviewed & Signed:

- Monthly Bills
- Monthly Payroll

Well No. 1 Operational Update

Mr. Huber reported that the main challenge is the annual calibration and maintenance. Otherwise, everything seems to be fine.

Infrastructure Project Update

Mr. Huber reported that the Pleasant Street part of the project is done. There were a few bumps along the way, but otherwise things have worked out. Traffic was managed well by the Police for which he thanked Chief Dow. Mr. Huber then turned to the access road part of the project. Things are proceeding well there. Mr. Simmons agreed noting some of his own observations about the work. Mr. O'Brien suggested the Commissioners go for a walk to see the progress. It was agreed to look at doing so in the near future. Mr. Huber then reported on the waiver for the tower. DEP has expressed concern about the delay in proceeding with that work. Mr. Voelker noted that the issue was with the manufacturing of some of the materials for the water tower, which could not be completed until December. This means that construction will have to wait until the spring. While DEP's concern is not without merit as to the timelines for the ACOP, the delay is mostly due to the lengthy process the tank contractor had to go through, as well as the town, in obtaining a waiver from DEP as to a provision of the SRF funding of the project. Mr. Huber then turned discussion to a complaint that has arisen from the Pleasant Street part of the project. The homeowner in question is unhappy with the removal of some plants she had and the fact that the replanting was loam and grass seed. It is unclear at this stage what is desired as a response. Mr. Simmons noted that the house in question along with several of its neighbors are actually off a private road. Mr. O'Brien agreed, but noted the area disturbed by the project was fully within the public right of way for Pleasant Street.

Mr. Huber noted a number of the challenges faced for that part of the project and the area in question appears to be small and within the public way. The project would not have gone deeper into private property. Mr. Huber recalled that there have been some complaints from the homes off that private road regarding discoloration in their water and pressure, but SWSS has worked to resolve the issue by flushing to remove air from the system and restore watercolor. Since SWSS has done

this, the remaining neighbors appear to no longer experience problems. Mr. Wilkins noted that the flushing would mostly help with discoloration, but was not so sure it would help with pressure. It was agreed that aside from some of these issues things are going mostly smoothly. Mr. Wilkins turned discussion back to the access road and asked if the electrical work there had been completed. Mr. Huber was uncertain as to whether that part was done yet. One of the challenges is that original power line to the wells wasn't put in conduit, but direct buried. There is concern about possible issues with tree roots and the precise location of the wire. It was agreed to monitor the situation closely as the project continues.

SWSS Update

Mr. Huber reported on where things stand currently. SWSS recently had to get help from Pepperell's water department in locating a water main on Main Street. This will likely result in an invoice. There appear to be some issues that have arisen as part of the project, and some have questioned the response times. Mr. Huber was uncertain if those issues were simply beyond SWSS's scope or range of talent. There also appear to be some personality challenges that have arisen between some parties. A big problem was the chemical issue that occurred on Pleasant Street for the new pipe. SWSS was a little slow in response. Mr. O'Brien reported on his own recollections as to what happened and confirmed there were a few personality issues between some town officials, SWSS, and the contractor. In the end, things were resolved, but it was an uphill battle with various parties not always taking responsibility. Mr. O'Brien submitted that it really didn't matter who was at fault, what mattered was resolving things. It was agreed that Mr. Huber would continue to manage the relationship. Otherwise, day-to-day operations with SWSS have been positive.

Department Operations Update

Mr. Huber reported that the next pre-construction meeting is scheduled for November 6, 2019. It has also been agreed with the Town Administrator to schedule a meeting between Roads, Water, and the Town Administrator to checkup on things and try to work stuff out. It is understood that if need be Highway can bill the Water Department in situations where they help the department. That should be avoided where possible, but when necessary it just has to be done.

Discussion of Billing for 493 Main Street Repair

Mr. Wilkins started off by noting that the department received a letter from the family in the past that suggested the town shut off the water. Mr. Huber agreed to that recollection and noted the issues with the leak that was occurring and the concern about the nearby septic system that could be harmed. The house is in foreclosure. Mr. Simmons noted that there was an auction, but the house didn't go for what the bank wanted for a minimum so it kept the house and cancelled the auction. The house now appears to be on the market for sale. Likely for a short sale. Mr. Huber then reported on the work being done with Ms. Bresnick to determine the options for the department within its rules and regulations as to shut off. The water bills for the house are being paid, and a person still appears to be living there. Mr. O'Brien reported that the listing for the property makes it clear it'll sell slowly as the interior cannot be seen and the bank appears to intend the buyer to evict the current occupant. Mr. Wilkins suggested that if the bank owns the property they are the owner. Mr. Huber agreed and proposed that the department could simply see to the repairs and bill the bank. Mr. O'Brien recommended contacting the listing agent, as they should be able to get in contact with officials at the bank. It was agreed that Mr. O'Brien would reach out to the listing agent. Mr. Voelker agreed to consult with the Town Administrator. In the meantime, it was agreed to see if a repair bill can be placed as a lien or added to the Municipal Lien Certificate. This could induce payment by the bank.

Next Meeting/Regular Meetings

The next regularly scheduled meeting would normally be tentatively be set for November 27, 2019. However, it may be rescheduled for earlier in the month due to the Thanksgiving holiday.

Authorization of Accounts Payable & Payroll

The Commission considered and signed off on several bills. These included normal monthly bills from SWSS, National Grid, Wright Pierce, and postage. There were also bills relating to the Water Infrastructure Project, mainly relating Police Dept. off duty details and RSI. The Commission then reviewed and approved payment of the bills and also signed department payroll.

Minutes

The Commission considered the minutes from September 18, 2019. Seeing no reason not to approve them the Commission proceeded with doing so.

A motion was made by Mr. O'Brien to approve the minutes of September 18, 2019 as written. The motion was seconded by Mr. Huber and passed by majority vote.

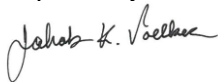
Additional Topics Discussed Not Noted on the Agenda

New Meters

Mr. Huber briefly reported on some new meters that were ordered. Some of the meters were determined to be worthy of replacement at the last meter reading. There were two meters that weren't reading correctly. Mr. O'Brien clarified that the meters are the town's responsibility to replace. Mr. Huber responded in the affirmative. Usually the department would order 25 or so at a time and replace that many. However, this handful of meters needed replacement with some urgency.

A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. O'Brien at 6:55 pm. The motion was seconded by Mr. Wilkins and passed without objection.

Respectfully submitted by



Jakob K. Voelker
Administrative Assistant
Dunstable Water Department