

NORTH BENNINGTON WATER BOARD

MINUTES OF MEETING

1 February 2023

PRESENT: David Shaughnessy, Arla Sampsell, Steve Goodrich, Jerry Elwell, Ted Fela, Mary Rogers, April Paulin, Jesse McDougall and Kit Ausschnitt

David called the meeting to order at 5:55 pm.

MINUTES

Steve wanted to be sure that the minutes clarified that Steve and David made every offer of help to the Shaftsbury Board during the mediation and they refused.

Steve moved to approve the minutes of 4 January as clarified. Arla seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

WARRANTS

Arla moved to approve the late warrant dated 18 January for \$10,177.53, check #10268-10273. Steve seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Steve moved to approve the payroll warrant for 1-28 February for \$9,454.94, check #'s 10274-10284. Arla seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Arla moved to approve the monthly warrant for 1 February for \$24,402.89, check #'s 10285-10297 as well as 2 debit charges. Steve seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC WATER BUSINESS TO BE TRANSACTED

Jesse McDougall and Kit Ausschnitt were present to discuss the proposed solar field on Holy Smoke Road in Shaftsbury. This was discussed last month because of the field being built over the water transmission main.

The proposed layout was presented and Jesse and Kit discussed their concerns of having such a large solar project in the area. There is a 45-day window for public comments that is coming to a close and they asked if the Board could make a comment to the Vermont Public Utility Commission saying that the Board is aware of the project and are concerned about the integrity and access to the water line.

The project is proposed as 50,000 solar panels, 2 substations, security fencing, and widening and paving of Holy Smoke Road. The sale of the property has been pending for 5 years and notification was just given in December. There have been heavy trucks at the site already while the workers are drilling holes etc. at the site.

Ted talked with Stephanie Wyman who is an engineer on the project and she asked for line locations and right of ways etc. They are working on revising and redoing the plans and she said they should be ready in 2-3 weeks. There will also be a plan for removal of the panels if needed.

Steve moved to have Jason or Frank, if Jason is not available, propose a letter to have a comment in the 45 day window to stress our concern about the access to the water line. Arla seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Mary handed out the Expenditures Budget Report.

Mary just downloaded the bond payment, and it is due in 3 weeks.

The payroll conversion is in the process and there will be no more paper checks after the end of this month. Going forth pay checks will be bi-weekly.

Vicki and Mary will be meeting on Friday to talk about conversation to QuickBooks. Steve Love no longer has staff on hand that can help with that sort of thing anymore.

Ted and Mary will meet with Norm to discuss Norm helping to do the digging to replace the service lines when repaving the road. The Board stressed that it is the customer's responsibility to replace the lines after the curb stop if they choose to do it.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Ted has received 3 bids for replacing the roof on the well building.

Shawn Thibodeau has gotten his workers comp insurance and submitted a bid of \$4,313.01 for a asphalt shingle roof. He submitted a bid of \$4,378.51 for a metal roof.

Tri Z has submitted a bid of \$7,050.00 for asphalt shingles and \$8,250.00 for a metal roof.

VT Roofing submitted a bid of \$4,819 for asphalt shingles and they do not do corrugated metal roofs.

David moved to accept Shawn Thibodeau's bid of \$4,378.51 for a metal roof on the well building. Arla seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Ted discussed the breakdown for the rates and comparisons vs the price of coffee etc. that he would like to include in the rate increase letter he will be sending to all users.

The sales rep from Ti-Sales for the water meters has offered to come to a meeting and give options for new meters and answer any questions. He suggested replacing the older and largest meters first with ultrasonic and going with the cheaper meters for the households.

Steve moved to purchase a new master meter for \$6,500 and to install it in June after the last meter reading for the bill. Arla seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Ted will send a letter to the Shaftsbury Water Board and explain the purchase of the new meter and when the water will be turned off to install the new meter and ask them what they would like down with the old meter.

There are 40 past due accounts and 2 of the larger accounts have received assistance to pay the bills off in full and an extra \$350. There was discussion of suggesting a budget plan to one of the accounts to keep her from getting into the same situation again.

OLD BUSINESS

Steve Love was asked if the Board is tax exempt, and his answer was yes. David will get back to Jason about a tax break for the owner wanting to donate the land on East Road. This brought up the question of whether it was worth it to pay taxes on land that is donated but not needed. The cabin property is in the Village of North Bennington's name instead of the Water Department and therefore can't be combined with the rest of the property. David will work with Jason to get that changed.

David spoke with a lawyer from the VLCT regarding the claim from Galen at North Bennington Variety. That claim is going forward and there is more information that is needed from the Board.

NEW BUSINESS

David discussed an Asset Management Plan that was brought up during the PFAS issues on Overlea Road and Harvest Hills. This plan includes an inventory of equipment, buildings and system and would help with budget planning. It also includes a map of the entire system which would include the updates. This plan is 100% reimbursed from the State and would give us priority for future improvements from the State. Otter Creek suggested having it done and David asked them to investigate and apply and we were approved for \$41,000. David gave the Board an information packet on this for their review to discuss at the next meeting.

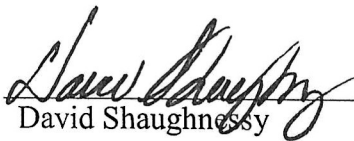
The State has said there is still money available for the generator for the plant that had been discussed in the past. David will send out information to the Board so that they can discuss it next month.

Steve moved to adjourn this meeting at 7:46 pm. Arla seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

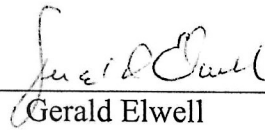
April A. Paulin
Board Secretary

Approved:



David Shaughnessy

Date



Gerald Elwell

Date


Joseph Herrmann

Date



Arla Sampson

Date



Steve Goodrich

Date