

NORTH BENNINGTON WATER BOARD
MINUTES OF MEETING
4 January 2023

PRESENT: David Shaughnessy, Arla Sampsell, Jerry Elwell, Steve Goodrich, Joe Herrmann, Ted Fela, Mary Rogers, April Paulin and Vicki Dejnozka.

David called the meeting to order at 5:54 pm.

MINUTES

Steve moved to approve the minutes of 20 December 2022, as presented. Arla seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

WARRANTS

Joe moved to approve the special warrant for 31 December for \$19,322.74. There were no check numbers associated with this warrant as there were bank transfers and debit charges instead. Arla seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Joe moved to approve the 4 January monthly warrant for \$3,151.86, check #'s 10243-10248. Check #'s 10266-10267 were listed by mistake and should not be there. Steve seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Steve moved to approve the payroll warrant for 3 January – 2 February for \$11,532.12, check #'s 10252-10265. Joe seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Mary had account balances for the reserve accounts for the Board but did not have an analysis available. She did say that we had gone over the budget by \$68,636.83 but about ½ will be reimbursed.

The Board introduced Vicki Dejnozka as a candidate for the open bookkeeper position. Vicki has her own company called Complete Bookkeeping Services and has been doing various bookkeeping services for a variety of customers for 10 years. Vicki had already met with some of the Board members and Ted about what she could do for the Board and was present tonight to answer some more questions, as well as ask some of her own questions. There was some discussion on transferring the data to the new program and setting up the payroll program. She would work with Mary and Ted to get things set up and get a system together that would work for all parties. Mary discussed different reports and different information that could be done with the new program to help the Board. Vicki would attend monthly meetings as requested by the Board.

After both parties were satisfied and there were no more questions to ask Vicki left as her presence was no longer needed.

Steve moved to hire Vicki Dejnozka at her contracted price of \$40/hr. for the position of bookkeeper. Arla seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

The numbers for the proposed 2023 budget were finalized and double checked. The budget increased 12% over 2022. There was some discussion of rates and reserves to fall back on for excessive spending and a 7-year plan for improvements for future budgets.

Steve moved to approve the 2023 budget for \$461,959.44. Joe seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

This past billing the department billed for just over 72 million gallons of water. The water rates have not been increased in three years even though the budget has increased every year. At the current rate we would fall well short of the budget. Ted worked on some numbers and the Board discussed the best options for meeting the needs of the budget without causing a large increase on the customers.

After discussing the different options for a new rate Steve moved to approve a rate increase of \$1.40/1000 gallons. Arla seconded the motion. Joe opposed. After further discussion Steve amended his motion to approve a rate increase of \$1.50/1000 gallons. Arla seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously. Ted will send a letter to all users explaining the reason for the new rate and give them ample time before the next bills are mailed out.

The master meter that is used to meter Shaftsbury's usage and the other larger meters on the system should be replaced due to age and inaccuracies in measuring the flow. The rep has started preparing a packet/starter kit with pricing for the Shaftsbury meter. Joe stated that North Bennington and Shaftsbury went $\frac{1}{2}$ and $\frac{1}{2}$ on the purchase of the meter but Shaftsbury owns it. The replacement plan should be presented to Shaftsbury's Board first just to keep them in the loop.

Joe asked Steve and David about the new agreement with Shaftsbury and what happens if there is a leak in Shaftsbury. The agreement states that North Bennington is to turn the water off at the master meter until the leak is isolated by Shaftsbury. Joe's concern was that the whole Village would be turned off until the leak could be found and their Superintendent works 60 miles away. At the mediation meeting Shaftsbury was very insistent that they could take care of their own system and did not want any help from North Bennington. They understood that if there was a leak the water to their whole system would be turned off until someone from their department could isolate it. Joe will discuss this further and will set up a meeting with Shaftsbury just to be sure they really understand what would happen if there were a leak within their system.

Ted presented the Board with a draft of the report for the annual report. The new dehumidifier is scheduled to be installed on the 17th by Bennington Cooling and Heating. They have already been paid for ½ the cost. Ted spoke with Shawn Thibodeau about a price for the well building roof. Shawn will be submitting a price but at this time does not have workers comp insurance although he stated he should be getting it soon.

At the Shaftsbury Select Board meeting a proposal for an 85 acre solar field on Holy Smoke Road was presented. It was brought to Ted's attention as the water transmission main goes through there and the building specs have it built directly over the main. Ted contacted them and Aaron Perez from Vermont Rural Water will come down and mark the line so they can redo their plans.

NEW BUSINESS

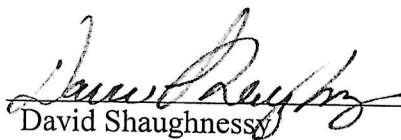
David received an email from Jason about a 25-acre piece of property that abuts the property on East Road. The owner lives in California and is asking if we would like to buy it knowing that we have bought land in the past to protect the wells. He would also be interested in donating it. The property is land locked. It makes no sense to buy the property, but it would be a benefit if it was donated.

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 Sampsell

Date



Steve Goodrich

Date