

Water Commission Minutes
11-4-2019

Called to Order: 6 PM

Members Present: Fran Huntoon, David Sander, Christy Witters, Bard Hill, Don Morin

Absent: None

Others Present: Josh Arneson, Town Manager; Kendall Chamberlin, W & Sewer Superintendent.; Kathy Daub-Stearns, Admin. Assist.; Paul O'Leary, Joy Reap; Bob Reap; Paul Hauf; Cindy Feloney; Heidi Bormann; David Sunshine; and Ruth Miller was present to videotape the meeting for MMCTV Channel 15.

1. Welcome by Bard. No comments.

2. Additions or Deletions to the Agenda. None.

3. Other Business:

a) Discussion of & vote on approval to expand the water and sewer district to include 91 Willis Farm Rd.

Bard opened the discussion surrounding the Oct. 10 letter from Reaps. Christy asked if items can be separated, could the line be expanded without expanding the district and what ramifications there might be going forward. Kendall responded that if the Town expanded the district then it would be up to the property owner to decide to tie in. If not all property owners wanted to then it would be up to the Board to decide whether to expand or not. There is precedent. There are property owners that tie in without expansion. The property owner foots the cost of the lines from the existing district and maintains them. It was discussed that if a private party builds to Town specs the Town could take them over or they could be kept private depending on what the property owner desired. Kendall also noted that the Reap property has a substantial amount of water availability and that there might be some interest to discuss that as a secondary source which the Town does not have at this time. Fran noted that the problem with having sewer line private was billing. Kendall stated that there would be a meter placed on their well, as is done with other properties, to determine billing. Don was excited about developing property and that the project has potential. Joy stated the project they were proposing would entail the installation of a pump station and lines that were up to town code so the Town could tie in but it might be kept private. The Reaps would bear the cost of permits, do the infrastructure work and potentially turn it over to the Town. Joy thought there could be a way for them to recoup some of the investment. Kendall likened it to Camels Hump Middle School and thought it would require negotiations with the Town. Don inquired as to how many users would be hooking in. Joy responded 1 commercial user at this time. Don stated the costs were higher to have 1 customer vs 10 customers to spread out costs. Joy agreed one small business with no capacity would not worth it. To have a sizable commercial flow is the goal. Heidi said she has property with pump station, they paid for. As a business owner it should be up to the property owner to pay for the repairs, that she would never ask for the town to take over her lines and the Town should never take over anyone else's.

A discussion was had regarding whether the Town could approve, prior to permit application, the Reap's project. It was decided that there was unanimous interest from the Board, provided the Town wouldn't incur any costs for the project and that it would be a benefit to users of the system. More information was needed before a final decision could be made.

b) Update on discussion with the business owners on Upper West Bridge St. regarding water lines to the buildings

David Sunshine stated there are 2 options; come from 1 dir or another. Gab & Lisa are not ok with tying into the old line which is asbestos lined, they would want to install new pipe. Kendall interjected that either end is connectable. David Sunshine would like the Town to install curb stops. Because it is a private line Kendall says the Town cannot do that. David Sunshine says the issue is that there are 4 business owners and if one doesn't pay the bill then they all get shut off. Bard wasn't certain statute would allow for turning off a private line and that would have to be explored.

c) Discussion of the need for a policy for the apprenticeship compensation plan

Josh reported that there was not much to update and would bring pay grid information back for approval.

d) Reminder of water line bond vote on Nov. 5 and next steps

Bard stated the voting was for authority to borrow money; users would pay it back

e) Fund balances as of the end of FY19

Josh provided the balance for the end of FY 19. Bard thought it should be brought back next time for further discussion.

f) Discussion of process to approve warrants

Fran moved to approve process to approve warrants. Don was not comfortable & thought he needed more time maybe 15 minutes about how they're reviewed and approved. Mary thought having the treasurer come in would be appropriate. Bard thanked her for the suggestion.

g) Discussion of law requiring lead testing at all Vermont schools and child care centers

Bard reported that he reviewed a website that documented the lead testing results and the 3 childcare centers in Richmond all tested below for lead levels.

h) Superintendents Report

Kendall reported that a dryer going online in Brattleboro. Thinking maybe dryer for Richmond, we'll see. High water was a challenge, not a problem. The money from Irene was spent well. There were times the plant was performing 10x above normal plant capacity. Bard said he knew 5 other plants that had been overrun. Kendall stated we performed 100%, this time was a problem. He is confident there are storm drains attached to the system that should not be. Bard thought this should be taken up at a future meeting, everyone agreed.

4. Approval of Minutes, Warrants and Purchase Order

a) Minutes of 10/21/19¹

MOTION:

Bared moved to have the 10/21/19 Minutes approved, Fran seconded, 4 in favor; 1 abstention

Further discussion:

Don wondered if the town attorney should be contacted to determine whether we can accept Reaps proposal. Bard suggested that the discussion be continued at the next meeting, all agreed.

5. Discuss Items for Next Agenda and Adjourn

Bard moved to adjourn, seconded by David, All were in favor, adjourned at 7 PM