

# **Franconia Water Department Meeting**

**Thursday January 14, 2021**

**ZOOM Meeting 5pm**

**In Attendance:** Water Commissioners Darrel Dietlein, Kevin Johnson, & Dan Walker; Sandy Kellogg, Water Department Office Administrator; & Pete Hilton, Water Operator/Lakes Region Water Co  
Darrel motions to open the meeting at 5:06 pm. Dan seconds and the meeting begins.

## **Approval of Past Meeting Minutes:**

Motion to accept the minutes of the December 12<sup>th</sup> 2020 meeting was made by Darrel, seconded by Kevin, and approved unanimously.

## **Acknowledgement of E-Vote:**

Commissioners acknowledged their unanimous email vote to approve the 2021 Water Department budget. Approved 2021 budget attached and also posted on the town website.

**New contract with LRW for 2021** was sent to Commissioners ahead of this meeting. They felt that it was lacking details and specifics that should be included such as number of hours spent, documentation of hours/time, is a log book kept, and several more. Kevin suggested that each Commissioner should take the weekend and get a list of items they would like to see included in the contract to Sandy by Tuesday morning when she is next in the office. Dan agreed on this timeline especially since at this time we are without a contract.

**Action:** Sandy to look for emails from the commissioners, and from those create a list of concerns and items for inclusion in the new 2021 contract and to get this list to Tom at LRW.

**Update to Rules and Regulations** - Kevin had provided the following verbiage for review.

*The Department will pay for meter repairs and replacements necessitated by ordinary wear. Expenses associated with tampering or removing from service any meter, either by the customer or contractor hired by the customer, for the purpose of winterization, renovations, or for any other causes within the control of the customer, or as a result of freezing; will be charged to the customer, including cost of removing and replacing the missing or damaged meter, and a determination of an estimate of water consumed during the period the meter was out of service or not operating properly.*

**Action:** Darrel made a motion to revise the Water Department Rules and Regulations to reflect this new verbiage. Kevin seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously. Sandy will update the Rules and Regs to reflect this change and post it on the website

## **Highway Department:**

Scott Leslie did not call in to this meeting; Sandy indicated that she had included him on the email reminder with the ZOOM link that had gone out on January 12<sup>th</sup>. The Commissioners expressed their disappointment that Scott had not called into the meeting and they would still like to open a line of communication with the Highway Department and feel that this is important. The Commissioners would like to now try dialoging with the town via the Town Administrator, Kim Cowles.

**Action:** Sandy will see if Kim is able to join for the February meeting.

## **LRW Update on Mittersill Septic & Resolution:**

Tom Mason from LRW did not call in and Pete was on vacation during the time of the repair so there was no update available other than that Pete thought that this repair had been made and all was complete. Kevin expressed concern that the required separation of water and sewer line has not been met, but has now been discovered. Darrel felt certain that this situation would be “grandfathered” as it was preexisting. Kevin also indicated that the FWD should prepare a letter to be signed by the homeowners that would absolve FWD of any future repairs.

**Action:** Sandy to check with Tom on status of this repair. Sandy also to contact the Waste Water Bureau to ascertain if this situation is in fact “grandfathered”, then run the situation by the Town Attorney.

### **Pete’s Update:**

- **Lead Mitigation** at Mittersill: Of the 10 sites sampled there were 3 new “hits” on Hubertus Ring. Darrel found the notices on OneStop and shared them. They indicate a Copper Exceedance. Pete thought that a notification letter from NHDES should have been received. Sandy indicated that notification had not yet been received.  
**Action:** Sandy will watch for it so that she can take the appropriate administrative mitigation steps as will be outlined in the letter. Sandy also to reach out to customers regarding these results and that an exceedance of Copper may result in deterioration of their pipes and manifest as small leaks over time.
- **Mittersill Project Update:** Pete indicated that he was unaware that FWD was planning to move forward with both Phase I and Phase II of the 2021 Mittersill Projects and so had only pre-purchased materials for Phase I in 2020. He also updated the LRW quote with detailed cost info on the long & short services. Phase I - Mittersill to Woodchuck has 5 long & 1 short and that Phase II - Woodchuck Trail has 6 short & 4 long. He also mentioned that there may be an additional cost in getting rid of extra fill as the person who has been taking this may no longer be interested.  
**Action:** Sandy will update the 2021 Mittersill Project estimate sheet and get that to the Commissioners.
- **Leak/(Spring?) on Hubertus Ring Update:** Pete is confident that this is not a leak. Pete went up and shut the water off to this area and the water still kept bubbling. This also happened last year. The Commissioners asked that he keep this on his radar.  
**Action:** Pete to check back on it in June/July when things are drier.
- **Mittersill Storage Tank Mixer** – it appears that the mixer on this storage tank has stopped working. Pete has contacted the company to see when they will be able to come and take a look at it. He believes that the unit is still under warranty. They may not be able to do the repair until the spring when the weather improves.

### **Sandy’s Update:**

- **Electric Bill** – The bills have been increasing. Sandy has reached out to Eversource and it has come to light that our contract with an independent supplier ran out over a year ago and we have been paying an increased rate that may be as much as double the current rate offered by Eversource. Sandy is working with Kim to negotiate a new rate for all the town accounts. In another matter, Eversource has sent a letter indicating that due to usage of over 750 kWh, at the Old Fire Station, over the past 3 consecutive months that they will be installing a new meter that will more closely monitor the usage and likely charge us even more. Sandy is looking for help to see if we can resolve this situation in our favor... After some discussion Darrel suggested that Sandy contact DAS about having an Energy Audit, maybe the pump needs to be upgraded/replaced and a more energy efficient pump could be purchased?  
**Action:** Pete will have an electrical contractor come and have an efficiency test done on the pump to see if the pump is failing or if it is the pump “curve”. Pete will also have amperage checked. Sandy will check with Kim to see if the Town is working on an Energy Audit.
- **Phone Bills** - Sandy shared that the phone bills have also been increasing and that she reached out to Consolidated Communications to see if something could be done to bring the cost of our phone service back under control. She has a new 3 year contract that will bundle the 3 regular phone lines and their local and long distance service into a much lower fixed monthly fee. It will not change the interface with the computer systems, this contract will only affect how the lines are billed. Pete and Darrel discussed the BANA lines and how we might upgrade these lines to better meet the current needs at the Franconia Pump Station. It may be worth discussing a network upgrade with the Telemetry people at EII, could the BANA line be improved?  
**Action:** All commissioners agreed to have Pete investigate options by speaking with Tom or Jim about improving or upgrading the BANA line.  
**Motion:** Darrel moved that after Sandy has confirmed that future changes to the BANA lines will not affect the new contract that Sandy is authorized to sign the new 3 year contract with Consolidated Communications. Motion was seconded by Kevin and approved unanimously.

**Current Water Use Restrictions** – the latest update from NHDES on the drought is that Franconia is in the clear.

**Motion** – Darrel moved to lift the Voluntary Water Use Restrictions that are currently in effect. Seconded by Kevin and unanimously approved.

Motion made by Darrel to adjourn the meeting at 6:27pm and seconded by Kevin.