

Franconia Water Department Monthly Meeting

Thursday January 9, 2020

Town Hall Meeting Room 4:30pm

In Attendance: Water Commissioners Darrel Dietlein, Joan Hartford and Dan Walker; Meaghan Caron, Water Department Secretary; Peter Hilton, LRW

Public in Attendance: Kevin Johnson

Darrel motions to open the meeting at 4:30pm. Joan seconds and all are in favor.

Meeting minutes from 12/12/2019 are reviewed. Darrel motions to approve the minutes, Joan seconds and all are in favor.

The Commissioners discuss the existing new customer connection fee. Per our R&Rs, "all new services will be installed by the Franconia water dept with all charges billed to the customer....." It is agreed upon by the Commissioners that we would like to adopt language stating that a 50% deposit must be made and 50% will be due at completion. We will solidify the change at the work session on 1/14/19.

Fire hydrants: Darrel speaks to the fact that the Water Department is obligated to maintain OR decommission the hydrants. There are ways that we could create better pressures on the hydrants at a hefty cost. But, if we increase pressure then we may have other problems.

What is the cost to decommission?

The response from the town customers and businesses who's insurance would be affected is a great consideration.

Kevin Johnson speaks: What is the percentage discount on insurance based on distance from the hydrant? The values argument the benefit to the town residents as far as the discount to their insurance...

Darrel states that properly working hydrants benefits *everyone* in town and that the insurance savings only benefit the downtown residents. There isn't really any tangible benefit to out of town residents.

We understand why the fire dept doesn't use the hydrants and we are taking this into consideration with our discussions and how we will move forward.

Would installing a booster station satisfy the needs of the fire suppression system? If this were an option that the Department decided to follow through with it would have to be a warrant to the town.

Dan asks how would decommissioning the hydrants possibly affect the ISO of the Town? Meg will inquire with Holly regarding the Town's ISO rating.

We don't want to keep maintaining hydrants that we may decommission in two years. At this time, we are not fully prepared to start charging the town hydrant fees.

We confirm that this means for our 2020 budget there will be a shortage of \$9600.00. This will be worked on at the Work Session on 1/14/19 so as to finalize the budget.

Dan reviews options for increasing the water usage rate. It has been two years since we raised the rates. Option would be to raise these rates to gain the money that we need.

Holly Burbank, Town Administrator happens to come into the Main Hall and Dan asks about the town ISO rating. She doesn't think that the town has to apply to ISO ratings but she will contact the town's insurance agent to check if there is any information regarding the insurance rates for municipalities. She will contact Meg with any information.

Pete Hilton gives his update:

The leak at Berwick court was fixed. It was a big leak. The company that originally put the new main and water lines in during the 2009 project had left the old curb stop on the property so Pete had to find and dig up the newer one after the leak was visible further in on the property. The leak turned out to not be at the curb stop, rather it was found to be on the service line of the customer because the copper piping was pitting from the outside in. Pete believes this has been leaking for years. While working on fixing the leak the property owner did come out and speak to Pete so he was aware of the work being done and how extensive it was. Pete did inform the owner that he will likely need a whole new service line on his property. When a bill is sent we will make a recommendation for the property owner to replace his service line. A discussion on how to bill the customer begins and it is determined that the large amount of work that was done was due to the deterioration of the service line on the property past the new curb stop.

The bill for the work completed has already been paid to LRW. Darrel motions to bill the customer the full amount of \$3150.00 and Joan seconds. Dan opposes. With the majority in favor, Meg will generate up the bill for the customer.

Pete recommends looking into a system for informing customers of future water shut off periods. "One Call" is a system that can be used. At this time, the Department does not have the funds to purchase a new alert system but will take this into consideration for the future. Meg has had a good response to her request for customers updated contact information so any water shut offs that are anticipated can be properly posted. Meg can notify customers with blast emails and make phone calls. In the event of an emergency shut off the situation is just the same as if electricity goes off in a storm—the event will be managed and service will be restored as soon as possible.

Kevin Johnson states that he is fine with paying the usage rate that is necessary to sustain the system. If we have to raise the usage rate he understands and supports us and the quality of the

product we deliver. He would stand in our support at Town Meeting if needed and we greatly appreciate his support in this matter.

The next Monthly meeting will be held on Thursday February 13, 2020 at 4:30pm.

With no further business to attend to Darrel motions to close the meeting at 6:15pm. Joan seconds and all are in favor.

These minutes of the Franconia Water Department have been recorded by its Secretary. Though believed to be accurate and correct they are subject to additions, deletions and corrections by the Board of Commissioners of the Water Department at its next meeting when the Board votes its final approval of the minutes. They are being made available at this time to conform to the requirements of New Hampshire RSA 91-A:2.