

Franconia Water Department Monthly Meeting

Wednesday March 11, 2020

Franconia Town Hall 5pm

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

Public in Attendance: Karen Foss

Others in Attendance: Scott Clang from GSRWA and Cathy Conway, Horizon Engineering Inc.

Darrel moves to open the meeting at 5pm Dan seconds and all are in favor.

Darrel welcomes Kevin Johnson to the board officially. He was sworn in by Carol Wills today after he was written in for the elected position. Congratulations, Kevin!

Scott Clang is here from Granite State Rural Water Association to speak about assisting with determining the viability of our fire hydrant system as it exists today.

Darrel explains the fire hydrant situation as two-fold:

1. The fire hydrants don't meet the standards of what the Fire Department needs in order to be used. We have been told that their protocol states that they do not hook up to the hydrants.
2. Town residents receive insurance premium discounts because there are fire hydrants near or at a certain distance to their properties.

Therefore, what our department is working to understand is:

1. Are the hydrants up to par? If they are not, is there a way to bring them up to par to meet industry standards? If there is no way, is there not a measure of liability the town is absorbing by having the hydrants?
2. If we cannot use them, what is the purpose of maintaining them? If we decommission them there will be huge implications, namely insurance savings for our customers is likely lost. Also, there will be a cost to remove the hydrants.

Various businesses have shown concern to the idea of no fire hydrants in town. It is the department's responsibility to ensure we address the problem and figure out a solution. Once we have done our due diligence to have tests done and pull together numbers we must then bring a comprehensive report to the Town at the next Town meeting as a warrant article. It should be a decision made by more than just the 3 people representing the board.

Scott asks how the fire department stated that the hydrants are not usable. Darrel speaks to the pressure not being sufficient. Our tank's capacity is 375,000 gallons. The well's yield would be an issue if

used during a fire emergency. Currently, the Fire Department goes directly to the Gale River for their water source.

Scott Clang speaks about performing a fire hydrant assessment and gathering a better understanding of pressure ratings at each hydrant and then flow tests to gather capability of each hydrant on the system. Once this is completed, then you can develop a plan with the fire department to determine which hydrants can be used in the event of a fire.

We want a professional who can provide empirical data to provide the report that sets the possible recommendations. We would bring it together with the other research and recommendations so that we can then present the information to the Town.

Kevin asks if we actually know that the hydrants don't have the appropriate pressure? Has the Fire Department tried to utilize the hydrants to know this for sure?

Darrel explains that we have been told that the FD has hooked up to different hydrants at different times with varying results. The system has the volume just not the pressure. A different attack approach is strictly for an initial attack to fill tankers until a better water source could be provided. We are not fire fighting professionals but this is our understanding.

We must gather the facts, have them substantiated by a credible source and create a report to then bring to the town.

Make sure that the hydrants functionality is acceptable to the insurance companies so that the department is not liable.

Scott speaks to color coding the hydrants once a test is done. The idea is to code the hydrants based on their flow rate and pressure capabilities so that the FD would know what could be provided.

Kevin speaks: should we be looking at the insurance industry to see what their standards are?

Scott responds that industry standards are 20psi under all fire flow conditions.

Dan asks the basic question again: *Do we continue to spend the money to maintain or replace a hydrant system that isn't and cannot be used or do we spend the money to decommission them?*

We do need some endpoints and midpoints to routine flush the system. We could change a hydrant to a blow off.

Primex may have a recommendation on who we can hire to have come in to do a test. Darrel asks Scott to come up with some recommendations on who we could call to help and possibly assist in this situation and asks him to also be involved.

We need to rally some support from people and businesses in town to get a feel for what they save on their insurance and what they feel should be done. Once we have the responses from businesses and

community members we can compare the information to the requirements and standards of the insurance companies.

Scott will come up with the list of resources and any insights for insurance contacts and will communicate with Meaghan.

Minutes from the February 13, 2020 meeting are reviewed. Kevin asks about the update for the FSC connection to the Mittersill Inn dry hydrant. We have not yet heard of any further progress with Lois or FSC as of today.

Darrel moves to accept the amended minutes with one typo that Meaghan will correct. Dan seconds and all are in favor.

Cathy Conway is here to speak about the Garnet Hill/Main street project. She shows the drafts for the plans showing 3 new service connections across rte 18 to the few houses that were not connected back when the 2009 project occurred. These homes will now be serviced from the front sides of their properties. The old line would be decommissioned.

The new 8" main line would cut across rte 18 and head just past the stream behind Garnet Hill and Coldwell Banker. The original plans included the line ending just past the stream but the additional scope of plans for directional drilling under the stream and continuing on to the nursing home. There could be a pit in the area at the base at the small drive between Coldwell Banker and Garnet Hill so as to directional drill under the road and under the stream. A cost estimate will be created for this part of the plan.

For consideration with this project and moving forward with gaining possible grant monies:

The project will consist of 3 directional drills services across Rte 18, 1 x 8" water main crossing over Rte 18 and approximately 1400 feet of 8" water main. This brings some rough numbers to a possible \$500,000 project.

When estimating a project's cost, options are given to meet certain pressures and ratings that have to be met. Performance specs are given between ductile iron, HDPE, and C900 which is typically the least expensive. USDA will not support ductile iron due to cost. Pete states that we would likely stay with C900 and road crossings would be HDPE.

The Northern Boarder Regional Commission program applications are due May 15th. It is possible to get up to \$500,000 for an infrastructure project through this program. The Water department would have to show that this project is for our community's economic development. Because this project is occurring on our Main Street business strip, and also includes the nursing home we would be able to meet those criteria. The NBRC program requires a 50% match so the department could also go to the Community Development Block Grant program and ask for funds from them (up to \$500,000) to potentially have the support of both programs. By potentially combining the projects of the hydrants and the Main Street project we could likely get a 100% grant funded project.

Cathy would be able to help with pulling together the information for the NBRC program and for CDBG grant assistance we could have Donna Lane help. This would need to be approved through the Select Board.

Scott could provide the information from a pressure and flow test, Meg would have to put out a public notice of water pressure drops etc. Scott and Pete could work together to perform the flow tests, ideally during April Vacation so as to not disturb the school. The Best Western is also a business that is impacted by the water flow.

Kevin will plan to contact the local businesses to get letters and information from them regarding their needs and concerns with the system and the hydrants. Cathy will help with providing a sample letter for Kevin to use. Getting a letter from the chamber to the various businesses that would be impacted could help with the grant applications and the process moving forward. Individual business letters speaking to the community members that they employ and how important their business is to the town give the strongest argument. Letters from the Chamber, Lakes Region Water and GSRWA will also benefit the grant application.

After a discussion regarding pipe size that would be installed, relating to what already exists in our system, Darrel states that we would be best leaving the decision up to what is recommended through the study, either 8" or 10". As long as both options are viable and we can be cost effective on our decision. Pete suggests we stick with what already exists going into the Nursing home and will get this information to Cathy.

Cathy will work with Michelle to get the grant application put together. Cathy will create a cost estimate and also get Meg a sample letter for the businesses for Kevin to distribute. We will need the Franconia Board of Selectmen to write a letter of intent to state that we will be applying for the CDBG grant money.

Kevin asks if the department has any record of Letters of deficiency from the past. Is there value in showing deficient characteristics of the water line from back then that could still exist in the remaining line? Do we gain more headway for the grant applications? We also let Cathy know that the existing main line that runs behind all of the homes on Main Street/Rte 18 goes under many of the septic systems.

Pete can hopefully perform his spring flushing in coordination with Scott Clang performing the flow test.

We discuss changing the time for our regular meetings. 5pm meetings on the second Thursday works for everyone. Darrel moves to change the meeting time from 4:30pm to 5pm on the second Thursday of each month. Dan seconds and all are in favor.

Pete: Telemetry guy from Lavoilette came up to get the Scada system installation started. He will be back up to finish next week. Pete says that since then the tank level sensor isn't working properly, it overflows. And the chlorine analyzer isn't working. Pete will ask the tech to fix or repair as needed when he returns.

Mittersill project can be started at the end of August depending on how wet it is. Pete is also in contact with the paving companies to be sure that we are on their schedules. He has spoken with Scott Leslie and will touch base with him again regarding the culvert that needs to be replaced.

Pete will call and put together a list for John Devivo at Cannon to get permission to store materials at the second gravel parking lot this summer. Meg will call to arrange this storage.

Pete and Kevin will coordinate a time to drive around the system and to see the pump houses.

Meg gives Kevin a signature box key and Kevin signs out key #2.

With no further business needing attention Darrel moves to adjourn the meeting at 6:37pm. Kevin 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.