

Milford Water/Wastewater Commissioners' Meeting Minutes
August 18, 2020

Present: Michael Putnam, Chairman
Robert Courage, Vice-Chairman
Dale White, Commissioner
Kevin Stetson, Director, Water Utilities Department
Evelyn Gendron, Recording Secretary
Ryan Provins, Water Dept. Foreman
Andy Kouropoulos, Videographer

Call to Order

At 6:00 p.m. Chairman Putnam called the meeting to order with introductions. He explained the Board is meeting at the Town Hall location to better meet social distancing guidelines, and that this evening is the commissioners' first live-streamed meeting. At 6:10 p.m. Commissioner White joined the meeting in progress.

Press and Public Comments – none

Decisions & Approvals

Meeting Minutes

Upon motion by Chairman Courage, seconded by Vice-Chairman Putnam, it was unanimously agreed by the 2/0 vote to table the 7/21/2020 Meeting Minutes until the 9/1/2020 meeting to allow for amending/clarifying the minutes. Motion passed by the 2/0 "aye" votes.

Note: Hours prior to the 6:00 p.m. 8/4/2020 Board meeting, Chairman Putnam canceled the posted meeting due to the Hurricane Isaias forecasted weather.

Water Users Fee/Tax Collector's Warrant – July 2020 – After Chairman Putnam read the Tax Collector's Water Users Fee Warrant to collect the taxes in the matter of water users fees for the July 2020 Bill Commitment 200731 in the amount of \$140,108.53 and for the July 2020 Final Bills issued in the amount of \$1,899.30, the commissioners approved and signed this warrant as presented.

Sewer Users Fee/Tax Collector's Warrant – July 2020 – After Chairman Putnam read the Tax Collector's Sewer Users Fee Warrant to collect the taxes in the matter of sewer users fees for the July 2020 Bill Commitment 200731 in the amount of \$186,865.92 for the July 2020 Final Bills issued in the amount of \$2,451.76, the commissioners approved and signed this warrant as presented.

Sewer Abatement Request – Situation Management Systems (339 Nashua Street)

Upon motion by Vice-Chairman Courage, seconded by Chairman Putnam, the Situation Management Systems' sewer abatement request relative to the basement water leak was unanimously approved by the 2/0 vote taken, in the amount of \$323.02 for the 2020 Bill #237491, abating 4,695 cubic feet of sewer usage, per the signed recommendation of Director Stetson and Water Foreman Provins. Motion passed by the 2/0 "aye" votes.

2018 Mayflower Tank Electrical Installation Capital Reserve Transfer – The Finance Department questioned an unpaid balance for the 2018 Mayflower Tank Project, relative to electrical work performed at the tank. To assist Finance with closing their books regarding a 2018 Water Utilities budget account balance, Mr. Stetson prepared the Water Capital Reserve trust fund transfer request form in the amount of \$8,300.00 to cover those expenses, through the disbursement of Water Capital Reserve Funds to Account 610928-2018 to replace funds for electrical service installation costs. The board reviewed and inquired of the January 11, 2018 Evans Line Construction invoice/payment documents amounting to \$8,300.00. The vendor had been paid. The funds transfer will reimburse the Water Utilities Department’s budget account funds. **Upon motion by Vice-Chairman Courage, seconded by Chairman Putnam, it was unanimously approved by the 2/0 vote to disburse \$8,300.00 from Water Capital Reserve Funds to Account 610928-2018 to replace funds for electrical service installation costs at the Mayflower Tank in 2018, as presented. All voted in favor. Motion carried by the 2/0 “aye” votes.**

2018 Dewatering Project Engineering Capital Reserve Transfer – The commissioners reviewed the project financial records provided by Director Stetson, including an 8/12/2020 email from the Finance Department. He explained there were more expenses to the Dewatering Project engineering specification, bid, and selection of contractors, were paid before the project was approved. He explained that following a partial payment, the difference of \$15,812.10, is being requested from the Sewer Capital Reserve account to pay that remaining project account balance in Finance, in essence “paying ourselves back”, assisting Finance to close their 2018 books. **Upon motion by Vice-Chairman Courage, seconded by Chairman Putnam, it was unanimously approved by the 2/0 vote to disburse Sewer Capital Reserve Funds in the amount of \$15,812.10 to replace funds to Project Account 710929 for payment of project engineering expenses, as presented. All voted in favor. Motion carried by the 2/0 “aye” votes.**

Chairman Putnam welcomed Commissioner White as he joined the meeting, listed the executed decision agenda topics, and asked Mr. White whether he had questions regarding the meeting topics. Mr. White expressed appreciation, and indicated there were no questions, being familiar with the Board’s informational meeting packet.

Discussion/Information Items

Draft 6 Request For Proposal – WWTF Nutrient-Metals Removal Upgrade Design – The commissioners received Director Stetson’s revised request for proposal (RFP) language pertinent to aeration tank biological nutrient removal upgrades, effluent filtration, and waste activated sludge storage. Mr. Putnam recalled that this agenda topic had been tabled on 7/21/2020, that the 8/4/2020 meeting had been canceled, and asked that the Board be updated. Mr. Stetson seeks approval from the Board to distribute the final wastewater treatment facility RFP draft for design, engineering and bidding, in order to receive sealed proposals on or before September 28th which would contain a separate, sealed fee schedule that would be opened after review and ranking of proposals, as described in the RFP. The Board had no questions or recommended changes to the RFP. Mr. Stetson will distribute the RFP to engineering firms.

Recap of 7/30/2020 Wilton Water Commission Meeting – Chairman Putnam explained that the Board had met virtually with the Wilton Water Commission on Thursday, July 20th to explore the possibility of connecting Milford’s water distribution system with Wilton’s water distribution system for the purpose of purchasing water from Wilton. Vice-Chairman Courage added that the Wilton Water Commissioners were not very interested in expanding their water system or adding Milford as a Wilton bulk water customer. Mr. Putnam inquired whether Milford’s water system information had been sent to Wilton. Mr. Provins, Milford Water Department Foreman,

being present, answered that the information had not been sent but is ready to go. In the spirit of pursuing all bulk water opportunities, Mr. Stetson will send Milford Water Department details to Wilton and await feedback. The Milford Board's consensus currently is that building upon previous discussions with Nashua's Pennichuck to purchase an increased volume of bulk water may prove successful, given that a bulk water contract with Pennichuck exists and infrastructure is in place.

7 Walnut Street Fire Sprinkler System Service Connection – Chairman Putnam explained that the new house at this address has a sprinkler system with only one water line connected to the building, which they were going to connect before the water meter. The building plans did not include the sprinkler system. Routinely with sprinkler systems, he said, two separate water lines are installed: one for the service and one for the fire sprinkler. The Milford Water Department policy manual does not currently address this scenario. The Milford Fire Department indicated that if there is a sprinkler system in the house, it must be connected, or removed. Being that the house is fully built and sheet rocked, all possibilities were considered. Should the owner(s) be expected to dig back to the water main? Or be expected to have a tee installed outdoors at the curb-stop so that the Water Department has access? Or should a separate service be added for the sprinkler system? Commissioner White pointed out that when two water lines are installed, one line is typically run before the water meter, and beyond the tee there would be a domestic water line where a curb stop could be placed. This is because a water service connection can be "shut" for non-payment; however, a water service connection may not be shut to a fire sprinkler service line. Mr. White asked whether a line could be teed-off to feed outdoors. Sizes of the installed water lines and taps to the building were discussed. Mr. Putnam noted that the service line installed by the Town was 3/4" and that the owner increased the size to 1-1/2" beyond the curb stop, between the building and the curb-stop. Many details continued to be shared. Mr. Stetson added that the water main is not far from the property line, and that a solution is desired this week by the property owners.

Upon motion by Vice-Chairman Courage, seconded by Chairman Putnam, it was unanimously decided by the 3/0 vote that the acceptable solution would be for the owner to provide a 3/4" line for a domestic service and whatever size fire suppression line that is required by the Fire Department and insurance company, all the way back to the water main. It would be the responsibility of the owners to pay for the entire cost, including any supplied, necessary parts involved. All voted in favor. Motion passed by the 3/0 "aye" votes.

Director Stetson agreed to prepare a policy, to be finalized as a Water Department standard going forward, to avoid confusion and assumptions as to use of a water line for fire suppression or irrigation purposes. Being a former plumber, Chairman Putnam offered his assistance to develop this new Water Department policy.

Annual Pennichuck Water Rate Evaluation – The commissioners received Director Stetson's draft letter to Pennichuck Water regarding the 2020 special rate calculations, increasing the rate from \$2.50/100 cubic feet to \$2.55/100 cubic feet, in order for Milford Water Utilities to recover administrative and maintenance costs associated with the distribution of Pennichuck water through the Milford water distribution system, which would become effective November 1st. Milford's special rate to Pennichuck applies to water distribution services within The Reserve, Federal Hill, Bartlett Commons, Ashley Commons, and Greatbrook Condos.

Upon motion by Chairman Putnam, seconded by Vice-Chairman Courage, it was unanimously approved by the 3/0 vote to increase the annual Pennichuck water rate effective November 1, 2020 from \$2.50/100 cubic feet to \$2.55/100 cubic feet. All voted in favor. Motion passed by the 3/0 "aye" votes.

Meeting Request With Finance Director – Discussion Topics and Schedule – Director Stetson explained that an audit for 2019 is expected. He asked whether the Board would like to meet with the Finance Director to ask questions directly, relative to:

- The 2019 audit status
 - Explanation of revenues from Water Utilities sales, such as: Coding for deposited checks
 - Accounts that deposits go into
 - Whether funds get applied to accounts to repay expenses
- Annual budget process
 - Labor expenses
 - Benefit expenses
 - Budget revenues
- Water Utilities' cash position reports
- Any additional topics

As the Board is interested in participating in a work session with Finance Director Calabria, Mr. Stetson will arrange a mutually convenient date and time, giving as much notice as possible to the Board.

Water Main Improvement Project – Director Stetson distributed tallies of the closed SUR-West and Stantec project expenses for discussion. He itemized the bond, construction, construction phase monitoring and capital reserve project expenses. He noted that the construction phase monitoring expenses were not included in estimated costs. The Water Utilities Department was left with a capital reserve balance of \$16,944.90, which he would like to remove from Capital Reserve Funds in order to reimburse the Water Budget for this 2019 Water Main Improvement Project. The Board received a completed Water Capital Reserve trust fund transfer form, in the amount of \$16,944.90, to replace funds spent above the project bond amount. Mr. White inquired whether everything was agreed upon regarding the changes made with Stantec. Mr. Stetson replied affirmatively, mentioning that savings from the construction project were rolled into inspection and construction monitoring costs. Mr. Stetson confirmed that the \$16,944.90 would reimburse the Water Department for the 2019 Water Main Improvement Project.

Upon motion by Commissioner White, seconded by Chairman Putnam, it was unanimously approved by the 3/0 vote to disburse \$16,944.90 from the Water Capital Reserve account to satisfy the cost expenditure, and return this amount to the Water Department budget. All voted in favor. Motion passed by the 3/0 “aye” votes.

Activities Report – The commissioners received and reviewed the reported and planned activities lists received from the Wastewater, Collection System and Water foremen. There were no questions.

ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA

Trombly Connections on North River Road – Chairman Putnam inquired whether Mr. Trombly is being charged for North River Road water connections. Mr. Stetson said that Mr. Trombly has been asked to pay full service connection entrance fees. Mr. Putnam pointed out that Mr. Trombly has been tied into the water system since the mid-1980's, and asked why he would be required to pay full entrance fees. Vice-Chairman Courage recalled the EPA funding a 2" line running from the Buxton Road water main during the mid-1980's to serve

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the homes on Buxton Road, and the State Highway Department maintenance garage, however, he did not recall Mr. Trombly getting service connections from that water line, but a connection may have occurred later. Mr. Putnam indicated that Trombly houses have had water meters since the mid-1980 and have been making water payments for water coming from that direction. Mr. Courage asked how many units are being served off of that line. Water Foreman Provins answered that the line feeds seven units, the farmhouse has a meter, which feeds the farmhouse, the Sugar Shack, the trailer across the street, then the line splits and feeds the farm, a watering bin to the animals, and so forth. What's happening is that the State has come in to install a spreader rack on their property, which is where that water line runs, which feeds all those buildings. In order to avoid potential issues should the line be "hit", Mr. Trombly has been asked to tie in off of the 12" water main, and put a service into the farmhouse, a service into the Sugar Shack, and the service that goes through his farm, and another line that would feed the trailer across the street, in order to eliminate the line that runs 800 feet cross-country from Buxton Road. There is no opportunity for the Water Department personnel to verify whether water leaks exist in the line. Mr. Putnam said he is not opposed to charging Mr. Trombly for the cost of doing the three taps, but it would not be fair to require Mr. Trombly to pay for the entire entrance fee. Mr. White agreed, given that Mr. Trombly has been paying for water obtained with permission.

Mr. Courage indicated there should be a separate meter in every unit. Mr. Provins said everything will be on separate meters now. He said because the State would not allow digging across the road, at the time, the only hiccup is the 1" line that was tapped for the farmhouse is also going to feed the trailer across the street. This is a temporary fix, and they know this is temporary, but there will be all separate meters. The State has suggested that the Water Department accomplish a directional bore across the road. To speed up the process, the Water Department wants to tie into the existing water line there to feed the trailer. For now, added Director Stetson. This would be a temporary fix, said Mr. Provins, so that should the Buxton Road water line get hit, there is still a way for water to reach the trailer across the street.

Upon motion by Vice-Chairman Courage, seconded by Chairman Putnam, it was unanimously approved by the 3/0 vote for the Milford Water Department to waive the entrance fees for Mr. Trombly, in exchange for Mr. Trombly paying for all involvements by the Water Department, costs including materials and services that the Town provides, in addition to Mr. Trombly providing water meters for every unit for which a water supply line is connected. All voted in favor. Motion passed by the 3/0 "aye" votes.

The Water Department Open Equipment Operator Position – Chairman Putnam inquired whether the Water Department's open Equipment Operator position should be filled in light of potential revenue shortfalls. It was agreed that many factors are contributing to budget challenges: the Water Department is paying more for meter horns than last year, the revenue reduction due to the outdoor watering restrictions, and the 2020 water/sewer revenue reduction compared to 2019 for this same time of year—added together, the budget reality differs from projected revenue. Billed customers may take longer to pay over time. The outdoor watering ban cannot be lifted yet, southern NH continues to be in a moderate drought and the Souhegan River level is low. Mr. Provins reported that Curtis Well water pumping levels are being maintained with Pennichuck running. Commissioner White asked Mr. Provins about his needs for a new hire. Mr. Provins explained that valve maintenance and hydrant maintenance are not getting done. Work orders are getting done. With an additional person, more meters could be installed. Commissioner Courage feels that an operator driving a truck who could assist with gate valve repairs and repairing water main breaks is a priority over an equipment operator at this time, as current, talented staff can operate equipment. The Water Department does not have the volume of equipment operation requirements on a daily basis. If an equipment operator were hired, that person may not continue long term. The group consensus, without a formal motion, is that Director Stetson will speak with the Human

Resources Director about changing the posted Water Department employment opportunity, such as for a water operator with some experience operating a loader, as Mr. Provins suggested, who understands how water works. Mr. Stetson noted that three nearby communities have posted very similar water operator employment opportunities.

Property Tie-in Next to #77 Adams Street – Director Stetson learned today that an Adams Street property owner is interested in knowing how to proceed with water utility tie-in connections. The commissioners referred to maps as Mr. Stetson explained that the sewer pump on this property pumps to a dedicated line: a Dearborn Street manhole. This property would connect to a 2-1/2” force main. Mr. Stetson uncertain whether the owner of #77 Adams Street is the owner of the pipe to the manhole, or if it is in the street, would it belong to the Water Utilities Department and we’re able to connect to it. Mr. White commented that we need to have a separate line. Mr. Putnam recalled during a previous discussion with Collection System Foreman Whitfield, that on the original 1984 permit was the notation that “the owner would pay \$60,000.00 to have the Town sewer extended, put in front of the building.” At the time, Mr. Putnam and Mr. Whitfield considered the language to convey that the Town owned the line. Mr. Courage agreed that if the owner paid the Town to install the 2” line, and that it is located in the Town’s public right-of-way, he would say that we own it. Mr. Stetson said the developer who connects to that would put in all of the check valves, and backflows. Mr. Courage said the entrance fees would need to be paid. If the Board agrees with considering that Town property, then the Water Utilities Department can inform the developer of the necessary connection steps. Mr. Stetson wanted to be certain whether the Town or #77 Adams Street had rights. Mr. Stetson agrees that services in the street belong to the Town. Mr. Putnam and Mr. Courage concurred that infrastructure in the public right-of-way belongs to the Town. The developer will be requested to install an E-1 system, in keeping with the Water Utilities Department practices.

Project Updates

Curtis Well/Pennichuck Water Use Update – The commissioners received and reviewed Director Stetson’s 8/18/2020 correspondence with 9 pages attached, outlining a variety of details pertaining to:

- Water Usage: Steady water usage has been recorded for the previous two weeks
- Well Static Levels: Wells #1 and #2 static levels were recorded as lower in the previous two weeks
- Monitoring Well Levels: Levels were recorded as lower for the previous two weeks
- Outside Water Use Restrictions Non-Compliance Information: Not all water customers adhere to the drought press release issued on June 20, 2020. The Water Department staff recently completed a “radio read” of secondary (irrigation) meters, which reveals outdoor water usage has occurred. Some neighbors have been falsely advised by neighbors that Milford’s outdoor watering restrictions had been lifted. Mr. Stetson’s concern is the amount of residents and the trend of the volume of outdoor watering. He is less concerned with knowing the names of the non-compliant customers.
- The AccuTab tablet chlorination system will ship from the factory on 9/9/2020.

2021Capital Improvements Plan Update – The commissioners received and reviewed Director Stetson’s correspondence and CIP Water and Wastewater project and financial details for the next five years with date “placeholders” for discussion. Wastewater upgrade projects were placed/delayed three years, some project dates appear as “to be determined” until cost estimates are received. Many project details were carried over

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from the projects recommended in the 10 year Master Plan and the Comprehensive Facility Plan. Mr. Stetson addressed the Commissioners' comments and questions, toward gaining the Board's approval to prepare Water Utilities Department details for presentation to the CIP committee. Keeping up with necessary equipment upgrades was emphasized to avoid equipment repairs/failures, including Curtis Well #3 development. The NHDES requires notification at the onset of planned well development activities, including the test well stage, due to the amount of water being withdrawn. The wellfield is dependent upon the Souhegan River.

Upon motion by Vice-Chairman Courage, seconded by Chairman Putnam, it was unanimously approved by the 3/0 vote for Director Stetson to apprise the NHDES of Milford Water Utilities' proceeding toward obtaining approval for test well work at the Curtis Wells toward development of a supplemental well. All voted in favor. Motion passed by the 3/0 "aye" votes.

As to the upcoming CIP presentation, the commissioners asked that it be made clear to the CIP committee members that the identified placeholders for projects and expenses may or may not have to be accomplished. Mr. Stetson agreed, indicating that the placeholder projects reflect an estimated timeline for possible project expenses. Chairman Putnam also requested that the CIP committee members understand that other debt should be paid in full within some placeholder project timelines, so that the picture does not look like only added debt.

Primex – Required Training

The commissioners received the updated spreadsheet tracking Water Utilities employees that have achieved certificates for three mandatory, on-line Primex training sessions to be completed prior to the end of 2020. The commissioners had no questions as to the training is relevant to leading causes of workers compensation losses and how to avoid them: proper lifting techniques to avoid injury, preventing slips, trips and falls, and vehicle related collisions.

Drought Update

The Board received and reviewed the U.S. Drought Monitor map of New Hampshire as of August 11, 2020, released August 13, 2020. The southern NH tier continues to be in a moderate drought ranking. Milford's outside watering ban continues to be in effect, with the exception of watering vegetable gardens.

2021 Budget Update

The Board reviewed Mr. Stetson's updated water and sewer budget correspondence, including the 2021 budget cycle timeline dates. Mr. Stetson indicated that draft 2021 budget expenses exceed expected revenues, for both the water department and sewer department. In approximately a month the Budget Advisory Committee will meet with the Board and the Director. Quotes are still anticipated for the administration building's membrane roof; the ages/stages of current vehicles were mentioned. As always, not all desired expenditures materialize into approved expenditures.

2020 Budget Status

Mr. Stetson distributed the 2019-2020 revenue report, the 2020-2021 revenue estimation, and the 2019 – 2020 delinquent accounts comparison for the commissioners' review and discussion. Impacts to revenue include: water use restrictions, pandemic economic factors upon unpaid utility bills, water conservation measures by water customers. The potential for revenue shortfalls were identified.

Landfill Update

Emery and Garrett's emailed draft report prepared for submittal to the NHDES was reviewed. The plan of action will not be submitted without approval by the Board. Report conclusions were as follows:

- Groundwater flows potentially carry landfill contaminants away from landfill
- Landfill water levels suggest that water is entering landfill from above
- Samples from downgradient of landfill indicate elevated concentrations of contaminants
- Results suggest shallow groundwater contamination
- Landfill water levels suggest that landfill water is overflowing the perimeter of the landfill liner
- The membrane cap system is the suspected source of migration.

Corrective action recommendations:

- Engineering review of landfill design
- Membrane cap inspection
- Landfill soil gas measurements
- If breach of the membrane is found:
 - o Repair evaluation
 - o Membrane cap replacement

The commission inquired of the cost. Mr. Stetson indicated that the Emery and Garrett report will be sent to the NHDES and, if approved, price proposals will be solicited. Without a formal motion, it was the consensus of the Board to have Emery and Garrett send the report to the NHDES.

NON-PUBLIC SESSION – RSA 91-A:3,II(a) Personnel

At 7:37 p.m., the Board unanimously concluded the public portion of the meeting in order to enter into non-public session for the purpose of discussing personnel, as announced by Chairman Putnam.

Adjournment – The meeting adjourned at 7:54 p.m.

Future Meetings

- Tuesday, 9/1/2020 6:00 p.m. is the next scheduled BOC meeting, to be held in the Board of Selectmen's Meeting Room, Milford Town Hall, 1 Union Square.

Michael Putnam, Chairman

Date

Robert Courage, Vice-Chairman

Date

Dale White, Commissioner

Date