

# **Milford Water/Wastewater Commissioners' Meeting Minutes**

## **April 27, 2021**

Dale White, Chairman

Robert Courage, Vice-Chairman

Kris Jensen, Commissioner

Kevin Stetson, Director, Water Utilities Department

Evelyn Gendron, Recording Secretary

While in Zoom's remote "waiting room", Mr. Mike Thornton, Milford Zoning Board of Adjustment member, was welcomed by Director Stetson.

### **Call to Order & Introductions**

At 6:07 p.m. Chairman White called the (hybrid style) meeting to order, introduced meeting participants, read the statement relative to invoking the provisions of RSA 91-A:2, III(b) and explained that the public can gain access to the meetings by phone or computer referring to agenda details posted prior to each meeting on the Milford Town Website, on the Board of Water and Sewer Commissioners' web page. He announced that the usual rules of conduct and decorum apply. Complying with the Right to Know Law, remote meeting participants will state their name, and the name of anyone in the room with them. Votes taken at this meeting will be by roll call vote. This evening's roll call attendance: Dale White (present), Robert Courage (present), Commissioner Jensen (present), Director Stetson (present) and Evelyn Gendron (present).

### **Press and Public Comments** – none

### **Decisions and Approvals**

#### **Meeting Minutes**

Upon motion by Commissioner Jensen, seconded by Vice-Chairman Courage, the meeting minutes of April 13, 2021 were approved as presented by the 3/0 roll call vote as follows:

**Robert Courage:** announced "yes"

**Kris Jensen:** announced "aye"

**Dale White:** announced "yes"

### **Discussion/Information Items & Project Updates**

#### **CMOM Program Six Month Report**

The Board reviewed Director Stetson's correspondence indicating that with the assistance from Hoyle Tanner and Associates (HTA) the EPA-required six month report was submitted on April 19, 2021. The Board received copies of the emailed confirmation received from both the EPA Region 1 and NHDES. Report submission satisfies the Wastewater Treatment Facility's 2020 Discharge Permit requirement of submitting a sewer system CMOM plan within six months of the November 1, 2020 permit issue. Mr. Stetson explained that he learned earlier today that the EPA had accepted the Wilton Sewer Department's CMOM report. The Board received a color timeline chart listing 17 upcoming activity deadlines relative to the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) 2020 permit compliance plan spanning 60 months. With that CMOM Plan 1 submission satisfied, he explained, the next item of focus will be the first annual report, expected to be

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submitted with assistance from HTA, followed by the second aluminum status report, both due in November 2021. The Board had no questions for discussion.

NHDES Drought Update – The Board reviewed the seven pages of drought update data provided by Director Stetson as reported by the NHDES, indicating that the entire state is experiencing abnormally dry and moderate drought conditions, and that as of April 20<sup>th</sup> the “NHDES is recommending that outdoor water use restrictions be implemented and conservation messaging be spread across your communities.” Measures Milford has taken include:

- May 1<sup>st</sup> begins residential Odd/Even Watering measures for outdoor irrigation
- Athletic Field irrigation has been restricted
- Bulk water sales are not allowed

Mr. Stetson asked whether additional measures should be considered, such as restrictions for large area water irrigation use. Chairman White explained it is too early to impose further restrictions, that Pennichuck Water’s activities in response to this abnormally dry season should be watched, and that we could reach out to Pennichuck and take direction from them. Vice-Chairman Courage and Commissioner Jensen agreed to wait a little longer before taking additional measures. All agreed it is important to not over-burden the Curtis Well pumps, and to purchase additional Pennichuck Water as needed, as this plan has worked well in the past.

Curtis Well 2A Status Update – Maher Services will contact Milford Water Utilities as to their availability for Well 2A redevelopment, having returned the approved redevelopment proposal to Director Stetson on April 20, 2021. Mr. Stetson provided the Board with summarized highlights of the Pennichuck Agreement terms and water rate details. Water Usage details provided by Mr. Stetson included:

- Curtis Well 2021 daily average usage to date is about 45% of the allowed usage of 1.58 MGD over a 24 hour period.
- Pennichuck daily average usage to date is estimated at 25% of the estimated minimum usage of 0.8 MGD

Mr. Stetson provided the Board with the actual versus budgeted amounts for purchasing water between January and March, 2021. Calculations were discussed and Mr. Stetson summarized that the Water Utilities Department usage of Pennichuck Water is on target. Mr. Mike Thornton, participating in this meeting via Zoom requested and received clarification from Chairman White who explained that we’re using the minimum of that which we are obligated to buy from Pennichuck. Mr. Stetson will contact Maher Services again to coordinate their scheduled arrival following the time sensitive groundwater discharge activities of the Milford Water Department staff.

#### NHDES Drought Update

The Board reviewed the seven pages of drought update data and diagrams provided by Director Stetson, as appeared on the NHDES website, indicating that the entire state is experiencing abnormally dry and moderate drought conditions, and that as of April 20<sup>th</sup> the “NHDES is recommending that outdoor water use restrictions be implemented and conservation messaging be spread across your communities.” Measures Milford has taken include:

- May 1<sup>st</sup> begins residential Odd/Even Watering measures for outdoor irrigation
- Athletic Field irrigation has been restricted
- Bulk water sales are not allowed

Mr. Stetson asked whether additional measures should be considered, such as restrictions for large area water irrigation use. Chairman White’s viewpoint is that now is too early to impose further restrictions, that Pennichuck Water’s activities in response to this abnormally dry season should be watched, and that we could

reach out to Pennichuck and take direction from them. Vice-Chairman Courage and Commissioner Jensen agreed Milford should wait a little longer before taking additional measures. All agreed it is important to not over-burden the Curtis Well pumps, and to purchase additional Pennichuck Water as needed since this plan has worked well in the past.

#### Curtis Well 2A Update

Maher Services has been contacted by Milford Water Utilities as to their availability for Well 2A redevelopment, and returned the approved redevelopment proposal to Director Stetson on April 20, 2021. Mr. Stetson provided the Board with summarized highlights of the Pennichuck Agreement terms and water rate details. Water Usage details provided by Mr. Stetson included:

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Mr. Stetson provided the Board with the actual versus budgeted amounts for purchasing water between January and March, 2021. After calculations were discussed, Mr. Stetson summarized that the Water Utilities Department use of Pennichuck Water is on target. Chairman White responded to Mr. Mike Thornton's inquiry, participating in this meeting via Zoom, explaining that Milford is using the minimum water volume that we are obligated to buy from Pennichuck. Mr. Stetson will contact Maher Services again to coordinate their scheduled arrival following the time sensitive groundwater discharge activities of the Milford Water Department staff.

#### Water & Sewer Accounts Fund Balance

The Board reviewed the WWTF Fund Balance report prepared by Finance Director Calabria as of April 19, 2021. Additional explanation of Water Fund Account 6000 and Wastewater Fund Account 7000 balance details are needed with respect to Capital Projects. Chairman White noted the reported Total Water Fund Balance (for Water Fund 6000) value is \$654,807.49, and the reported Total Water Fund Balance (for Wastewater Fund 7000) value is \$314,871.96. He requested Director Stetson obtain confirmation for the next Board Meeting in May that monthly updates to the Water and Sewer Accounts Fund Balance would be provided to the Board. Mr. Stetson felt that receiving updates on a quarterly basis may be good for now, and determine over time whether monthly updates are preferable.

Activities Report – The commissioners reviewed the Collection System, Water and Wastewater Operations activities reports and inquired when the hydrant flushing will begin (Monday, May 3<sup>rd</sup>). Chairman White commended Director Stetson's selection of New England Backflow for testing Milford backflow devices, which went well in this first half of the year because it allowed the Water Utilities staff to attend to other responsibilities. Commissioner Jensen inquired whether an in-house vs. contractor cost comparison had been completed, and whether an invoice had been received (Mr. Stetson responded that this cost comparison could be done at the end of May, following completion of the Town's third section of backflow device work). Mr. Jensen was glad to know that Electrical Installations was on-site for the panel installation at Dram Cup in preparation of moving electronics from the pit. Vice-Chairman Courage noted he is very impressed with the high level of details reported as accomplished and/or planned activities by the three foremen, very appreciated by the Board of Water & Wastewater Commissioners as that type of reporting gives a clear picture of what is going on. He indicated that he may share a copy of the Activities Report with the Town Administrator.

## ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA

### Sewer User Rate Update

Director Stetson outlined his participation in a kick-off meeting on April 22<sup>nd</sup> held remotely with Underwood Engineers (UE) regarding the Sewer User Rate Study Update. He cited the various details needed by to UE to continue to prepare: such as the Capital Project plans for the next five years, population, water usage, projects being considered, etc. UE should prepare a report by the end of May, a meeting with the commissioners should occur during June, during which a September public hearing date should be scheduled, which would allow a three month timeframe to inform the customers, after which a new sewer rate would become effective in January 2022, outlined on UE's meeting agenda as follows:

<u>MILESTONE</u>	<u>PROPOSED</u>
Draft Report	May 31, 2021
BOC Meeting	June 22, 2021
Final Report	July 2021
Attend Rate Hearing	September 2021

Also included on UE's meeting agenda were their planned tasks and a list of information to be provided by the Town. Mr. Courage initiated discussion of the list of projects that Mr. Stetson had given to UE regarding the next five years, commenting that project details remain relatively unknown until the pilot study is complete as to which improvements must be made to the design, which could be less than the current ballpark estimate includes. Mr. Stetson agreed, adding that figures from the 2017 facility plan had been used. Mr. Courage added that hopefully grant money will be received. Mr. Stetson added that application is being made for grant funds, loan forgiveness, and low interest loans. Mr. White noted that in the 2017 study, some work has been completed already, such as the clarifier. Mr. Courage added that there are no loans expected to be paid in full in the near future and that we are adding to Milford's indebtedness. The septage receiving facility loan is not yet paid in full. Due to the projects completed following the 2017 study, indicated Mr. Stetson, the cost of the NPDES permit renewal construction we are now facing costs a lot less than if it had not been done prior to now. Mr. White commented that two completed projects ended under budget than had been forecasted in 2017, which is a "positive". Mr. Courage added that, as he sees this, the only warrant article approval to be requested in 2022 should be the money for the final engineering plans and design of the major improvement in order to meet the requirements of the NPDES permit. Mr. Stetson agreed that is the plan. Mr. White added that in 2023, the warrant article approval would be for the construction, with putting the construction phase out to bid late in 2022. Mr. Courage said SRF grant money, instead of local funding, would be sought for the major portion of the NPDES permit upgrade cost, and involve the Board of Selectmen in Town cost-sharing discussions, after project costs become known. Mr. Stetson added that we have the preliminary design this year, then next year will be a warrant article for a final design will enable a cost number for 2023 funding.

Director Stetson advised the Board that, speaking of Capital Projects, he expects the Community Development Director to soon require a Capital Improvement Plan update regarding the Water Utilities Department's next 5 year capital project plan. Mr. White indicated that WUD only option would be to use the 2017 plan figures less what has been accomplished already.

Mr. Stetson addressed Mr. Thornton, participating during this meeting via Zoom, regarding discussion last fall with the Budget Advisory Committee regarding spreading out these rate studies to lessen the "all at once" impact upon Milford, however, scheduling a rate study every three years works because a rate study may take a full year to assemble and present, therefore a rate study appears to "reach high" in the event another adjustment

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must be accommodated. Commissioner Jensen pointed out that Milford’s current NPDES permit allows for a certain amount of wastewater to be received, which would increase as the systems and the permitted facility expands. He inquired whether slip lining activities continue to be performed to reduce the effects of infiltration. Mr. Stetson said yes, the approved collection system budget contained funds to continue that work, and the Collection System Foreman plans those projects.

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

**Upon motion by Commissioner Jensen, seconded by Vice-Chairman Courage, the Board entered into non-public session per RSA 91-A:3,II(a) for the purpose of discussing Personnel. Motion passed by the 3/0 “aye” votes as follows:**

<b>Robert Courage:</b>	<b>announced “aye”</b>
<b>Kris Jensen:</b>	<b>announced “aye”</b>
<b>Dale White:</b>	<b>announced “aye”</b>

**Future Meetings**

- Tuesday, 5/11/2021 6:00 p.m. is the next BOC meeting, which will include a Zoom meeting connection.

**Adjournment**

- The meeting adjourned at 7:38 p.m.

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Dale White, Chairman

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Date

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Robert Courage, Vice-Chairman

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Date

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Kris Jensen, Commissioner

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date