

Tilton Northfield Water District  
Commissioner's Meeting  
14 Academy Street, Tilton, NH 03276  
Monday, December 12, 2022  
Minutes

**In Attendance:** Commissioner Chair Sean Chandler, Commissioner Arthur Demass, Superintendent John Chase, James B. McArdle, Scott Haskins, Rene LaBranche (Stantec) remotely, Dave Fox (Raftelis) remotely

**Call to Order:**

Commissioner Chandler called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

**Public Comment:**

Mr. McArdle attended the meeting to discuss a late fee on Account 499. He submits through electronic banking with his bank, which does not postmark the payment. He provided all of the tracking from the bank. There seems to be an issue with the length of time it takes for the bank to process the payments. He has had discussions with the bank regarding this issue and would like to come up with a plan to resolve this in the future. Commissioner Chandler advised that we would be looking at the policy in the future but have not yet changed the policy. In the meantime, he suggested that Mr. McArdle pay the bill a bit earlier to ensure the payment arrives on time. There is currently \$60.00 in late fees. **Commissioner Chandler motioned to waive the current late fees of \$60.00 for Account 499 in light of the discussion and plan for future payments. Seconded by Commissioner Demass. All in favor. Motion carried.**

Scott Haskins was in attendance regarding the Pines Park in Northfield. He is the Chairman of the Parks Commission. He advised since the pine trees were cut down at the Pines Park location, loam has been brought in and then they received approval for an irrigation system. He wanted to tie into the water side on Dearborn St. or in front of the Police Department. He brought this back to the Park Commission and there was a discussion to put it on the back of the Police Department and tie into their water. They had a prior discussion with Superintendent Chase but he wanted to bring it to the Water District to make sure there are no issues. Superintendent Chase said the Police Department has a ¾" service and is wondering if that is going to be big enough to provide the PD with water when the sprinklers are on. Mr. Haskins advised that the irrigation company would install ½" service coming out of the PD and 11 different zones. The pipe would still be metered at the PD and they will put a meter on their pipe to show how much they use and will pay the PD for their share. The billing will remain as it does today. Superintendent Chase advised they would need to have a double backflow and be put into the rotation with New England Backflow to have it tested. Payment for this would need to be made by the Parks Commission to New England Backflow and the current cost is \$55.00/test. Backflows are typically tested twice a year but since this would only be run seasonally they would only have to be tested once – usually June. Superintendent Chase also advised the Water District is in the process of upgrading meters and would like to do this when the plumber is there to install the irrigation. Mr. Haskins advised it would be in the spring and will let the Water District know.

Rene LaBranche from Stantec went over the 30 year CIP schedule as requested by the Asset Management Grant. Superintendent Chase provided some information regarding water main work that is scheduled for 2023 and there was discussion about future equipment needs.

Dave Fox from Raftelis provided information on the rate study that he has been working on. He has information for the rate study with public fire protection and without public fire protection. If we continue with public fire protection, he projects we would need an annual increase of 5%. If there is no public fire protection, the projection is a 9% annual increase. Given the discussion on the CIP, these projections may change. Dave and Rene will work to fine tune this. They will also work on finalizing the Cost of Service study. He expects to have the preliminary numbers for this in a couple of weeks. Superintendent Chase said that one question that continues to come up with the Fire District is "what is the cost of one fire hydrant". Will we be able to get them this? Dave stated it is not the actual cost of the hydrant they should be asking about, but what is the cost to have a hydrant **and** the capacity in the water system to send adequate water to the hydrant in the event of a fire. Superintendent Chase asked if Rene and Dave would be able to present this information at a Fire District meeting in layman's terms. Dave advised that he would be able to do this.

### **Account 2122**

This account is contesting late charges assessed to the account. The Commissioners reviewed the information provided. **Commissioner Chandler motioned to not waive the \$30.00 late fee on Account 2112. Seconded by Commissioner Demass. All in favor. Motion carried.**

### **Review of Minutes:**

The Commissioners reviewed the November 7, 2022 minutes for the Water District. **Commissioner Demass motioned to approve the November 7, 2022 Water District minutes. Seconded by Commissioner Chandler. All in favor. Motion carried.** Superintendent Chase noted that Rene LaBranche's name is spelled incorrectly. It has an extra "e". **Commissioner Chandler revised the motion to accept the November 7, 2022 minutes with the correction of the spelling of Rene's name. Seconded by Commissioner Demass. All in favor. Motion carried.**

### **Treasurer's Report:**

The Commissioners reviewed the November, 2022 Treasurer's Report. **Commissioner Demass motioned to approve the November, 2022 Treasurer's Report. Seconded by Commissioner Chandler. All in favor. Motion carried.**

### **Superintendent's Report (John Chase):**

#### **Tilton Water Main Replacements**

Superintendent Chase has done all of the road measurements and put together a materials list. This would be for 3,830 feet of water mains, covering the top of Chestnut St., top of Prospect St., Daniel, Maple, Poplar, West, High St. ext., Morrison Ave. The cost is approximately \$400,000. This includes materials and labor. The break out is \$140,000 in materials and \$260,000 in labor. He is recommending writing a Warrant Article to expend \$400,000 from the Water Districts unreserved balance fund to pay for the project. The project is to be completed over the next 2 years. The project calls for 60 days of work time and with other projects going on it might be difficult to get this completed in one year.

#### **Email from 19 Holmes Ave.**

Resident has indicated that she is now applying for some assistance and in an attempt to get her account up to date. This residence has a shut off that is difficult to find. Use of a metal detector is challenging because of all the metal in the area. Superintendent Chase would like to hold off on shutting off water to see if the resident is able to resolve her account. There also

could be a potential leak as the usage goes up and down quite a bit. He will go contact her to go out and check on this. The Commissioners agreed that we would hold off for 30 days to see what the status is of her assistance.

### **Melanson & Heath – Audit and Taxes**

Melanson & Heath will be doing the audit and taxes for this year.

### **NH DES Asset Management Grant**

Superintendent Chase received a call stating that NH DES was unable to get this before the Governor for signature in December. It will now go before him in January.

### **Billing/Late Fee Penalty Procedures**

There have been some questions that have come up regarding this policy that the Commissioners need to review.

- *How often can late fees be abated?* The Commissioners discussed and determined they want to have flexibility regarding this issue so they do not want list a limit. It will be on a case by case evaluation.
- *Does the person have to come to the Commissioner's meeting?* The Commissioners agreed that they do not. They can submit information by mail or email. They can call in or they can attend in person. If they want to provide input to the discussion regarding the request, they may want to attend in person. In person attendance is not required but is recommended.
- *Choose a flat fee for the amount when the late fee is added rather than the formula of meter reading plus \$5.00.* The Commissioners agreed that they would set the amount at \$50.00 for a shut off keeping the late fee at \$30.00. **Commissioner Demass motioned on the billing penalty procedures, #3, be set at a flat amount of \$50.00 before they can be shut off and the late fee remaining at \$30.00. Seconded by Commissioner Chandler. All in favor. Motion carried.**
- *Checks received before the due date but are filled out incorrectly and need to be returned to the customer for correction. How many days should be allowed before the account is late?* The Commissioners agreed that 30 days from the date of the notice of deficiency is when the account would be considered late.
- *Should we revise the receipt date to be the date it is received at the office vs. the postmark date?* The Commissioners agreed that payment should be received by the Water District by the due date not the postmark date. Superintendent Chase indicated we would want to include something in the next bill regarding this to make people aware.

### **Old Business:**

None

### **New Business:**

None

### **Non-Public Session:**

None

### **Next meeting:**

Monday, January 9, 2023 4:00 p.m.

**Adjournment:**

With nothing further, **the meeting adjourned at 6:45 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

Michele Corey, District Clerk