

**Tilton Northfield Water District
Annual Meeting
Pines Community Center, Northfield, NH 03276
Tuesday, July 14, 2020
Minutes**

In Attendance: Commissioner Scott Davis, Commissioner Arthur Demass, Superintendent John Chase, Moderator James Shepard and District Clerk, Gayle Bestick

Absent: Commissioner Sean Chandler

Tilton's Supervisors of the Checklist: Judy Tilton, Bernie Chapman, and Kathy Mitchell

Northfield's Supervisors of the Checklist: Margaret LaBrecque, Terry Steady, and Rose Marie Welch.

Call to Order:

Moderator Shepard called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was performed. There were 10 people in attendance.

The Moderator displayed the ballot box/voter card visibility and reviewed the protocol for this deliberative session. He then read the Warrant.

Article 1: District Officers Open for Election:

Nominations from the floor began with the position of a Water District Commissioner for (3) three-year term. Scott Davis nominated Arthur Demass. Jason Wright seconded the nomination.

Scott Davis nominated Jim Shepard for the position of Moderator for a (2) two-year term.

Ballot Votes cast.

Article 2:

To See if the District will vote to raise and appropriate the amount of \$517,301.00 for the operation of the District for 2020 with said sum to come from fees and charges. No money raised through taxation, as recommended by the Commissioners. **Scott Davis moved, seconded by Jon Scanlon to move Article 2 to the floor for discussion.**

After Commissioner Scott Davis spoke on the Article explaining last years budget was \$534,436,00 and due to a DES loan in the amount of \$56,939.40 being paid off in June of 2019, there is a reduction although not the total amount, of approximately \$17,000 this year. No further discussion. The Moderator called the question to accept Article 2. **All in favor. Motion carried to adopt Article 2.**

Results of Article 1:

Water District Commissioner for 3 years, Arthur Demass 17 votes; Moderator for 2-year position, Jim Shepard 16 votes, there was one write in.

Article 3:

To see if the District will vote to appropriate the sum of \$209,000 for the purchase of new meters and radio read attachments and the implementation of a new meter radio read system to replace the current manual read process. This \$209,000 to come from the unassigned fund balance. **Scott Davis moved, seconded by Greg Pevery to bring Article 3 to the floor for discussion.**

Commissioner Scott Davis spoke on the Article explaining the radio read meter process where the men will not have to go onto to people's properties or enter into their homes, especially during the Corona Virus pandemic. Commission Davis noted there is money in the unassigned fund balance of approximately \$847,000. Jason Wright asked about the fund balance. Commissioner Davis explained the recommendation when released from the PUC, to keep a minimum of 1 years' worth of debt service - \$500,000 - taking the \$209,000...it will keep us just above that recommendation.

Commissioner Davis also mentioned they had refinanced the Franklin Savings Bank loan of \$5,880,000 with the Bank of New Hampshire with a lower interest rate. This lowered the annual payment from \$438,709.08 down to \$392,532.12. However, Commissioner Davis reported, since they are used to paying the higher amount, they are continuing with that to decrease the principal balance faster. The monthly cost is \$36,559.09 which is transferred monthly from the Aqueduct Company into the Water District account.

Commissioner Davis noted there is one DES loan which remains. That loan balance of \$373,985.08, is paid annually at \$40,091.01. He noted they still receive the Filtration Grant of \$17,982.41 annually until 2036. Commission Davis also noted starting out with a \$9.2 million worth of debt, which has improved \$4.6 million worth of improvements within the district, the debt load now down about \$6 million dollars.

No further discussion, the Moderator called the question. **All in favor. Motion carried to adopt Article 3.**

Article 4:

To see if the District will vote to adopt the new changes to the tariff. **Scott Davis moved the Article to the floor for discussion. Jon Scanlon seconded. Discussion:**

Commissioner, Scott Davis spoke on the recent Rate Study, which was completed by Raftelis Financial Consultants, Inc., an independent Rate Study firm. He noted to make changes to the Tariff, the Commissioners adopted the Rate Study which changes the model from generating revenues from water volumes sales to water availability. It was determined that to have a sustainable income, a rate change was needed since the last one was back in 2001. Commissioner Davis spoke about the future need for a major filtration improvement plan with a cost of approximately \$3 million dollars. Within the rate study structure, it was determined to reduce the private hydrant rates down to the same as the public hydrant rates. Many changes needed to happen for the District and its users to be able to sustain the operation of and improvements for the District, including a 4% annual rate increase over the next five years for domestic water use which will be analyzed annually. (Copies of the Rate Study are available to the public).

No further discussion, the Moderator called the question. **All in favor. Motion carried to adopt Article 4.**

Article 5:

To transact any other business that may legally come before the meeting.

Moderator Shepard recognized the Tilton Northfield Water District Staff and Commissioners for organizing this annual meeting especially during the pandemic. He thanked the Supervisors of the Checklists and also the Pines Community staff for their efforts opening their doors and making safe arrangements to hold this meeting.

Commissioner Scott Davis announced the retirement in June of the Office Manager, Cathy Deegan who had been with the District since its inception 14 years ago. She was a valuable asset to the District and will be missed. He reported Charlene Smith, the full time Administrative Assistant would be stepping into that position. Commissioner Davis also announced Kelly Ray was recently hired in March, as a part time Administrative Assistant working remotely; Scott Calley was hired this past year as Water Operator trainee, and lastly Gayle Bestick would be stepping down as the Water District Clerk – they will be looking to fill that position. Commissioner Davis thanked Gayle for her service, noting she would be missed.

Adjournment:

With nothing further, at 6:22 p.m., a motion was made and seconded to adjourn. **All in favor. Motion carried.**

Respectfully submitted,


Gayle M. Bestick, Clerk