



## TOWN OF HOPEDALE

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Board of Water & Sewer  
Commissioners

James Morin, Chair  
Robert Burns  
Christine Burke

### Hopedale Board of Water & Sewer Commissioners Minutes of June 12, 2014

The Hopedale Board of Water & Sewer Commissioners met on June 12, 2014 in the Draper Room of the Town Hall. Members present were Chairperson Morin and Commissioner Burke.

Chairperson Morin opened the meeting at 7:00PM.

#### **Consent Items**

Minutes of the May 8<sup>th</sup> meeting – Commissioner Burke made a motion to approve the minutes of May 8<sup>th</sup>, made unanimous by Chairperson Morin.

#### **Appointments**

- A. **Joe Fitzpatrick (solar discussions)** – Kurt Penney from Solar City discussed the power purchase agreement. Solar City would be in charge of installing, maintaining, owning and operating the solar panels with no upfront investment or ongoing maintenance costs. The Town's price for the first year would be \$.06/KW hour. Current rate is approximately \$.16/KW hour, an approximate savings of 65%. Mr. Penney informed the Board that they did look at canopies but cost per kilowatt would go up by \$.02 and it would not be feasible to do the whole project as canopies. Commissioner Burke asked what our responsibility is after the 20 years. Mr. Penney informed the Board that there were three options, (a) have the panels removed, (b) leave them there and use the power at a renegotiated price or (c) purchase at fair market value. The panels can be purchased outright after the 6<sup>th</sup> or 10<sup>th</sup> year but price would be much higher. The useful life of the panels is approximately 25 years. Nothing further can be done until a power purchase agreement is signed which needs to be reviewed by Town Counsel. Mr. Penney stated the goal would be to turn the switch by either Thanksgiving or year-end.
- B. **Affan Arshad (chlorine odor complaint)** - Mr. Arshad, a Mill Street resident, informed the Board that his water is white and cloudy and irritates his skin. Commissioner Burke asked Manager Tim Watson if the resident's water had been tested to which Manager Watson informed the Board that it is not a usual test site.

Manager Watson informed Mr. Arshad that we are required by DEP to remain at a certain residual level at the furthest point of the line, which we are. Mr. Arshad was informed he could have a filter installed by a licensed plumber. Mr. Arshad asked if there were alternatives to chlorine. Mr. Watson stated that there were but they were not cost effective.

- C. **Liz Nixon (water bill dispute)** – Mr. and Mrs. Nixon came before the Board disputing a large usage. The meter was rechecked twice and the reading has since gone up. Mr. Nixon stated that he had done research and found that mineral deposits in the meters could be the cause for high readings. The Nixon's were informed that they have two options: the Water Department could take the meter back to the shop and test it. If it is found to be accurate the Nixons would be billed the \$25 charge, or we could change the meter at no charge. Mr. Nixon asked if the meter could be tested. An appointment was set for the following morning at 9:00 A.M.
- D. **Ken Webb (pay discussion)** – Ken Webb, Sewer Chief Operator, stated he was looking to increase his pay since he feels responsibilities have increased. Ken stated he confirmed with his Union Rep Paul Coffey that he could come before the Board for this purpose. Due to increases in the complexity of the plant and new upgrades Mr. Webb feels there are more responsibilities justifying his request for an increase in pay. Commissioner Burke asked Manager Watson for his view. Manager Watson stated that Ken is very knowledgeable but feels timing is poor since he just received a \$4.00 increase. He stated if we went out for a new Chief Operator we would hire at a lower rate. The Board asked Ken to discuss what he is looking for with Manager Watson. It was also brought to the attention of the Board that a new union contract was just signed by which Ken will benefit. Ken stated he would like the opportunity to discuss further with Manager Watson.

### **New Business**

- A. **Assistant Chief Operator Position** – this position, posted in house, had one applicant, Mike Brown. Mike has been with the Sewer Department for 7 years and carries a Grade 5 license. We are required to have an Assistant Chief Operator if the Chief Operator is out. Commissioner Burke made a motion to accept the recommendation to appoint Mike Brown as assistant Chief Operator, seconded by Chairperson Morin. Prior to Mike or Ken accepting their new positions their rate of pays were the same, Chairperson Morin asked if we should keep Mike as is. Manager Watson recommended we give Mike a \$.60 per hour raise. Commissioner Burke made a motion to increase the pay of Assistant Chief Operator by \$.60 per hour seconded by Chairperson Morin.
- B. **Bedrock Well Cleaning Issues** – work was being done and in the process of raking, something occurred which caused water to go through and rendered both wells unusable. Both wells have since been fixed and the well cleaning company is going to submit a claim to their insurance company. The Town will have to pay the costs up front but will be reimbursed once the claim is accepted.

### **Old Business**

- A. Weston & Sampson Update – the O & M manuals are now complete and we are now in compliance. The manuals will be discussed at the next meeting.

**Correspondence – None**

Other topics not reasonable anticipated by the Chairman within 48 hours – Chairperson Morin inquired about hydrant painting which are now in process. Lastly, Chairperson Morin thanked Vinny Demeo, retired Sewer Chief Operator, for his years of service.

Chairperson Morin made a motion at 8:35 to adjourn to executive session to discuss pending litigation not to reconvene, made unanimous by Commissioner Burke.

I attest to the best of my knowledge that this is a true and accurate recording of the minutes June 12<sup>th</sup>, 2014.

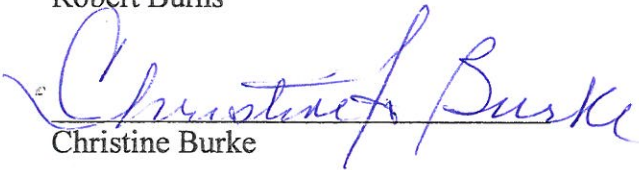
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James Morin – Chairperson

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Robert Burns

  
Christine Burke