

TOWN OF EGREMONT, MASSACHUSETTS
MEETING OF THE WATER COMMISSION
MINUTES

Date: July 20, 2023
Time: 10:00 AM
Place: Via Zoom Meeting & Town Hall
Egremont

Present at the meeting in person were Selectboard Chairman George McGurn, Vice-Chair Lucinda Fenn-Vermeulen, Board member Mary Brazie, Water Department Clerk Will Brinker and Water Department Operator Nate Stalker.

There was no one present via zoom.

The meeting was audio and video recorded.

MINUTES:

The minutes of the June 21 and July 6 meetings were accepted with minor edits.

NEW BUSINESS:

FY 23 collections came in higher than the budget and there was about \$16,000 left in the Water Enterprise Fund budget.

OLD BUSINESS:

Will Brinker will follow up with legal counsel regarding the Rules & Regulations.

The water main at the culvert is the last piece of the water main will be installed. It will then be attached to service lines, pressurized, tested, and chlorinated for use. The completed service line goes from Route 41 to the Old Mill. When put into use it was found that the old line was leaking. Water usage at the plant is now down. There was also a leak in the service line at the Browsersy which has been fixed. Nate Stalker explained how leaks are detected: when the plant meters register an increase in water usage a search begins for the leak. With the new water main on Main Street, there is the ability to shut down water in zones to test for leaks. There is some concern that when the new main on Main Street is in use there may be leaks in the Sheffield Road and Great Barrington due to the higher pressure because some of those lines have not been updated.

The Commissioners reviewed the process required to shut off water to a user. Proper notice has been given to Mr. Ferguson. Mr. Ferguson's outstanding balance goes back several years with no attempts to make payments. The Commissioners voted two in favor, Vice-chair Vermeulen abstaining, to shut off water to Mr. Ferguson's residence at 688 South Egremont Road on July 26, after proper notification, if not paid in full. The notice has been sent via certified mail, and will be hand delivered by the Police for hand delivery to Mr. Ferguson.

\$560 owed to the Egremont Village Inn for rental of space for Council on Aging events was held and applied to account #46 for the Village Inn. The Board approved placing a tax lien on the property for the outstanding water usage fees. The Board also discussed withdrawing and/or denying permits and licenses. It was decided to invite the owners/operators to a meeting on August 10, at 10am to discuss bringing their accounts current.

Denise Dufault has written on behalf of her Aunt Mrs. Brunner expressing her displeasure with the Commissioners denial of her request to abate the interest on the past due water bill. The past due principal amount for about 3 years was paid but not the interest. The Commissioners held firm on their denial of forgiveness for the interest and asked that Water Department Clerk Will Brinker notify them of the decision.

There are two applications in hand for the position of Water Operator/Clerk Trainee. The Commissioners asked Water Department Clerk Will Brinker to give to Personnel Director Cara Becker the required training needed. The person cannot start work until online training is completed and an Operator in Training license has been issued. It was also asked if interview notes could be given to Cara Becker.

GRANTS:

The Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has acknowledged receipt of the request for technical assistance for completing service line lead pipe inventory.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Water Department Clerk Will Brinker reported the final transponders have been ordered. The cost is up 35%. He also reported that calibrations have been ordered. The last calibrations cost \$4,800. This round is projected to cost \$8,200. This is vital and required by DEP. Hach Company, who does the work, will complete the service.

Ti-Sales has priced a new reader for the Department at \$9,000. The current reader continues to work properly.

American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) has issued results of a water study that shows the average water usage bill is \$118. Egremont's water usage bill is about half that before debt.

The next meeting date will be August 10, 2023 at 10:00am.

The Board agreed that the new hydrants should be painted dark green to match the older hydrants.

Vice-Chair Vermeulen praised Nate Stalker for a wonderful, informative and impressive tour of the water plant.

Meeting adjourned at 11:07am

Mary Brazie,
Office Administrator

minutes.24/jul20

The recording of the minutes is posted on the Town's web page at www.egremont-ma.gov for 90 days. Any attachments noted are on file at Town Hall.