

PRELIMINARY MINUTES

**VILLAGE OF LUDLOW
WATER COMMISSION**

REGULAR MEETING

5:00 PM

HOWARD BARTON, JR. CONFERENCE ROOM

Tuesday February 6, 2024

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

David Rose, Chairman Ron Bixby Jackie Cromwell

STAFF:

Brendan McNamara

OTHERS PRESENT:

Dan Buckley

AGENDA

1. Call To Order
 - A. David Rose called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. All members present.

2. Consideration of any Changes, Additions or Removals to the Agenda
 - A. Brendan McNamara noted that no changes are needed.

3. Approve Minutes from Previous Meeting
 - A. David Rose noted that the minutes from January 2, 2024.
 - B. **MOTION by Ron Bixby and seconded by Jackie Cromwell to approve the minutes from January 2, 2024 as presented. Motion passed unanimously.**

4. Comments from Citizens
 - A. There were none.

5. Department Head Reports
 - A. David Rose asked about the valve on Andover Street.
 - B. Brendan McNamara said there was debris and it has been cleared out.
 - C. David Rose asked if it was the valve across from the Transfer Station.
 - D. Brendan McNamara said yes.

6. Aged Receivables Report

- A. Brendan McNamara advised that the numbers are cleaning up well. He said the longest ones are Wastewater and there is nothing we can do about them, other than try to reach some agreements. When properties are sold, that will come up on the Title Searches and we will get paid at closing. He said the 3 from 2014 are the Dunnett property. There were discrepancies when the allocation was made. He asked the board to let him try to clean it up, rather than to let it sit on the list.
- B. There was board consensus to allow this.
- C. David Rose noted that there is a balance due on Bowker Court. He asked if the owner is around.
- D. Brendan McNamara said he is and the house is being transferred to a new owner.
- E. Jackie Cromwell asked 18 Pleasant Street.
- F. Brendan McNamara said it was 2 properties, one was a rental. The balance on the primary residence was paid by the State.
- G. David Rose asked about 72 Main Street. He said it had been a rental and they had tried before to clear it up in the past.
- H. Brendan McNamara said it is going up for tax sale.
- I. Jackie Cromwell asked about 65 Andover Street. The notes on the summary say the owner is unavailable.
- J. Brendan McNamara said that the town cannot shut off the water until the spring. It is under 2 billing cycles. He added that overall, we are doing well.

7. Water Billing Requests

- A. 86 Andover Street - Request to increase allocation from 2 bedrooms to a 3-bedroom allocation
 - i. **MOTION by Ron Bixby and seconded by Jackie Cromwell to approve the request to increase the allocation from a 2 bedrooms to a 3-bedroom allocation. Motion passed unanimously.**
- B. Eight Oh Brew – 145 Main Street- requesting a rate reduction due to Flooding.
 - i. David Rose said that this board has not approved applications like this in the past and it would be like opening a can of worms.
 - ii. Brendan McNamara advised that the applicant is working to reopen.
 - iii. Jackie Cromwell said they are requesting a “hold” be placed on the billing period from Jan. 1 through June 30, 2024 due to the flood and the business has not been open since then. They are also requesting that the their bill for the period July 1, 2023 through December 30, 2023 be re-evaluated because they have not been open.
 - iv. Ron Bixby noted that they said they understand that they will need to pay the base charges for water and sewer.
 - v. Brendan McNamara said there has been no consumption, but we do not meter water. We can put the account on hold.
 - vi. David Rose suggested this item be tabled for not.
 - vii. Brendan McNamara said he will get more details.
- C. Mr. Darcy’s- 31 Route 103 South – requesting a rate reduction due to Flooding
 - i. David Rose suggested that they also table Mr. Darcy’s as it is the same request as Eight Oh Brew.

- D. There was consensus to table both Eight Oh Brew and Mr. Darcy's request for further information
- E. Subway -21 Main Street - requesting a rate reduction due to Flooding.
- F. Sam's Steakhouse - 91 Route 103 South - requesting a rate reduction due to Flooding.
 - i. Brendan McNamara advised that both applicants are working through the FEMA buy-out process and that they have been approved by the Select Board. If the properties ever needed the allocations in the future, they would have to reapply.
 - ii. **MOTION by Ron Bixby and seconded by Jackie Cromwell to approve the applicants requests to relinquish the Water Allocations for both Subway and Sam's Steakhouse and to remove the bill for use since July, 2023. Motion passed unanimously.**

8. Budget Discussion

- A. Brendan McNamara noted that salaries were increased from \$46,900 to \$51,000. He said that
- B. insurance was increase from \$5,750 to \$7,200. He said that Ludlow Police Dispatch had been listed both under WATER as well as WATER OTHER. He deleted the one under WATER. Most of the items are level funded. Under WATER MAINTENANCE, he increased LABOR BY \$150. He put in 0 for mileage; staff uses the water department vehicles. He noted that under WATER CORROSION, Sodium Hydroxide was increased from \$10,000 to \$16,000.
- C. David Rose said that is used to increase the PH.
- D. Brendan McNamara noted a discrepancy in the math and said he would have it corrected. He said a projection for revenue of \$440,000 is conservative and it would probably be more. This FY's actual number is more.
- E. David Rose said the board would look at rates in May.
- F. Brendan McNamara said he is estimating a surplus of about \$95,000. He will tune the budget up and email it out.
- G. David Rose said he will not be at the March meeting.
- H. Brendan McNamara said that the Water department was not hit as badly by the July flooding and the budget numbers are not as skewed as other areas. He said the costs to the town/village are now about \$2.9 million.

9. Municipal Manager Updates

- A. Brendan McNamara noted that there was a water break on a service at the Mill (145 Main Street) parking lot. There is a catch basin there which caught the water.
- B. Asset Management Project - Brendan McNamara advised that Wayne Elliott is finishing working on the Asset Management Plan.
- C. Lead Service Line Inventory - Brendan McNamara advised that Wayne Elliott will not be able to do the survey as they are handling many of the wastewater plant flood damages. The inventory must be completed by October and Wayne Elliott suggested contacting Pat Smart from MSK Engineering.
- D. David Rose asked Brendan McNamara to also contact Craig Jewitt at Otter Creek. He said that Otter Creek used to do a lot of their projects.
- E. Brendan McNamara said that we are eligible for \$107,767 for that project and of that \$103,000 is forgivable. He said he does not know how much lead pipe we have, but Cavendish has a lot.

- F. David Rose said the lead pipe is typically at the service connections to older houses.
- G. Brendan McNamara said he will reach out the Craig Jewitt and Pat Smart.
- H. Brendan McNamara said that the paperwork is all in to the Clean Water at the State for possible funding for the High Street and Pleasant Street Extension projects.
- I. Brendan McNamara said that Seth and Chris are both enrolling in a new Water Distribution Testing course that is required.
- J. David Rose asked if we pay the course fees.
- K. Brendan McNamara said yes.

10. Other Business

- A. Road to Strong's Tank
 - i. David Rose noted that the road has not been plowed and asked if they still go to the tank daily.
 - ii. Brendan McNamara said that he has touched base with staff on this and will have them clear the road to the Strong's Tank. He said when they paved Hemingway Hill they paved a bit further up to make it easier to access the drive to the tank.
- B. Pump Station
 - i. David Rose asked if they are also checking the pump station daily.
 - ii. Brendan McNamara said yes.
- C. Valve at the Springs
 - i. Brendan McNamara said that the valve by the springs is completely exposed and staff will have to take care of that.
- D. Generator at the Wells
 - i. David Rose asked if the generator is being exercised and the road plowed for better access.
 - ii. Brendan McNamara said yes, monthly.
 - iii. David Rose said it should be opened up and exercised more frequently.

11. Set Date for Next Meeting

- A. March 5, 2024 at 5:00 p.m.
- B. David Rose said he would not be at that meeting

12. Possible Agenda Items for Next Meeting

- A. Budget

13. Sign Warrant Orders

- A. Orders have been signed

14. Possible Executive Session - Personnel

- A. Brendan McNamara advised that an Executive session is not needed

15. Adjourn

- A. MOTION by Jackie Cromwell and seconded by Ron Bixby to adjourn. Motion passed unanimously.
- B. Meeting adjourned at 5:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisha Klaiber
Recording Secretary

David Rose, Chairman

Ron Bixby, Vice Chair

Ron Bixby, Vice Chair

Jackie Cromwell, Clerk