

***PRELIMINARY MINUTES***

**VILLAGE OF LUDLOW  
WATER COMMISSION**

**REGULAR MEETING**

**5:00 PM**

Tuesday September 1, 2020

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:**

David Rose, Chairman                      George Abraham                      Ron Bixby

**STAFF:**

Scott Murphy                                      Chuck Craig

**OTHERS PRESENT:**

Susan Arndt (phone)                      Bob Brandt                      Robert Clark

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. Scott Murphy advised that no changes are needed.

3. **Approve Minutes from Previous Meetings**

A. David Rose advised the minutes to be approved are from the regular meeting of August 4, 2020.

B. **MOTION by Ron Bixby and seconded by George Abraham to approve minutes from the meeting of August 4, 2020 as submitted. Motion passed unanimously.**

4. **Comments From Citizens**

A. There were none.

5. **Water Hook-On Request**

A. Ballard Hobart Post #36/American Legion  
i. Property address is 81 High Street

- ii. David Rose advised that this is a request to add 3 residences to the water system. He advised that the hook-on fee is \$500.00 per unit for a total of \$1,500.00
- iii. Scott Murphy advised that while there is a sewer connection on the property (from the previous garage) the applicants do not want to connect to the sewer, but want to put in a septic system. It is not required for them to connect to the sewer.
- iv. **MOTION by Ron Bixby and seconded by George Abraham to approve this application to add 3 residences to the water system with a hook-on fee of \$500.00 per unit for a total of \$1,500.00.**
- v. David Rose asked what happens to the water line into the property. Who is responsible for it?
- vi. Scott Murphy said we charge the owners from the existing water main for the line in to the property.
- vii. Chuck Craig said the owner pays for service from the main to the fire hydrant.
- viii. Scott Murphy said we will purchase the hydrant, they will install it.
- ix. David Rose said if we take over the new water main line, we will need an easement.
- x. George Abraham said that the letter should include that they will install the hydrant.
- xi. Scott Murphy said he will also include the easement.
- xii. George Abraham asked if there is enough water to the hydrant.
- xiii. Chuck Craig said as much as to any other hydrant in that area.
- xiv. David Rose said that is why we are pushing to do the High Street water project.
- xv. **Motion passed unanimously.**

6. **Possibly Consider Appeal of Water Commissioners Decision from Susan Arndt RE: 8 Andover Street Abatement**

- A. Scott Murphy advised that Ms. Arndt will be present by telephone to discuss this.
- B. David Rose said that the board discussed this at the August meeting and that she is looking for an abatement dating back to 2003.
- C. Scott Murphy said that at the August meeting, the board abated her current bill and the previous bill and also removed the allocation for the downstairs residential apartment. She wants reimbursement for all bills since 2003.
- D. Susan Arndt asked how the board will resolve this situation. She said that she had been told by Town Hall that if she removed the residential unit, she would not be able to keep the commercial unit. She said that she has called several times over the years since 2003. She asked why they can't change this. She found out that it was incorrect and she had spoken to Frank Heald.
- E. David Rose said that the board did abate some of her water fees, but they have never previously gone back in time to 2003 and abated that far back. He said that if she had contacted the board earlier, they would have been able to discuss it.
- F. Susan Arndt asked why she was billed incorrectly and why was this swept under the carpet. She said that 2 billing cycles credit is unacceptable. She asked how the bills are prepared and how the prior owner was billed. She said she was guided incorrectly by the town. She said she can't accept this decision and deserves a better resolution.
- G. David Rose said it was not swept under the carpet. He said that she did have the allocation for 2 residential and one commercial unit the entire time and the board did drop the allocation for one of the residential units as requested at their last meeting.
- H. Susan Arndt said she doesn't understand why she should accept this. It's a lot of money. If the town billed me incorrectly, I should get the money back.

- I. David Rose said he has been on this board for 14 years and this is the first he has heard of her issue.
- J. Susan Arndt said she was never told it was wrong or that she could appeal. She said the town made the mistake.
- K. David Rose said that she did have allocation for the unit downstairs the whole time.
- L. Susan Arndt said there are no units downstairs.
- M. David Rose said at one time there were 2 units on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor.
- N. Susan Arndt said there is only one. She said there was no change of use when she purchased the property and none on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor. She doesn't know how she got billed for a residential unit on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor.
- O. David Rose said that this board does have a policy and they do not go back in time. He said that if she had come to the board at that time, it could have been addressed.
- P. Ron Bixby noted that one of the listers said there were 2 apartments.
- Q. Scott Murphy said he will send Ms. Arndt a letter.

7. **Robert Clark of Otter Creek Engineering to Discuss Water Capacity Study**

- A. Robert Clark asked if the board had any questions on the report. He said that, in general, it is fairly conservative. He said that there were a number of privately owned water systems constructed at developments on Okemo in the 1970s and 1980s and they are now starting to struggle with the amount of water they have and the quality of that water. In the long run, he does have concerns about the viability of the mountain water system. He said that with the development over the last 40 years, the systems are starting to impact each other. He said that the Village is seeing a decline in the amount of water available in the winter from the springs. The process for the town to provide water to the Okemo developments would take a long time.
- B. David Rose said that 2 of the developments have approached us to hook on to the Village system and that he is concerned for and wants to protect the Village rate payers. Since our system is now spring feed there would be an additional cost to run the wells.
- C. Robert Clark said the Village does have landowners in the valley that it can approach, but the mountain developments don't. He said that some towns sell water to other communities and that you could sell water to those 2 developments on the mountain, but where would it stop.
- D. David Rose asked if the developments could form fire districts on their own.
- E. Robert Clark said they could, but they are all in different financial situations. If they formed a fire district, you could sell to the fire district.
- F. George Abraham said the Village does have seasonal fluctuations. He asked if we could get data from them as to what their needs are. We would rather not use our wells.
- G. Robert Clark said they are public community systems up there and they should have data that could be analyzed to determine their water needs. He said that the Village water use has improved since you did the last water project. He said he would hate to see you connect them and then find out there are leaks or other flow increases. Your water plant is sized for the springs and wells you have, but you'd have to decide. He said that he recommends that if they are interested in having you provide them with water, ask them to propose new sources of water supply.
- H. George Abraham said if we agree to add them, then there is a 2-year drought, are we required to provide them with the same service as to the town.
- I. Scott Murphy said that would depend on the contract.
- J. Robert Clark said there may be times when you would treat them as a customer and would be responsible to provide to them as per the contract.

- K. David Rose said he doesn't want to put the people in the Village in jeopardy. He added that he can't imagine the cost of the infrastructure to put our water up there would make it viable.
- L. Robert Clark said if they form a fire district, they would have access to the same funds and grants as the Village. He said there is a SEARCH grant for up to \$30,000 for hydrogeological studies that they might apply for.
- M. Ron Bixby said that he agrees with David Rose in that we need to protect the Village.
- N. George Abraham said the Village could make some money selling them water, but is it worth the risk.

8. **Possibly Consider Elm Street/Pleasant Street Valve & Pipe Replacement**

- A. Scott Murphy said that there are 2 valves that leak at the intersection. He said that Chuck Craig got a cost estimate to replace those 2 valves with 4, for about \$11,125.
- B. Chuck Craig said the estimate is wrong. It says 2 valves for Elm Street only, and should be 4. He thinks it would be about \$30,000 to \$35,000 for all 4 valves.
- C. David Rose said they can put out an RFP and asked if they have the funds.
- D. Scott Murphy said there is about \$148,000 in the Water Capital Account.
- E. George Abraham asked if M&M would be able to do the work before winter.
- F. Scott Murphy said probably not, most of the contractors are pretty tight with projects. It probably would be the spring.
- G. David Rose suggested doing the RFP later on.
- H. Scott Murphy said we would like to see the work get done.
- I. David Rose said he is always in favor of doing upgrades.
- J. Chuck Craig said the packings in the 2 valves are leaking.
- K. David Rose asked if it can wait until spring.
- L. Chuck Craig said if we have to close one in the winter, we'll have a glacier.
- M. Ron Bixby said that he recommends waiting or see if anyone is available before the winter and needs work.
- N. Scott Murphy said if the contractors are not hungry, it will cost us more. If we send out an RFP in January or February, we may get better bids.
- O. George Abraham asked why they would need to open/close the valves.
- P. Chuck Craig said to service the mains. This case would benefit the water quality in the Godfrey tank. The valves leak worse when they are closed. We typically do not have to close them.
- Q. George Abraham asked if they will last until spring.
- R. Scott Murphy said we should shelf this for now and try to get through the winter. We can put out an RFP in January or February and if something happens this winter, we'll deal with it.

9. **Possibly Approve Drinking Water Revolving Loan Fund Application**

- A. Scott Murphy said that we hired Aldrich & Elliott for the engineering and they started surveying today. The board needs to sign the loan application and the Trustees will also need to sign it. The Drinking Water amount is \$25,100 and the Clean Water amount will be \$27,200. This is for the preliminary and final design engineering. We want to have the project shovel ready for the stimulus money. We are already on the priority list for the Drinking Water loan, but are not for the Clean Water. As other projects drop off the list, we will move up in priority for the Clean Water loan. He said that funds are good this year.

- B. David Rose said this is free money and asked what about A&E's fee.
- C. Scott Murphy said it would be covered in the grant.
- D. George Abraham said that the application shows the total project as \$820,000.
- E. Scott Murphy said that is not solid. He said the last time we had an estimate, it was too high.
- F. David Rose said that he would like Wayne Elliott to look over the previous quote.
- G. George Abraham asked if the applications have to go at the same time.
- H. Scott Murphy said no, but since we are on the priority list for the Clean Water, it will probably get approved. The Drinking Water is more difficult.
- I. **MOTION by Ron Bixby and seconded by George Abraham to approve and sign the Drinking Water Revolving Loan Fund Application. Motion passed unanimously.**

10. **Other Business**

- A. **Water/Sewer Disconnect Notices to Be Mailed in Early September**
  - i. Scott Murphy advised that this is a heads up for board members. You may start getting phone calls.
- B. **Godfrey Tank**
  - i. David Rose asked Chuck Craig how the tank is doing.
  - ii. Chuck Craig said not as well as we had hope.
  - iii. David Rose asked if it increased the service area.
  - iv. Chuck Craig said yes, but it isn't the "silver bullet."

11. **Set Date for Next Meeting**

- A. Meeting set for Tuesday, October 6, 2020 at 5:00 p.m.

12. **Possible Agenda Items for Next Meeting**

- A. None indicated

13. **Sign Warrant Orders**

- A. Warrant orders were signed.

14. **Possible Executive Session/Personnel/Contracts**

- A. Scott Murphy said that an Executive Session is not needed.

15. **Adjourn**

- A. **MOTION to adjourn by Ron Bixby and seconded by George Abraham. Motion passed unanimously.**
- B. Meeting adjourned at 5:51 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisha Klaiber  
Recording Secretary

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David Rose, Chairman

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Ron Bixby

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George Abraham