

Town Of Milford – Board of Water Commissioners Meeting Minutes – March 23, 2022

Meeting Called to Order – 3:15 PM.

In attendance: Members Jamie Luchini, Philip Ciaramicoli and Chairman Jonathan Bruce. Also in attendance were Town Administrator Rick Villani, Esq., Water Department General Manager David Condrey, and Town Accountant Thomas Brown. Consultant Gerald M. Moody, Esq. was also present.

Agenda Items

Minutes of February 23, 2022 were reviewed. It was moved by Mr. Luchini, seconded Mr. Ciaramicoli and unanimously voted to approve the minutes of February 23, 2022. Chairman Bruce signed the minutes and those of January 26, 2022.

Meeting with Hopedale Water Commission

Ed Burt and James Morin, Hopedale Water Commissioners and Tim Watson, Hopedale Water Department Manager appeared for purposes of discussing interconnection with Milford and Hopedale's desire to purchase water from Milford when the need arises. Hopedale representatives expressed that there is a need for upgrades in their system, and the occasional need for water from Milford. They are looking for an interconnection system that will allow for automated access. They expressed a willingness to comply with Milford's use restrictions when buying water from Milford. Hopedale officials presented a copy of a 1948 Agreement with the Milford Water Company purporting to govern water purchases between the two systems.

Chairman Bruce pointed out that a goal was to standardize the connections between systems, with a hydrant on each side of the line and an above ground meter between, to be connected as needed. Hopedale expressed a concern about how this would work and whether DEP would approve. Milford pointed out that the impetus was from DEP. Mr. Watson expressed

concern that the Agreement of 1948 remains in effect. It was explained to him that there is no Agreement with the Town. Under the 1881 Charter of the Water Company the Town acquired only the assets not the liabilities. It was the consensus of the Milford Commission to Direct Mr. Condrey to work with Hopedale officials to develop a new interconnection agreement which would be brought back to the Milford Commission for review and approval.

Capital Projects

The three projects previously approved were discussed. All are to be funded with ARPA funds. The remaining 2.8 million dollars in ARPA funds will be substantially taken up by the Echo Lake project. This project is awaiting final approval of a design contract with Pare Engineering, which should be forth coming shortly. In addition to whatever ARPA money will remain, it would appear that there is also some 2 million in bond premium funds available.

Approval of expenditures.

The Commission had before it the following payroll and expense warrants:

Payroll	22 – 36
	22 – 37
	22 – 38
	22 – 39
Expense	22 – 36
	22 – 37
	22 – 38
	22 – 39

Budget Discussion

Mr. Condrey related his working with Finance Director Zach Taylor on the projected budget for FY 2023. Several iterations were considered. They finally arrived at the proposed \$7,349,844 budget before the Commission. This includes a 3% general wage increase and the \$4,000,000 payment of

principal and interest on the acquisition borrowing. The budget being recommended by Mr. Condrey has a deficit of \$441,324. Mr. Condrey thus recommends a rate increase of 5% (water sales only) effective July 1, 2022. This will reduce the deficit to \$128,448 which will be covered from retained earnings. The Commission will be meeting with the Finance Committee subcommittee Tuesday, March 29, 2022. After discussion, it was moved by Mr. Ciaramicoli, seconded by Mr. Luchini and unanimously voted to tentatively approve the budget as proposed and the 5% sales rate increases effective July 1, 2022.

Operational issues

According to Mr. Condrey there have been no operational issues of any significance since the last meeting. Mr. Condrey did provide a copy of the Water Quality Report that is to be sent out to all users. The content was discussed generally. Mr. Luchini reported, for the benefit of the public, that there had been several fires recently and that the firefighting efforts had caused water to be temporarily brown in certain areas. This is common when the fire hydrants are used for firefighting efforts.

Employee hiring process

Mr. Condrey related that, in hiring to replace an employee soon to retire, he wanted to hire with an overlap for training purposes. Commission members fully concurred in this process going forward so long as funds were available.

Interconnection Agreements

This topic was covered in detail during the earlier discussion with the Hopedale representatives.

Update from Attorney Moody

Atty. Moody reminded the Board that there are two potential Articles for the upcoming Annual Town Meeting. One is to utilize ARPA funds for the

Congress Street Tank work; the other would formally place items of on call pay and Operators License pay in the Personnel By-Laws. It was unanimously voted to submit and support both articles.

Counsel for Stone Ridge II withdrew her request to meet with the Commission.

Old Business

None.


The Commission will set the date for its next meeting after the Finance Committee subcommittee meeting on March 29, 2022.

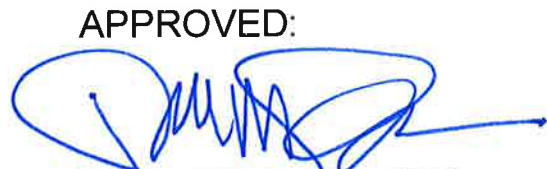
Executive Session

The Chairman asked for a motion to enter executive session to discuss the value of real estate currently leased for a cell tower site and the request of the lessor to extend. Mr. Luchini so moved, seconded by Mr. Ciaramicoli to enter executive session and it was unanimously voted on a roll call vote. The Chairman announced that the Commission would not be returning to open session.

Motion was made by Mr. Luchini, seconded by Mr. Ciaramicoli and unanimously voted on a roll call vote to adjourn the meeting.

Submitted by:


Gerald M. Moody, Esq.

APPROVED:

Jonathan M. Bruce,
Chairman