

**Water/Wastewater Commissioners’  
Meeting Minutes  
January 27, 2009**

Present: Walter Murray, Chairman  
Robert Courage, Vice-Chairman  
Merv Newton, Member  
Larry Anderson  
Evelyn Gendron

**Call to Order:**

Chairman Murray called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

**Press and Public Comments:**

There were no members of the press present, nor public comments received this evening.

**Appointments:**

There were no appointments this evening.

**Decisions:**

Approval of Final Minutes – Vice-Chairman Courage made the motion to approve the minutes of the meeting held on January 13, 2009 with one correction to the first page being necessary. Chairman Murray seconded the motion.

Annual Water & Sewer Abatement Request – The commissioners signed this annual document as presented by Superintendent Anderson, which itemized two invoices generated during 2008 that were not paid-in-full for residential water usage. Mr. Anderson noted that the commissioners’ approval would abate the unpaid amount of \$0.56 for one invoice and \$0.98 for another.

For information purposes only, Mr. Anderson distributed a two-page summary of abatements that had been approved during 2008 by the commissioners.

## **Discussions:**

Water/Sewer Warrant Articles – Superintendent Anderson said the warrants had been posted as of January 26<sup>th</sup>. He said that Article 3, Curtis Well Facility Improvements, was rounded at \$295,000. The two lowest contractual bids received were in the amount of \$219,900.00 and \$242,464.00. He said it is expected that the lowest bid, at \$219,900, would be unsuccessful, and that should the \$295,000 amount be “passed” by the voters for this warrant article, the Finance Director assured Superintendent Anderson that only the amount necessary to cover the fees associated with bonding and the Curtis Well Facility Improvements project would be bonded versus the entire \$295,000.00 amount that appears on the warrant article. Mr. Anderson expects approximately \$291,000.00 to be the amount bonded. Stantec Consulting is checking the references of the low bidder; he expects to receive Stantec’s recommendation as to awarding the bid soon.

Mr. Anderson said that the wording contained in the fourth line of Article #5, the Wastewater Treatment Operating Budget (page 15) and the third line of Article #6, the Water Treatment Operating Budget (page 15) is not exactly the language recommended by Attorney Drescher nor as it was forwarded to the Town Administrator’s Executive Assistant. He said that he had acted upon Attorney Drescher’s recommendation to remove the words “charges of an equal amount” from both of the warrant articles this year. However, despite those words having been deleted and then submitted to the Town Administrator’s office, the words (which had been included in last year’s warrant articles) had been inadvertently included and posted within this year’s warrant article. Once Superintendent Anderson became aware of how these two warrants would appear in print, there was no longer an opportunity to correct the wording. As the RSAs allow for appropriations to be offset by income received from wastewater and water users in amounts greater than the “charges of an equal amount” for capital reserve purposes, Attorney Drescher has assured Superintendent Anderson that he would explain the situation to the best of his ability should anyone have any questions regarding the wording of the two warrant articles during the February 7, 2009 deliberative session. Because Attorney Drescher had been assured that the modified wording would be forwarded for inclusion in the Town Warrants as agreed upon, it was an oversight during the review of the full warrant between the Town Administrator and Attorney Drescher that the “charges of an equal amount” wording was repeated from last year’s warrants.

Mr. Anderson then referred to Article #8, the Teamsters Union Collective Bargaining Agreement (page 16); specifically the impact upon water and sewer budgets for the Cost Items from Water and Sewer User Funds earmarked for 2009 wages (\$3,659.00), overtime and fringe benefits and the estimated costs between 2010 and 2013.

Mr. Anderson then referred to Article #10, the Wastewater Treatment Facility Wheel Loader Replacement (page 17), stating the article’s value is \$20,100 to cover the payment cost plus any document fees. He noted that the article is identified as a special warrant article, addresses the lease/purchase agreement’s first payment, disposition of the 1999 wheel loader, and that future years’ payments will be included in the wastewater operating budget.

Mr. Anderson then mentioned that three quotes have been received for the compact pick-up truck identified in the 2009 budget for the Water Department that. The lowest quote of \$12,301.00 was received from Grappone Ford in Concord, which is less than the budgeted amount of \$13,500.00. Vice-Chairman Courage made the motion to postpone taking action on the purchase of a 2009 compact pick-up until after the Town Deliberative Session scheduled for February 7, 2009. Commissioner Newton seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Wright-Pierce Water Supply Trombly Site Assessment Proposal – Presenting the memo prepared by Mr. Gary Smith dated January 19, 2008 entitled “Estimated Tasks and Budget to Perform 8-Inch Pump Test and Modeling”, Mr. Anderson said the amount of money necessary to investigate the feasibility of a water source was unexpected. Mr. Anderson included the proposed timeline prepared by (and previously distributed by) Mr. Phil Hart of USGS. Vice-Chairman Courage said his recollection of the initial project discussions were to occur at a slower pace, within a phased-in schedule over a longer period of time.

Chairman Murray suggested the commission consider sharing this timeline/task/cost information with the Board of Selectmen to obtain their feedback, as the town would be the beneficiary of any future land improvements that would result in gaining an additional water supply, involve infrastructure, and/or the lease/purchase of additional land. Commissioner Newton asked whether the Tromblys would prefer to sell or lease a portion of their land to the town. Mr. Anderson explained that permission has been given to the Town to explore the land for water source options and that discussions have not yet progressed to the level of purchase versus lease details. Having an inter-municipal water connection with Wilton, he said, in addition to the water connection with Pennichuck, would “buy” the Town of Milford time to pursue water supply exploration activities over a longer period.

Mr. Anderson stated he learned from Rob McCoy, SEA Consultants, that the Wilton Water Commissioners were working on two warrant articles for their Town Meeting: one regarding the inter-municipal agreement with Milford, and one regarding the work involved. Although the wording of the warrants is unknown at present, Mr. Anderson would expect the language to pertain to economic stimulus grant monies.

Milford-Wilton Inter-Municipal Agreement – Vice-Chairman Courage commented that water would likely be more economical if purchased from Wilton than from Pennichuck, and that according to the report received from SEA Consultants, a water connection with Wilton would provide assistance to Milford in the event of an emergency lasting a short duration, a few days. Mr. Courage suggested the capability of Wilton’s distribution system be determined, i.e., could Wilton provide Milford with 300,000 gallons of water per day, and what is the size of the water pipes along Route 101A, to better understand the potential for a back-up water supply, especially if a back-up water supply would become necessary beyond a “short duration”.

Commissioner Newton mentioned Milford may want to offer Wilton the option of entering into an inter-municipal agreement, for a fee, to operate their water system and pump station(s). Doing so would provide trained personnel as operators while ensuring a competitive rate is paid for water, compared with Pennichuck. Superintendent Anderson said this would necessitate a cost analysis between manpower, duties and the potential revenue for such services; additional personnel may be required in order to assign additional responsibilities. Vice-Chairman Courage agreed with Chairman Murray's earlier suggestion: there is merit in informing the Board of Selectmen of the water exploration activities to date, as well as the anticipated options. He said that while there is no guarantee that Milford would qualify for a groundwater permit by the NH DES upon the completion of water exploration activities at the Trombly site, the exploration activities must continue toward the goal of obtaining a permit, meanwhile, the associated fees will continue to be assessed. Superintendent Anderson will contact Mr. Trombly to invite him and his son to attend a meeting with the commissioners (to be held after the February 7<sup>th</sup> Deliberative Session) to initiate discussions regarding his land lease/sale cost expectations, and at a later date will schedule a meeting with the Board of Selectmen to initiate discussions regarding the status of Wright-Pierce's Water Supply Assessment proposal and budgeting to expand infrastructure.

#### **Information Items Requiring No Decisions:**

Pennichuck Water Rate Increase – Mr. Anderson distributed a notice received from Pennichuck regarding the monthly volumetric rate increase of 10.02% for water services rendered effective July 28, 2008. Consequently, Milford is purchasing water at a higher cost than Milford water customers are being charged, he said. Milford was charged a retroactive fee of \$1,700.00 in December. On average, approximately 20% of Milford's water is purchased from Pennichuck, warranting a water rate increase to align revenue with expenses, he said.

Superintendent Anderson will contact Mr. Densberger at Pennichuck to inquire whether all Nashua customers will be billed retroactively (or just Milford), since all customers should be treated the same. As Pennichuck "master meter" water customers serviced in Milford (The Reserve, Greatbrook Condominiums, and a few Amherst residences) pay a surcharge (Pennichuck's rate plus Milford's distribution costs), those customers may be retroactively billed accordingly. Superintendent Anderson will run the calculations.

Economic Recovery Funding – Chairman Murray, Vice-Chairman Courage and Superintendent Anderson will attend the Economic Recovery Funding meeting to be held in the NH DES Auditorium at 9:00 a.m. on February 6, 2008. Mr. Anderson will make the reservations.

#### **Other Business Requiring No Decisions:**

Unaccounted Water – Mr. Anderson distributed a spreadsheet and two charts he prepared that depicted the volume of unaccounted water between 2003 (when it was 18%) and 2008 (when it was 9%) and said he was pleasantly surprised after tallying the numbers. The 9% unaccounted

water during 2008 is most probably due to flushing hydrants, hydrant use in response to Fire Department call-outs, filling the street sweeper by the Public Works Dept., etc. Vice-Chairman Courage commented that the information depicts a tightly run Water Department. The bar chart compared the Curtis Well and Pennichuck water usage throughout 2008, with a window charting the rainfall on a monthly basis. The line graph showed the ups and downs, yet consistency, of the monthly water usage between 2005 and 2008.

Compensation – Commissioner Newton will make inquiries as to how the Plymouth Village Water and Sewer Village District handles compensation and cost sharing issues; his findings will be discussed during a future commissioners’ meeting.

**Future Appointments/Meetings:**

The next meeting of the Water and Wastewater Commissioners will be held at 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, February 10<sup>th</sup> at 564 Nashua Street, in the Water Utilities Conference Room.

The Deliberative Session will be February 7<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 a.m. in the Town Hall Auditorium.

The Town Vote will be held at the Milford Middle School on March 10th, 6:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m.

**Adjournment:**

A motion to adjourn was made by Chairman Murray at 7:20 p.m. Commissioner Newton seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Evelyn B. Gendron

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Walter Murray – Chairman

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Date

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Robert Courage – Vice-Chairman

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Date

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Merv Newton – Commissioner

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

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