

**North Branch Fire District #1
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Minutes of the North Branch Fire District #1, Board of Abatement, June 1, 2017.

This Meeting, having been duly warned, was called to order at 6:58 p.m. by Cyndee Frere.

Members Present: Thomas Ferrazza, Cyndee Frere, Edward Barber, Brendan Ryan and Karl Braunbach.

Also Present: John Densmore, Edward Kost Mary Jane Finnegan and Linda Holland.

Frere called for nominations for a Chairperson. Ferrazza nominated Frere to Chair the Abatement meeting. Seconded by Barber. Passed unanimously.

Minutes: Ferrazza moved to approve the Minutes of December 12, 2016 as submitted. Seconded by Ryan. Passed unanimously.

HI051/Kost, Edward: Mr. Kost provided the Board with a statement from Kingsley Plumbing and Heating that stated, in part, that all valves were shut except for the main valve off the pressure tank and valve line for the boiler. The plumber shut the main valve off at the pressure tank and waited for about five minutes before opening the valve back up. When the valve was reopened there was no indication of any water flow. The owner states that all the valves are closed every time he leaves the house. The plumber also verified this statement. Also attached, copies of the electric bills for six months. Ryan moved to use 10,414 gallons as a six month average and bill Mr. Kost \$172.87 for usage and \$22.47 for the bond, a total of \$195.34 and abate the amount of \$1,090.61. Seconded by Ferrazza. Passed unanimously.

RT019/Mary Jane Finnegan: Ferrazza moved to abate \$4,907.01 as this is a 501(c)(3) and was voted at the Annual Meeting as a tax exempt parcel. Seconded by Ryan. Passed unanimously. (Note: this parcel has a new cellular meter installed on September 7, 2016. An inspection was performed on February 29, 2016 when the property was transferred from Windsor Gold Star dba Red Oak Inn to Twice Blessed. At that time the inspection report states the main meter was leaking. The leak created a use of 171,842 gallons).

GS000/John Densmore: Mr. Densmore, on behalf of the Greensprings at Mount Snow HOA, came to discuss the May bill for the amenities center in the amount of \$3,560.40. Mr. Densmore asked the Board how could he get the meter calibrated what methods are in place to confirm the readings. Densmore informed the Board that he and Bart Howes had read the meter, drawn a gallon of water, and reread the meter. The meter indicated

that only one gallon of water was used. Holland will have the operational crew verify that the cell head on the meter is the correct cell head for the body of the meter. Based on six month history from eye-on-water, Ferrazza moved to have the Greensprings at Mount Snow HOA pay the full \$3,560.40. Seconded by Barber. Passed unanimously.

In House Errors: SEC02/Simpson, David: This unit no longer has a lock-out apartment and the meter for that section has been taken out. All water currently runs through one meter. Based on the information above, Ferrazza moved to abate \$33.90 for SEC02. Seconded by Barber. Passed unanimously.

DGA0/Faldetta, John & Danielle: In error the “reading” was applied to the “use”. Mr. & Mrs. Faldetta should be billed for 324 gallons not 33,733. Ferrazza moved to abate \$598.97 from the May 2017 bill. Seconded by Braunbach. Passed unanimously.

MV000F/Galaty, Michael: This property originally received a bill in the amount of \$33.90. The bill was submitted to the rental agent who immediately called the Fire District stating that seven people were in the house all winter and they used the laundry. This bill was immediately adjusted, based on several other full-time rentals, to a bill totaling \$656.36. Ferrazza moved to abate \$33.90 and charge Mr. Galaty \$656.36. Seconded by Barber. Passed unanimously.

MV016/Gallagher, James R.: Mr. Gallagher writes that his current water bill seems to be excessively high for the last half year. Mr. Gallagher has provided a copy of his electric bills for the Board to review. Mr. Gallagher’s letter also states, in part, that he does have a toilet that leaks as well as a faucet. Holland pointed out that Mr. Gallagher has a delinquent amount of \$352.76 and a current bill of \$307.86 totaling \$660.62. After reviewing the meter and billing history, Ferrazza moved to deny Mr. Gallagher’s request for an adjustment. Seconded by Barber. Passed unanimously.

GS201/Spaight, David: Mr. Spaight owner a home on Trail View Lane is appealing the use of 14,482 gallons that the meter read while he was in Michigan. He has never rented the home and along with his family are the sole inhabitants. Holland contacted Judy Warburton, at Greensprings, letting her know that a spike in water usage was indicated through eye-on-water. On February 21, February 22 and February 23 a total of 14,482 ran through the meter. Warren William from Greensprings checked the home and confirmed the water main was shut off in the house. Mr. Spaight states that his father passed away on February 21st. and he was at his father’s bedside in Michigan and remained in Michigan for the funeral as well. No one was at the home in West Dover. The Board carefully reviewed the eye-on-water readings that indicated no usage from February 9 through the 17th of February. Small amounts of usage is indicated on February 18th, 19th. and 20th, with the spikes occurring on the 21st. 22nd and 23rd. February 24th no water ran through the meter. Ferrazza moved to deny Mr. Spaight’s request for an adjusted bill, based on usage directly before and the fact the meter appears to be functioning fine since that occurrence. Seconded by Ryan. Passed unanimously. Holland will ask John Densmore for his main meter log sheets in an effort to resolve the issue of the spikes in reading.

MV004/Greco, Kevin & Paula: Mr. Greco has created a two year history and is requesting an adjustment of his November 2014 bill in the amount of \$954.75 for a total of 65,740 gallons. Ryan moved to reimburse the difference of \$908.95 based on Mr. Greco's average history. Seconded by Ferrazza. Passed unanimously.

GS109/Newman, James & Lisa: Mr. & Mrs. Newman are disputing the May 2016 bill in the amount of \$3,617.87 for the use of 170,700 gallons. Ferrazza moved to revisit this matter if Mr. & Mrs. Newman will kindly submit the electric bills for the period in question. (November 2015 through April 2016) Seconded by Barber. Passed unanimously.

MV000T/Armour, Bruce: Mr. Armour writes asking the Board for an abatement of his May 2017 bill for 91,800 gallons. Attached to the letter is a letter from the water systems operator, confirmation of the building restoration after the water line break, photos, sworn statement in proof of loss for water damage and insurance paperwork. Based on the information provided by Mr. Armour and his past history, Ryan moved to abate \$1,665.33 and charge Mr. Armour \$56.65 for the May 2017 billing period. Seconded by Braunbach. Passed unanimously.

GS047/Lawrence, Peter: Mr. Lawrence wrote the Board stating he had installed the new cellular meter in September 2016 and his new bill is far higher than he thought it should be. Mr. Lawrence states that Greensprings received two calls from Holland stating there was a high usage in the unit. One high occurrence was on January 10, 2017 when 2,996 gallons went through the meter and the other was March 27, 2017 when 3,314 were recorded by the meter. Ferrazza moved to deny Mr. Lawrence's request based on two separate events that appear to be similar. Seconded by Barber. Passed unanimously. Holland will provide the eye-on-water charts to Mr. Lawrence.

FMD04/Levy, Jay: Mr. Levy wrote the Board to appeal the current bill in the amount of \$506.47. The meter was read correctly, however, all previous bills have shown a very small charge. The unit was checked for leaks or any running toilets etc. and no problems were found. Mr. Levy also provided electric bills that indicate very low usage, a range from a low of \$16.34 to a high of \$19.03. Based on the information provided Ryan moved to abate \$472.57 from the May 2017 bill and charge Mr. Levy \$33.90 and ask Mr. Levy to please strongly consider replacing the meter as soon as possible. Seconded by Ferrazza. Passed unanimously.

OLE03B/Lieberman, Gregory: No letter of appeal. Tabled until additional information is provided by the owner.

GS132/Defeo, Paul: No letter of appeal. Tabled until additional information is provided by the owner.

SP004B/Wood, Christine: No letter of appeal. Tabled until additional information is provided by the owner.

SEO07/Schurr, Paul H.: No letter of appeal. Only electric history. Tabled until additional information is provided by the owner.

JR006J/Hurewitz, Jeff: Mr. Hurewitz wrote explaining that his home in Joan's Ridge is a vacation home and it is occupied about 25% of the time. His recent bill is in the amount of \$610.18 for a total of 32,529 gallons. In a separate E-mail, Mr. Hurewitz states that he cannot provide the electric bills for the last 6 months as the house was rented for part of that time and since he used a rental agency, he cannot reach the renter. The same people rented the house the previous year. Ferrazza moved to deny Mr. Hurewitz because as a rental home is does not appear to be out of line. Seconded by Braunbach. Passed unanimously.

AP002A/Augur, Mark: A letter from Mr. Augur stating he would like to appeal his water usage bill at 183 Handle Road. (Alpine Loop – AP002A). This property has no water, heat or insulation. The property has been in this state since 2011 and is currently listed for sale. Ferrazza moved to abate \$375.16. Seconded by Ryan. Passed unanimously. (Note: The Board is aware of the condition of this property).

OLO5A/Macdonald, Craig: Mr. Macdonald is asking the Board to abate the excess usage on his May 2017 bill totaling \$690.27. Mr. Macdonald's letter goes on to state that the property manager had informed him that they had noticed, while flushing the water tanks in February and March, this year, that there was a lot of water usage after hours while they were attempting the re-fill/flushing. Mr. Macdonald states that in the past he has had toilets running after he had flushed them and in talking with the property manager believes that this is what happened, during the re-fill period. Ryan moved to deny Mr. Macdonald's request because the water from the toilets came to the facility to be treated. Seconded by Ferrazza. Passed unanimously.

AP014/Palladino, Anthony: Mr. Palladino would like the Board to review his bill for May 2017 in the amount of \$504.16. Attached are the electric bills and the statements from the plumbers. Due to a freeze-up the heat exchanger was leaking, a leak was detected in the baseboard heater in the living room and the supply lines to the toilets in the first floor bathroom were broken from freezing. A leak was found in the heat line in the loft area and a split line in the ceiling of the dining room. Ferrazza moved to abate \$422.34 and bill Mr. Palladino \$81.82 based on his average bills for the same time period. Seconded by Ryan. Passed unanimously.

Other Appeals: None.

Frere adjourned the meeting at 9:06 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Linda L. Holland,
Administrative Manager

cc: E. Barber, T. Ferrazza, C. Frere, B. Ryan, K. Braunbach, J. Densmore, E. Kost, M.J. Finnegan, D. Simpson, D. Faldetta, M. Galaty, J. Gallagher, D. Spaight, K. Greco, J. Newman, B. Armour, P. Lawrence, J. Levy, G. Lieberman, P. Defeo, C. Wood, P. Schurr, J. Hurewitz, M. Augur, C. Macdonald, A. Palladino Deerfield Valley News & Brattleboro Reformer.

Posted: North Branch Fire District #1, Wastewater Treatment Facility & Administrations Building. Dover Town Office.