

**North Branch Fire District #1
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**THESE MINUTES ARE NOT OFFICIAL UNTIL APPROVED BY THE
PRUDENTIAL COMMITTEE**

Minutes of the Special Meeting of the North Branch Fire District #1, Prudential Committee, June 30, 2020.

This Meeting, having been duly Warned, was called to order at 12:02 p.m. by Vice Chairperson, Thomas Ferrazza.

Members Present: Thomas Ferrazza, Daniel Facilla and Edward Barber by phone.

Absent: Cyndee Frere and Brendan Ryan.

Also Present: Carina Hellstrom and Linda Holland.

Public Comments: Hellstrom came before the Prudential Committee to discuss the future of her sewer bills. She is concerned that there are less people bringing water into the sewer plant, therefore, for those of us who are using water we are paying a higher rate. Hellstrom is also concerned how the Coronavirus may also affect the rates, if money is not coming in are the businesses going to see even higher rates. In the last two years she has seen an increase in her bill of approximately one-third. Ferrazza explained that approximately two months ago the Committee tried to set-up some kind of stimulus, similar to what the Town did. Ferrazza went on to explain that the State “shot us down simply because we are not set up for that”. Ferrazza stated that we are looking at things in the Ordinance, but our hands are tied. All we can do is try to collect from people connecting to the line and that would lower what we are asking the users to raise and appropriate. We are raising and appropriating more money because each year we schedule something to be repaired or replaced. Facilla stated that he took the seminar that was suggested by Hellstrom and he learned that there are certain sewer districts that have been keeping their sewer charges level, even as costs were going up. How the districts were actually balancing this Facilla is not sure, unless they were in some way using a reserve account. North Branch has always used a different system and the seminar suggested that the other districts move into what we have always been doing. As an example, if North Branch has a surplus in any given year it is passed on to the consumer through the raise and appropriate figures. Facilla used the Board of Abatement as an example stating if we abate or reimburse a customer the sums abated must be made up during the next billing period. Facilla also stated that the seminar suggested Fire

District's should borrow from themselves and not the Federal Government. This is a practice the North Branch has followed for many years. Facilla also explained that approximately four years ago the public came to the Committee and stated that they did not want another bond. Currently, we are attempting to charge and put into the reserve enough money to cover a replacement of what is out there according to our capital plan. Ferrazza also pointed out that the Fire District is responsible for replacing the endpoints every ten years and replacing the meters every twenty years. That burden is no longer on the property owner and is also part of the Capital Budget. Hellstrom was assured by Ferrazza that he would keep her informed.

Executive Session: At 12:25 p.m. Facilla moved to go into Executive Session for legal matters. Seconded by Barber. Passed unanimously. Facilla moved to come out of Executive Session at 12:50 p.m. Seconded by Barber. Passed unanimously.

DECISION: At this time the letter of appeal from Richard Caplan representing Andirons Redevelopment Company, LLC cannot be read at an open meeting. The reason being Attorney Valente, representing Caplan, contacted the Fire District's attorney stating he was representing Mr. Caplan in this appeal. Once Caplan's attorney contacted our attorney it becomes a legal matter that has to be handled in executive session. Therefore, the letter cannot be read into the Minutes until the matter is discussed with our attorney. If Mr. Caplan's attorney is not representing him in this matter the Committee is willing to hear Mr. Caplan and will not set a thirty day time limit on the appeal.

Facilla moved that the Prudential Committee approve the Mediated Settlement Agreement, in the lawsuit against the North Branch Fire District #1, brought by the Andirons Redevelopment Company LLC, dated June 17, 2020, and authorizes Vice-Chairman Thomas Ferrazza to execute the Settlement Agreement on behalf of the District. Seconded by Barber. Passed unanimously.

After conference with the Secretary of State's Office, Facilla moved that if the condition arises, that there are less than three Board Members present at a meeting; the attending two members may approve the monthly bills. Seconded by Barber. Passed unanimously.

Snow Republic Brewery: Holland will contact Mr. Bansley and ask what his intentions are for the Brewery. Tabled until July 16, 2020 meeting.

Other Business: None.

Old Business: None.

Meeting adjourned at 12:59 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Linda L. Holland,
Administrative Manager

cc: C. Frere, K. Braunbach, T. Ferrazza, E. Barber, E. Floyd, B. Howes, H. Terhune, D. Facilla, A. Pritcher, A. Palmiter, A. Perkins, A. Havreluk, C. Helmstetter, C. Turpin, G. Henry, G. Golet, Grayghostinn, J. Gooch, J. Eckert, J. Flanagan-Marchese, J. Mahon, J. Densmore, J. Brunen, J. Redd, L. Harkawik, L. Newton, L. Fraser, M. Hamilton, M. Formel, M. Hathaway, M. Garber, P. Fisher, P. Fitzpatrick, R. Reed, R. Caplan, R. Rubin, W. Ruane, S. MacDougall, S. Dupuis, S. Joyce-Albano, T. House, Weathervanelodge, Y. Strus, Deerfield Valley News and Brattleboro Reformer.

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