

North Branch Fire District #1
78 Dorr Fitch Road
West Dover, Vermont 05356

Website: www.northbranchfiredistrict.com

Phone: 802-464-7560 x110

Fax: 802-464-3040

Email: administration@nbfddwwt.com

**THESE MINUTES ARE NOT OFFICIAL UNTIL APPROVED BY THE
PRUDENTIAL COMMITTEE**

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the North Branch Fire District #1, Prudential Committee, August 11, 2021.

This Meeting, having been duly Warned, was called to order at 10:00 a.m. by Chairman, Steve Montello.

Members Present: Steve Montello, Bob Stone, Jon Prial, Ken Westby, and Peter Edwards.

Also Present: Bart Howes, Rebecca Snow, Helen Krzeminski. Public members: Tom Ferrazza, Kevin Joyce, and Sheila Joyce.

Public Comments:

- Kevin Joyce read a letter to the board in response to Nbfd's letter to him, dated August 3, 2021, stating his employment status. The intent of his letter is to clarify events leading up to his injury and employment with North Branch. He showed a certificate to the board and stated he earned 44 credit training hours in basic wastewater operations from July 14, 2020, to September 2, 2020, while he was out.

Minutes: Stone moved to approve the minutes of July 21, 2021. Seconded by Westby. Passed unanimously.

Letters:

- Kevin Joyce's letter will be discussed in executive session.

Treasurer's Report:

- Stone moved to approve to pay bills in the amount of \$ 53,200.19. Seconded by Westby. Passed unanimously.
- Snow reported that an additional charge of \$49.95/month will be added to the ADP bill for employee Time & Attendance.
- Snow and Westby will work to prepare financials and a proposed 6-month budget for Septembers' regular meeting. They will also have figures of available cash, current account receivables and assets, then propose a rate for billing users of Nbfd#1.
- Edwards stated that the cash base accounting system we are currently using is not generally accepted as standard practice for municipalities. Westby stated that Nbfd was moving to an accrual-based statement as of July 1, 2021.

- Ferrazza asked how much of the approximate three million, that is in the bank, is usable. Montello asked to have an available cash report done for September's meeting.
- Montello stated there will be a reserve study analysis done, by an independent firm, for the public's awareness and to maintain transparency.

Chief Operator's Report:

Operations

- Howes contacted 7 concrete contractors about repairing our rotor pads. To date, 3 have responded saying they declined the work due to being too busy this year and two (Evans's construction & RC concrete) have stated they would come look at the job in the next couple weeks.
- Anthony Paraspolo started work on Aug 2nd.
- Casella (our sludge hauler and disposal company) has sent a three-year contract for us to sign. This is a new policy of theirs to have a contract. They originally wanted an increase in trucking per load from the current \$900 to \$1,100, but Howes was able to get them to compromise at \$1,000. Westby moved to allow Howes to sign a contract with Casella. Seconded by Prial. Passed unanimously.

Capital

- Howes contacted Association Reserves and sent them our capital budget for review. They replied with a reserve study proposal for \$6,000.00. It will take approximately 8 weeks.
- Westby moved to go ahead with the reserve analysis for \$6,000.00. Seconded by Stone. Passed unanimously.

Contracts:

- It was clarified that Letter of Intent, for gallonage, is good for 180 days based on the current ordinance and will be written in the letter.
- Stone moved to have Krzeminski draw up contracts for 1) Deer Meadow, 2) the Tamarack/Henry property and 3) Mike Dejulio (old West Dover Joe's), then have it vetted by Nbfd's attorney, signed by purchaser with paid fees, then signed by 3 members of the Prudential Committee. Seconded by Prial. Passed unanimously.
- It was decided to address the cost of new meters to the closing attorneys so that they can hold that money in escrow. Currently Nbfd attaches a lien of \$750.00, if a new meter is needed, at closing. We receive a check from attorney or owner and refund the portion that is not used for the cost of the meter. Going forward, Nbfd will not hold the funds, but bill the attorney instead.

Legal/Governance:

- Montello stated that he had been working with a small committee comprised of Jon Prial, Tom Ferrazza, James Valente, and Andrew Sherman, who is on the board at Timber Creek, to understand the Ordinance, laws and make sure actions taken are done correctly.

- Montello stated that the Prudential Committee has the authority to change rates. He named the three rates that Nbfd#1 has, and the committee will be looking at, which are 1) sewer usage rates, 2) hook up rates/fees and 3) sleeping space charges.
- Montello stated that there needs to be a thorough review of the current Ordinance in Force.

Technology Update:

- Prial noted that he had been working on proposals with three vendors. The first one is Vermont Media Publishing Co, LTD, for our ecommerce, domain registration, web hosting (Wix.com, we are currently with another company who uses WordPress) and mailing list management. The other two Harris Computer and Arcomm Communication, Nbfd currently works with them, but Prial noted there are upgrades and additions that need to happen to make things work more efficiently. Prial will check with Arcomm Communications to clarify if the fee they quoted was based on month to month or a year contract.
- Prial made a motion to be able to continue to work on these projects and authorize proposals. Seconded by Westby. Passed unanimously.

Sleeping Spaces:

- Edwards stated that he and Stone had brought in several people to be on the committee to work on sleeping space issues. John Redd, Brian Morgan, the president of Timber Creek Homeowners Association, Pat Lagrange, a resident of Virginia Lane and possibly Bob Rueben will join.
- He stated that at the organizational meeting they discussed the way sleeping spaces are counted, enforced, the subjectivity involved with sleeping spaces and how the ordinance is written. They will be working with the finance committee to determine how sleeping space charges impact Nbfd. The committee will report back to the Prudential Committee make recommendations at the September meeting.

Other Business:

- Information had been gathered from the attorneys at Vermont League of Cities and Towns concerning North Branch Fire District's current policy of exempting certain entities from sewer charges. There is a continuation of the Annual Meeting on October 14, 2021, for the public to vote on this issue. Meters need to be installed at two locations, and Nbfd needs to have access to the Historical Society of Dover. Letters will go out to the Dover Fire Department and West Dover Church, stating that they need to have a Nbfd meter installed by a Vermont licensed plumber, and they will be billed for the meter by Nbfd. The Historical Society has been sent a letter.
- Montello ordered a split door for the foyer that will replace the full door. The intention is to have visitors stop at the door and some added security for staff.

New Business:

- Westby asked if North Branch Fire District #1 had map of users and sewer lines in the district. Howes explained that there are blueprints of the municipal lines and manholes but that does not include all the private lines that hook up to our system. It was discussed to possibly have a surveyor create a map/study.
- Stone asked if we ever were at full capacity, could we put new lines in, and increase our capacity. A discussion on what would be involved occurred. Howes presented figures of current flows and uncommitted reserve capacity. Howes stated using our annual average daily flow we are only at half capacity, and he did not foresee us hitting that capacity limit. The act 250 peak 7-day flow limit is the foreseeable limit we will hit first as we had in the past and may be a better way of calculating our gallons available to sell.

Executive Session: Stone moved to go into executive session at 11:10 a.m. for legal and personnel matters. Seconded by Prial. Passed unanimously. The Prudential Committee came out of executive session at 11:35 a.m.

DECISIONS:

- Westby moved for Montello to contact Valente about preparing a letter to Kevin Joyce, about current employment status. Seconded by Stone. Passed unanimously.
- Krzeminski is to have updates on the Health Reimbursement Arrangement through Blue Cross/Blue Shield and the current plan in place for the next regular meeting of the Prudential Committee.

Montello adjourned the meeting at 11:45 a.m.

The next Regular Prudential Committee meeting will be on September 8, 2021, at 10:00 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Helen Krzeminski
Helen Krzeminski
Administration

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