

**North Branch Fire District #1
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**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, June 23, 2021

This Meeting, having been duly Warned, was called to order at 6:05 p.m. by Chairman,
Steve Montello.

Members Present: Steve Montello, Thomas Ferrazza, Daniel Facilla, Jon Prial and Bob
Stone via Teams.

Also Present: Bart Howes, Rebecca Snow, Helen Krzeminski and John
Giordano(public).

Public Comments: None

Minutes: Ferrazza moved to approve the minutes of May 13, 2021. Seconded by Prial.
Passed unanimously.

Letters:

- Bill Hayde's Abatement case was still under investigation. Based on findings that he knew his meter was not working and failed to rectify it in a timely manner, Ferrazza moved to send him a letter stating he was to pay his bill in full, including penalty and interest and once his new meter is installed and monitored for two more years. Seconded by Prial. Approved unanimously.
- A Cobra letter signed by Kevin Joyce was noted.
- Gary Henry asked for an extension of his contract on the Pinnacle View property. It was decided to send him a letter extending it for 5 years as was done with Rich Caplan.
- Mountaineer Inn asked to update our records to coincide with his room counts. It was decided to review what is in our system and if it conflicts, to schedule an inspection.
- A copy of the draft for NBFDD's Indirect Discharge permit was reviewed. It still is in public comment phase.
- A copy of letters that were sent to residences that had no meter communication with our system was reviewed. Montello asked to start a weekly check of Beacon

for non-communicating meters. It was suggested to send a follow up letter, if problem not corrected. Owners to comply within 30 days or penalties will be attached.

- A letter from Thad Paul, Lodge at Mt Snow asking to recognize a previous permit allowing for more occupancy than Nbfd has on file currently. It was decided to look at the history, reinspect the property and put on agenda for next Prudential Committee meeting.
- Linda Hollands resignation letter was noted.
- A copy of a letter to Invesco Investment Services, Inc. assigning Helen Krzeminski as Retirement Plan Administrator, to replace Linda Holland was read.
- A copy of Appointment of Assistant Clerk, to Helen Krzeminski, by Catherine D. Kaufmann, Clerk, was noted.
- Copies of Letters of Intent, for gallonage were noted.
- Ferrazza moved to deny a request from Steve Charno for a waiver of a sleeping space charge. Seconded by Prial. Approved unanimously.

Treasurer's Report:

- Facilla moved to approve to pay bills in the amount of \$124,604.55, subject to Committee's review. Seconded by Ferrazza.
- It was confirmed there will be two signatures on checks from North Branch.
- A review of Commitments List, contracts and procedures for contracts will be done for next Prudential Committee meeting.
- Snow has had positive response from the 25 letters sent out on non-communicating meters. North Branch is resolving oldest cases first from 2018/19.

Chief Operator's Report:

- Howes asked to have Heritage Engineering to write up an analysis for replacement of concrete of rotor pads so that he can send out request for bids. Howes will get a price from Heritage for doing that and it will be on agenda for next Prudential Committee meeting.
- Howes has completed his employee's 90-day review.

Technology: Prial made the following summary based on his findings for North Branch Fire District #1's current technology:



Agenda Item -
Technology.pdf

- Prial entertained a motion to ask Arcomm Communications to propose a contract to Nbfd#1's for its technological needs.
- Ferrazza stated that he had a problem with Prial working on implementing technical changes when he was not given the power to do that. He said the State statute is clear on this. "1 VSA 172 states that no board member may act on their own."
- Ferrazza moved to allow Prial to investigate all technical aspects for North Branch. Seconded by Facilla. Approved unanimously.

- Ferrazza moved to give permission to Montello to work with Duncun Cable to connect North Branch to fiber instead of the existing high-speed internet. Seconded by Facilla. Approved unanimously.
- Montello stated it will cost about \$3,000 to bring in two poles to install and then \$60.00/month for 10/50 internet service.
- After discussion about employee exit procedures, it was decided to install a pin code lock on the doors.

Accounting: Montello made the following suggestions based on his findings for North Branch Fire District #1's current accounting procedures:

- Adopt the ADP Run System for payroll and hourly employees. The cost is \$46.00/pay period. Ferrazza moved to adopt the ADP Run System for payroll. Seconded by Prial. Passed unanimously.
- To move from North Branch's current calendar year to a fiscal year of July 1 through June 30. In conjunction with that, to do a 6-month audit and 6-month tax return. Ferrazza moved to change North Branch's budget from a calendar year to a fiscal year, subject to legal review. Seconded by Prial. Passed unanimously.
- To consolidate North Branch's current thirteen checking accounts down to seven and keep them all at People's United Bank. Form committees within the next 60 days to review the Capital plan, decide how much to keep in operating reserve and set up rate structure. Ferrazza moved to consolidate the checking accounts and the Certificate of Deposits (when they expire). Seconded by Prial. Passed unanimously.
- Montello suggested Facilla audit the bond account.
- Montello stated that no bank in the country audits dual signatures on checks. It is North Branch's policy to have two signatures on checks but not the bank's policy.
- Ferrazza moved to transfer \$100,000 from the sleeping space account to the Capital account to bring the total to \$797,000. Seconded by Prial. Passed unanimously.
- Prial moved to have Montello as second signer on North Branch's checks. Seconded by Ferrazza. Passed unanimously.

Billing/Audits: Facilla made the following suggestions:

- Take into consideration our daily and yearly maximum flow capacity, of the plant, when restructuring billing.
- Take measurement of maximum usage during peak times to accurately reflect impact on plant. Either by Beacon or implement a program to do that.
- Committee should look at limits and scope of our current audits.
- Going forward, Engagement letters and a scope of the audit need to be reviewed by the Prudential Committee before they are signed.

Ordinance/Procedures: Ferrazza made the following remarks to clarify North Branch's flow of protocol. He stated, "First of all, in all fairness, any sitting board has the right to make changes to their Ordinance."

- Ferrazza clarified that it is a two-step process. 1) First change the amendment, by creating a new amendment or abolishing the amendment that was put in force. 2)

Once a new amendment has been created it must be vetted by an attorney. When the board agrees and votes on the amendment, it must be signed, dated, posted in 5 locations and published in the chosen newspaper within 14 days of the Prudential Committee's vote to change the amendment. Within 44 days, if no objections, by petition, have been received and after 60 days of its posting, it becomes the amendment in force.

- The same procedure is followed to change the Ordinance. He stated that this is state law and protocol.
- Ferrazza suggested to take the time to make all the changes the board wants and have it vetted with the chosen wastewater attorney for North Branch Fire District#1.
- Ferrazza referenced Vermont State Statute Title 24; Chapter 59: Sections 1971,1972 and 1973.

Old Business:

- It was decided, by the Prudential Committee, to make sure all entities who are not getting charges from North Branch have a working meter so that there can be a history of usage for the October 2021 meeting.

New Business:

- Howes recommended that Krzeminski be an authorized signer on North Branch's monthly reports going to the State. Ferrazza moved to make Helen Krzeminski an authorized signer on North Branch Fire District#1's monthly monitoring reports. Seconded by Prial. Passed unanimously.
- Facilla suggested a different way of vetting capital funding since, in the past, the engineer's estimates have been far off from what the project ended up costing. It was decided to hire a reserve analysis company in August or September for year-end budget.

Executive Session: Prial moved to go into executive session at 8:25 p.m. for legal and personnel matters. Seconded by Ferrazza. Passed unanimously. The Prudential Committee came out of executive session at 8:46 p.m.

DECISIONS:

Rebecca Snow and Helen Krzeminski are to write up their job descriptions and present them at the next regular Prudential Committee meeting.

Montello adjourned the meeting at 8:47 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Helen Krzeminski
Helen Krzeminski,
Administrative Assistant

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