

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

Website: www.northbranchfiredistrict.com

Phone: 802-464-7560 x 110

Fax: 802-464-3040

E mail: administration@nbfldwwt.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, November 9, 2022.

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

Members Present: Steve Montello, Jon Prial and Ken Westby. Bob Stone and Pete Edwards attended via Zoom.

Also Present: Deana Covieo-Clarke, Bartholomew Howes, Helen Krzeminski, Scott Stein. Barbara Hyde, Geraldine Golet and Cathy Kaufmann. James Valente attended via Zoom.

Public Comments:

- Barbara Hyde wanted to thank those public members who paid the sewer bill for the West Dover Congregation Church. She stated that it would be wonderful if it could happen again as it was not in the Church's budget. Prial wanted to clarify that though some members of the board may have been involved, personally, it was not a North Branch participation.
- Cathy Kaufmann said she had two items she wanted to address 1) that the sewer bills did not reflect the amount paid towards the bond anymore and 2) a concern for customers who do cannot receive a bill via email. Montello stated that customers can still receive a paper bill if they choose to. Westby addressed her bond concern by explaining the budget and expenses. In the future, he stated, the bills may have a summary of expenses broken down by percentages, which would include what percentage is going towards the bond. Kaufmann was not satisfied with the explanation stating that she wanted to see how much she paid for usage and the amount she paid towards the bond on her bill and suggested North Branch to go back to how the bills were sent out previously. Montello noted that it was not the correct forum for a discussion, but that board would take her comments under consideration.
- Golet added that she would also like to understand the billing process. Westby explained the how the budget is arrived at. Golet commented on the Church's high bill, particularly, July, using over 1000 gallons. It was suggested that a purchase of a deduct meter may benefit the Church.

Minutes: Prial made a motion to approve the minutes of October 12, 2022, regular meeting. Seconded by Westby. Motion passed.

Progress with Beacon/Muni Smart for November's billing: North Branch is still working with the meter reading company, Beacon and the billing server, Muni Smart to resolve long, ongoing issues. Another meeting will be scheduled within a few weeks, with both companies, to continue working on these issues.

Invoice Cloud Update: North Branch went live, with InvoiceCloud, on November 1 as scheduled. Krzeminski reported that as of recent, 22 people had signed up for autopay, 77 customers used InvoiceCloud to pay their bill and 29 people signed up for paperless. It was noted that some customers are still making payments on MunciPay, even though it has been deleted from our website. North Branch is having to keep track of those payments.

Chief Operator's Report: Howes presented the following report:

Operations

- We received State approval to reduce chlorine residual testing in our Spray to once per day.
- One of our alum pumps is broken and needed replacement at a cost of \$774.
- Pump #2 at Route 100 PS had a leaking gasket that needed replacement. A new dehumidifier and blower vent fan were also purchased that needed replacement there.
- Monadnock Fence has completed the fence and gate out front.
- On 11/1 Champlin Associates came and started to replace pump # 1 at Rt 100. The new pump is slightly larger requiring them to get some fittings machined. They plan to be back tomorrow, 11/10. Currently we are down to two pumps, but a single pump can handle our flows up until holiday peak flow weeks.
- We used to have a "plumbers' policy" that stated, "water meters must be installed no later than 1:30pm the day they are issued to allow NBFD personnel to seal them". This was to ensure all meters that get issued are inspected when the plumber is there in case of problems and sealed by us in a timely manner. We stopped enforcing this when we did the hand to cell swap over to allow more meters to be installed and it has caused lots of problems. Plumbers still are regularly not contacting us and bringing us to these meters. Since plumbers are so busy and sometimes not from this area, I'd like to amend the previous policy to allow them till 1:30 the next business day. Plus, state that if we are not contacted to inspect with the plumber by this deadline, we will not issue any more meters to that plumbing company and we should be considering charging the homeowner some kind of additional fee for our time in these cases.

Treasurer's Report: Property codes discussion:

- Covieo-Clark reported \$525,066 out in sewer usage bills for this billing cycle.
- There are 1480 solar credits that need to be used by the end of the next bill.
- Covieo-Clark gave an update on the establishments that responded to her letter about seat counts. She stated she received responses from 9 of the 13 letters she sent out. When responses differ from what is on our records, an inspection will be scheduled. There was a discussion on committed reserve an uncommitted reserve. It was clarified that North Branch's commitments list should reflect the gallonage that was sold to the property owner, not what is on the wastewater permit.
- Covieo-Clark reported that there is \$35,796 in receivables that are over 90 days old. It was discussed how to proceed with accounts that are over 180 days old and

have not responded to efforts to get them current. It was decided that CVG Law will form a letter for those accounts.

- Montello asked for status on the June 2021 audit being done by Steve Love. It was determined that it is not complete, and that staff will contact Love about that audit and the draft for the June 2022 audit.
- Covieo-Clark stated that North Branch's property codes are not always matching the Town of Dover's. She requested permission to change our property codes so that they align with the Town's. The board agreed that needed to be done.

Old Business: Abatement Hearing. The date was set for December 21, 2022, at 6:00 p.m.

New Business:

- Prial wanted to set some guidelines for the coming months. Prial stated that the board and staff need to look excessive use in February and agree on an excessive use charge. He stated that the structure of the semiannual bill and monthly delinquent bills needs to be changed. North Branch needs to think about charges for not going paperless. He suggested we have that done by March.
- Prial said he and Westby are waiting for the school (Dover Elementary) and the Town(Dover) to let them know where to send North Branch's extra solar credits.

Executive Session: Westby made a motion to go into executive session, to discuss personnel and legal issues at 11:00. Seconded by Prial. Motion passed. The Prudential Committee came out of executive session at 11:46.

Decisions: None

Montello adjourned the meeting at 12:00.

Respectfully submitted,

Helen Krzeminski

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Assistant Clerk

The next, regular meeting of NBFD#1's Prudential Committee is on December 14, 2022, at 10:00 a.m.

Posted: North Branch Fire District# 1, Wastewater Treatment Facility building and Administration's building, Dover Town Office and www.northbranchfiredistrict.com.