

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, October 8, 2025.

This meeting, having been duly warned, was called to order at 10:00a.m., by Chair, Ken Westby.

Members present: Steve Montello, Ken Westby, Jon Prial via Zoom, Bart Howes and Helen Krzeminski

Public comments: None

TC143 Fontaine: Outstanding meter invoice: No action taken at this meeting.

August Minutes: Montello made a motion to approve the minutes of August 13, 2025, with an amendment of a name misspelling, Prial seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Review of Monthly Updates: Krzeminski updated the Prudential Committee on customer data, meters and AR/billing. Paperless customers have increased from 1094 to 1097. Commitments list decreased to 31,187 gallons.

Krzeminski reviewed the master meter accounts, their number of units and how that is incorporated into total number of billable accounts.

Montello asked to have a detailed breakdown of all outstanding receivables, to include names, addresses of those accounts and what actions are being taken.

Chief Operator's Report:

Oct Topics

- The crew has spent the last month releveling and preparing the sprayfield for winter.
- Pond Sludge removal: PH Senesac has finished their survey of the polishing pond. There is between 18-24" sludge. They estimate there's between 103-131 dry tons of sludge. The estimated cost for them to dewater, transport and dispose of the sludge is \$289,000 - \$367,000. Operationally this project would work good around June/July of next year as we must take the pond offline for them to do the work. We need to approve the work in order to have them scheduled.
 - Once the sludge is removed, the goal is to have operations be able to dry out and clean the pond annually and be able to fully inspect the liner.
- I broke the tablet we use for installing water meters. I ordered a replacement for \$300.

Discussion:

Montello asked Howes if North Branch was required to remove the pond sludge and inspect the liners and if there was a capacity issue. Howes replied no to both questions. It was discussed to have Howes get data from the Reserve Study, budget and Capital Reserve then have the Committee review all the data so that the PC could compare that with cash on hand and if it will affect rates.

There was no action taken at this meeting, it was advised not to schedule any further work on the pond and tentatively be put on the agenda for January's meeting as Budget and Capital Reserve review.

Excess usage fees will affect the 2026 spring bill. Dates for those monitoring weeks will be as follows:

- December Holiday period- December 26, 2025 to January 5, 2026
- MLK Holiday- January 16, 2026 to January 20, 2026
- Presidents Week Holiday- February 13, 2026 to February 22, 2025

Montello made a motion to clarify verbiage on letter, once all information has been reviewed and have, they PC approve the letter, via email and "unanimous consent". Seconded by Prial. Motion passed.

Written notification of Excess Use charges will go out before those dates and be posted on the website

Treasurer's Report: Financials and payables were reviewed under monthly updates. Montello asked if North Branch's HRA unused funds from last year had been returned. Krzeminski stated they were returned in July. Krzeminski updated the committee on correspondence with Health Equity about changing how we prefund the accounts. Montello suggested that we investigate using another company next year, possibly ADP.

Administrative and Treasure's cell phone compensations: Krzeminski explained that she and Covieo-Clarke are using their personal cell phones for North Branch business. Mostly consisting of Authenticator App and security verifications for our programs. Montello made a motion to reimburse each \$25.00/month and to pay it in payroll, under miscellaneous reimbursements. Prial seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Old business/new business: Montello addressed North Branch's workman's compensation coverage. He suggested that we self-insure up to two weeks if an employee were to have an injury or accident that did not require medical treatment beyond on site first aid. This would mean that the employee could take off work and get paid, regardless of the status of their paid time off status. Krzeminski asked for clarification of that statement. Montello stated that PTO would not be used. Krzeminski stated that North Branch is not required to notify the Department of Labor, within 72 hours, if no medical treatment was sought by the employee.

Montello asked where we were with the third-party audit for the fiscal year 24-25. Krzeminski stated that the auditors will be starting on it next week.

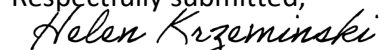
Montello suggested that we set the Christmas lunch date now, to give everyone time to mark their calendars. Krzeminski will work with Covieo-Clarke to set that date and let everyone know.

Howes stated that he and Krzeminski needed clarification on how they expected us to report outstanding contracts/changes on the commitments list and to clarify the policy on gallonage remaining with the land when houses or businesses on the land have been burned or torn down. Montello stated that any gallons purchased and paid in full will stay with the land. Howes and Krzeminski agreed that a current wastewater permit will need to be on file when they go to rebuild.

Krzeminski reported that a recent communication with the Town and a real estate broker found that a property had paid for gallonage in 2011 for a 4-bedroom home. Currently the property is listed by the Town as an 8-bedroom inn. There is a wastewater permit on file stating that they were on septic but would need to hook up to North Branch if the system failed. There were some questions as to whether they were on septic or hooked up to North Branch. Montello called the previous owner who also owns the abutting property. It was clarified that it was still septic but may be failing. Krzeminski will reach out to Health officer of the town and see how they want to proceed. The property was never added to the commitments list, and it was agreed that since gallonage for 4 bedrooms was paid in full, it needs to be added at the gallonage the wastewater permit states.

Westby adjourned the meeting at 11:20 am.

Respectfully submitted,



Helen Krzeminski, Assistant Clerk

The next meeting of NBFD# will be on November 12, 2025, at 10:00 am

Posted: North Branch Fire District #1 Wastewater Treatment Facility building, Administration Building and Dover Library