

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@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, March 13, 2024

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

Members Present: Steve Montello and Ken Westby. Jon Prial and Robert Stone
attended via Zoom.

Also Present: Deana Covieo-Clarke, Helen Krzeminski and Kevin Palmer. Mario
Campora and James Valente attended via Zoom.

Public Comments: Mario Campora addressed the Prudential Committee about the recent
invoice that was sent to him, for unmetered years of service. An explanation was given to
him, by Ken Westby, on how the figures were calculated. He indicated that he felt the
fees were exceptionally high, some possible occupancy errors on the invoices and that the
oversight on their part was unintentional. He was told that they would discuss the account
in executive session and that ultimately, the board would need two years of history and he
would have to file with the Board of Abatement, for a hearing, on any disputed charges.

Minutes: Montello made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 14, 2024,
Regular meeting. Seconded by Prial. Motion passed.

Update of East Track Property: Montello reported that he had been in contact with the
parties involved to develop in Wilmington and expanding the Fire District. There are two
possible places for the property involved to hook into North Branch.

Review of Monthly Updates: Covieo-Clarke and Krzeminski updated the Prudential
Committee on customer data, meters, AR/billing, and contracts. North Branch has 19 non-
communicating meters. Five hand read meters still need to be replaced, but all radio read
meters have been replaced. The remaining have different issues, either needing to be
activated or an error that needs to be addressed.

Chief Operator's Report: Howes submitted the following report:
Operations

- Amy Pritcher has said that she would like us to take over her private collection
system and pump station on Antler Loop as she want to move. I told her to put the
request in writing. She stated she would email it to me and I have yet to see it.
- The Town is paving Handle Road from Tannery RD to the North Access RD and
also Snow Vidda Loop. There are 36 manholes in this area, but once snow
completely melts, we will get a count on how many will need paving rings we

actually need. I got a quote on 20 which currently cost \$3372 just so we have an idea of cost.

- Feb 28 – 29th we had a power outage lasting roughly 18.5 hrs. We ran a portable generator at The Ellis pumpstation to keep it flowing and had a portable gas pump running to pump from our small pond to our big pond to keep it from overflowing. We were barely keeping up with the flow with the pump and our flows were not high. The gas pump is too small for medium to high flows and in the event it (even a bigger pump) had a problem we would have had big problems. This is the third large event we had in the past year with the two big rainstorms this summer. This has identified a huge problem that I feel needs to be addressed as these events are happening more frequently. I recommend we look at different backup generator options for the facility. We should at minimum have power to our pond transfer pump station as that is the critical item. Buildings heat/water and whole plant should also be investigated as options to get a good cost/benefit ratio. It may be reasonable to have whole plant rather than a few items as to the cost of other components needing to be purchased, installed, and rewiring of items that would be required. I'd like to hire the electrical engineer that worked on our last project to come investigate the needs and come up with what's needed for each option.

Montello added that he had been working with Howes to get bids on adding generators to the Operations and Administration buildings. He also noted that operations will be lowering finishing pond to remove any built-up sludge and make repairs on liner, this summer.

Treasurer's Report: Westby reported that some of the treasury investments will mature at the end of the month. He stated that 100 to 200 thousand will be kept for accounts payable and the rest will be reinvested. He stated North Branch is slightly over budget for administrative costs due to the third-party audits being done, currently for previous years. Covio-Clark said that the audits should be completed within the next 30 days. Westby reported that there is 350,000 dollars in excess income, currently, and should be no deficit at the end of the year.

New Business: Westby reported that the lawsuit brought against North Branch by Tom Ferrazza was dismissed. He announced that with Stone's expiring term and two recent resignations, North Branch will be following State statute. A special town meeting will be warned. Montello made a motion to warn a Special Town Meeting on April 30 to reduce the number of board members to three (with three-year staggered terms) from the current 5-member board. Seconded by Prial. Motion passed.

Montello reported that he had called Adams Farm to get a decision on the offer of the North Branch property that is adjacent to them. There has been no response from them. Westby reported that he and Montello, members of the Town of Dover planning commission and Laura Sabilia had met to discuss what would need to be done to have

North Branch run a public water supply system. Sabilia will investigate funding for a feasibility study. Westby stated that this would most likely be state funded and will take about three years to get the report. Prial asked if it would be a different entity with different borders making North Branch Fire District two different districts. Montello stated that this would be considered in the feasibility study.

Westby reported that there had been work done on those customer accounts who have gone over their allotted gallonage, on peak weeks, by 300%. There will be an excessive use charge for each gallon over their allotment and for the number of days they went over. It will be fifty cents per gallon they were over and fifty dollars each day they went over. These charges will be on the Spring bill going out on May 1, 2024. Final approval of adding these charges will be done at the April Regular PC meeting.

Executive Session: Montello made a motion to go into executive session at 10:45, to discuss legal and personnel matters. Seconded by Stone. Motion passed. The board came out of Executive session at 11:05.

Decisions: None

Westby adjourned the meeting at 11:07.

Respectfully submitted,

Helen Krzeminski

Helen Krzeminski

Assistant Clerk

The next, regular meeting of NBFD#1's Prudential Committee is April 10, 2024, 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