

**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, February 14, 2024

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

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

Also Present: Deana Covieo-Clarke, Bart Howes and Helen Krzeminski, Angelo Poulos and James Valente attended via Zoom.

Public Comments: None

Minutes: Prial made a motion to approve the minutes of the December 13, 2023, Regular meeting. Seconded by Montello. Motion passed.

VL002: addressing layout of new construction and charges imposed by Nbfd at closing. After discussion, Montello made a motion to invoice Poulos for one additional bedroom. Seconded by Edwards. Motion passed. Nbfd records will now show that the property has 4 bedrooms and a loft.

Letters: Adam's offer on Wilmington property. Montello made a motion to have the chairman, Ken Westby, sign a contract on behalf of the Prudential Committee, should the Adam's family come to an agreeable negotiation. Prial asked that the Committee to not consider less than \$85, 000 in initial possible agreement. Edwards seconded the motion. Motion passed.

A letter was sent by the Windham County Conservation District asking if North Branch would be interested in a site visit to assess participation in a river corridor easement program. The Prudential Committee was not interested in participating in the project at this time.

An email was read from Lynn Bucossi and Allison Kimball stating that they are moving forward with the next steps of the East Track proposed build, in Wilmington, to have them included in the North Branch Fire District. Montello added that he had spoken with individuals on Upper and Lower Highlands roads, who were interested in hooking into North Branch's sewer lines. He added that Howes had found 42 houses along Blue Brook Road that could be hooked into North Branch. Howes will be working on obtaining numbers of possible hook-ups on Upper and Lower Highlands Road.

Montello stated that North Branch should meet with an engineer, for the scope of work involved, in extending the sewer lines to these areas. Prial suggested that North Branch

investigate other target areas that might be easier to hook up. Montello suggested the Valley View area.

Approve offer of settlement regarding the lawsuit related to terms of office of the Prudential Committee: moved to executive session.

Review of Monthly Updates: Covieo-Clarke and Krzeminski updated the Prudential Committee on customer data, meters, AR/billing, and contracts. North Branch has 20 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. Prial asked if customers were taking advantage of the ACH payment option, which has no fee. Krzeminski stated that when customers call, this option is pointed out to them. Prial suggested adding a line item on the next bill, explaining this benefit. Montello stated that North Branch's available capacity is at 53%. Krzeminski updated the committee on the current contract with Boulder Ridge.

Treasurer's Report: Westby reported that there was \$118,000 in revenues of hookup fees in the last 7 months of this fiscal year. He noted there was \$110,000 in uncategorized revenues, which was the refunds from Health Equity, this fiscal year, that covered a period of years of unrefunded funds. He stated that revenues are very close to expenditures as of this month and that the budget was in good shape.

Master Meter Update: Montello reported that he had spoken to Lane Plumbing about installing the individual meters at Kingswood. He stated that he had a test with the new e-series, ultrasonic meters at Sundance, since they were having problems with clogging at the well house, using the disc meter. He asked the PC if they would agree that North Branch only buy these new meters for future installations. After discussion on cost and effectiveness, it was agreed that the new meters would be a better option. Westby asked Howes to get a count on the number of meters and endpoints that are currently in stock and to investigate if they can be returned for a credit. Howes said he will order 160 of the ultrasonic meters, with 113 being reserved for Kingswood. Montello asked to get dates on delivery as he had to schedule the installation with the plumber. Prial reported that he had clarified the master meter charges with Grand Summit and Rich Werner, who manages some of the properties who will be seeing the charge, next fall. A reminder of those Fall charges will be sent with the Spring bill.

Bear's Crossing/Fire Marshal occupancy: Covieo-Clarke had questions from residents as to their units which have an 8-person occupancy according to the fire marshal and if that gives them 8 sleeping spaces (or 4 bedrooms) allocation with North Branch. Montello explained that the occupancy code for the fire marshal is based on 200 square feet per person. If your unit is 1600 square feet, that would allow 8 people in the unit. This has been brought to the attention of the fire marshal due to the number of Airbnb's in the area. This does not change the allocation of gallonage, from North Branch, for the units.

SH034 Rebuild: Covieo-Clarke stated that when she contacted the new property owners of a home that had burned down in 2020, they indicated that they already had started construction on the new house. North Branch was not notified and only the Town of Dover had issued a permit. Covieo-Clarke asked how North Branch can improve the communication with the town in these cases since it is important the footprint of the

home has not changed. Montello said he would bring it up at the next Town Zoning board meeting.

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

Operations

- Mt Snow is replacing the spillway culvert at Snow Lake. All of their options will require both the gravity sewer and force main from our pumpstation to be relocated. I will reiterate that they are responsible for purchasing and operating everything for bypassing all the flows and that the pumpstation cannot be turned off for long.
- I received a quote on a spare spray pump for \$11,930 with a 12-14 week wait. I recommend that this be purchased. Lead times on equipment have made it vital to have spares on hand.

Montello made a motion to allow Howes to purchase the spare spray pump for \$11,930. Seconded by Edwards. Motion passed.

- The warrantied spray pump has arrived and has been installed.
- I ordered a replacement pump for PS#3 at a cost of \$2198 which handles our onsite sewage and liquid from the sludge centrifuge.
- One of the electric motors on the West Clarifier is starting to sound like it will fault soon. We have 4 of these exact motors in service, I ordered two at a total cost of \$906 so that we can replace the one and have a spare.

Water meters

- I recommend we no longer buy the disc meters and instead go with the e series ultrasonic. They do not require a water filter prior to the meter and cannot clog. The 1" e series is roughly \$30 cheaper and also will save the homeowner money for not paying to have a filter installed. The ¾" is about \$78 more expensive but should save the homeowner money in the end by not having a filter installed. If agreeable, I will save our existing inventory of disc meters and registers for repairs on existing installations until we run out. All new construction will get e series and once we run out of parts repairs will be swapped to e series.
- I recommend we do not do any more cell head swaps on the old radio head meters. The meters with the radio heads are on are now 10-17 years old. The original reason we did that was the meters were new and that is no longer the case. I recommend they should have a plumber swap out the meters and install a new cell head.

Prial wanted to confirm that North Branch is allowed to charge customers for new meters if the current one is not working or outdated. It was confirmed that it is in our ordinance, that North Branch can charge the customer for those meters.

Uncommitted Reserve: We have 251,120 gallons remaining to sell. That means we have used 47% of our capacity and have 53% remaining to sell.

NORTH BRANCH FIRE DISTRICT #1
STATE REPORT OF UNCOMMITTED RESERVE CAPACITY

Disposal Capacity 475,000 GPD

DATE	DISPOSAL CAPACITY GPD	AVG DAILY FLOW GPD	COMMITTED RESERVE GPD	UNCOMMITTED RESERVE GPD	% of Capacity Used	% of Capacity Remaining
01/11 - 12/11	475,000	161,546	160,732	152,722	68%	32%
01/12 - 12/12	475,000	146,343	160,732	167,925	65%	35%
01/13 - 12/13	475,000	142,020	160,732	172,248	64%	36%
01/14 - 12/14	475,000	162,584	160,732	151,684	68%	32%
01/15 - 12/15	475,000	134,699	160,732	179,569	62%	38%
01/16 - 12/16	475,000	129,355	66,648	278,997	41%	59%
01/17 - 12/17	475,000	169,540	83,664	221,796	53%	47%
01/18 - 12/18	475,000	180,238	53,610	241,152	49%	51%
01/19 - 12/19	475,000	156,649	53,991	264,360	44%	56%
01/20 - 12/20	475,000	156,508	50,301	268,191	44%	56%
01/21 - 12/21	475,000	157,479	52,797	264,724	44%	56%
01/22 - 12/22	475,000	155,690	40,437	278,873	41%	59%
01/23 - 12/23	475,000	185,463	38,417	251,120	47%	53%

Old Business: Charges for those who did not have meters for years. Westby presented an analysis of 13 customers who were connected to North Branch for several years, but never had a meter. He presented four different options for back charging these customers. Prial made a motion to approve back charges at 25% of gallonage allocated to property, 8% penalty, 12% interest, and a flat \$800.00 fine for not complying with North Branch’s ordinance. Seconded by Montello. Motion passed unanimously.

New Business: The Abatement Hearing was set for April 23, 2024, at 6:00 PM. The Annual Meeting will be held on June 12, 2024 at 10:00.

Executive Session: Montello made a motion to go into executive session at 11:10, to discuss legal and personnel matters. Seconded by Edwards. Motion passed. The board came out of Executive session at 12:00.

Decisions: Montello stated that the Prudential Committee will accept the resignation of Peter Edwards, Jon Prial and Scott Stien, effective May 9, 2024.

Montello made a motion to increase pay of all staff members by 3.2% for 2024. Edwards seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Westby adjourned the meeting at 12:02.

Respectfully submitted,

Helen Krzeminski

Helen Krzeminski

Assistant Clerk

The next, regular meeting of Nbfd#1’s Prudential Committee is March 13, 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