

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 12, 2022.

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

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

**Also Present:** Deana Covieo-Clarke, Bartholomew Howes, Helen Krzeminski, Scott Stein.

**Public Comments:** None.

**Minutes:** Stone made a motion to approve the minutes of September 14, 2022, regular meeting. Seconded by Westby. Motion passed.

**Monthly Updates:** Covieo-Clark and Krzeminski updated the board on customer data, meter installation/replacement, billing, and contracts. It was discussed that the ordinance will need to be updated to designate an enforcement officer to serve civil penalties to those not in compliance.

Montello suggested having a title search done and notifying the banks of the properties that have ongoing delinquent balances.

The Prudential Committee discussed making in person inspections on lodging and dining establishments as many have increased their seating capacity recently. Some have not responded to the notification that was sent out to update their records.

Montello asked to get the monthly updates sent to the board members so they can review before the monthly meeting.

**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. A meeting will be scheduled with both companies, at the same time, to work on these issues. The intention is to have these programs work as intended to and to alleviate the need for time-consuming, data entries.

**Invoice Cloud Update:** Covieo-Clark, Prial and Krzeminski are still working with Invoice Cloud on the implementation process and training. The "Go-Live" date is still set for November 1, 2022. Prial tested the IVR system (pay by phone). He said all is set.

**Treasurers Report:** Covieo-Clark gave A/R report under updates. Westby added that he checked the P&L and North Branch is within the budget for this fiscal year.

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

- I have two quotes for crawler style sewer camera with the accessories needed for our size of sewer pipes. Insight Vision for the sewer camera with accessories totaling \$37,713 and USA Blue Book for \$52,079 sewer camera with accessories. I'd like to purchase the camera now from Insight, as it has a 6-month lead time.

Westby made a motion to approve the purchase of the camera equipment from Insight at a total of \$37,713. Seconded by Stone. All were in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

- I met with VT Dam Safety on 10/5 regards to my plan to fill in the riprap on the dam and/or let some of the vegetation grow in. They stated they will review the site along with my plan and get back to me.
- Monadnock Fence stated they would start work on replacing the fence and front gate on 10/11.
- Champlin Associates came down on 10/4 to install our recirculation pump in the closed loop reactor. The RT 100 pump is back ordered until December. Depending on the weather, the pump may not get installed until spring.
- Currently we test for free and total chlorine residuals in our spray twice a day. I have received verbal approval from Bryan Harrington at the Indirect Discharge program to modify our monitoring to test only for total chlorine and I've also sent off a permit amendment request to test only once a day. The cost of this amendment is \$240.

#### Capital Budget

- Our capital plan currently has NBFD paying for the 20 year scheduled meter replacements at a cost of \$744,194 in 2039 and \$743,150 in 2040. I've asked for updated quotes since everything costs exponentially more. Without all the quotes in, this figure is now \$793,979 each year. Is the plan still to have NBFD pay for these or are the individuals paying for their own setup when we mandate the meters to be changed in 2038 & 2039?

It was decided to review the budget, options for replacing the meters in the future and that no determination would be made, today, as to whom would be responsible for the cost of those replacements.

Montello asked Howes if the Operations department was fully staffed currently.

Howes replied that they were fully staffed.

**Old Business:** Krzeminski stated that new customers questioned North Branch's policy on only having Vermont licensed plumbers install new meters, since there seems to be a shortage of those in Southern Vermont and delaying having meters installed. Howes pointed out that because North Branch is a public wastewater system, homeowners are not included in the State exemption and need to follow the guidelines set by VT Division of Public Safety.

Covieo-Clark stated that the solar company, Opal, who we send our payments to, wanted to set up automatic payment withdrawal. It was decided to wait until the new allocations of energy credits was determined with the other entities involved.

**New Business:** It was decided to start sending a minimum sewer bill to the Historical Society. It has been over a year and North Branch has not had a response from them to gain access to their property to assess if they have a meter or not.

**Executive Session:** Westby made a motion to go into executive session, to discuss personnel and legal issues at 10:45. Seconded by Prial. Motion passed. The Prudential Committee came out of executive session at 1055.

**Decisions:** Stone made a motion to increase the hourly rate of the Treasurer of North Branch Fire District to \$25.00/hr. Seconded by Edwards. Passed unanimously. Montello adjourned the meeting at 11:00.

Respectfully submitted,

*Helen Krzeminski*  
Helen Krzeminski  
Assistant Clerk

The next, regular meeting of NBFD#1's Prudential Committee is on November 9, 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](http://www.northbranchfiredistrict.com).