

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, April 12, 2023.

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

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

**Also Present:** Bartholomew Howes, Helen Krzeminski and Peter Mola. Robert Stone and Pete Edwards were absent.

**Public Comments:** Peter Mola asked to review his case regarding the property that he is renovating at 1 Valley View Road. It was decided that he will purchase a meter from North Branch to receive the minimum bill, rather than dig up and cap the line while he is renovating the property. A payment plan can be set up for this meter with the Treasurer.

**Victor Alemany, DM010 1 vs. 2 bedrooms:** Alemany was not present, but Howes wanted to state that that North Branch follows the state guidance, for residential properties, as a two-bedroom minimum.

Prial wanted to make a comment that all of charges are broken down, into a pie chart, on the North Branch website, to answer a request from a member of the public from a previous meeting.

**Minutes:** Prial made a motion to accept the minutes of March 8, 2023. Seconded by Westby. Motion passed.

**Review/Approve Annual Meeting Warning and Articles:** Prial made a motion to change the term limits from one year to three-year for the Clerk position. Seconded by Westby. Motion passed. Westby made a motion to approve the Annual Meeting Warning and Articles with the clerk position change. Seconded by Prial. Motion passed.

Petitions and consent forms need to be filled in and returned to North Branch by 5:00 pm on May 22, 2023, to be a candidate on the ballot.

**Review of monthly updates:** Krzeminski updated the board tracking of customer data, meters, accounts receivable and contracts.

- Approximately 220 meter cell heads to replace that North Branch does not have communication with, for May's billing.
- Montello stated that the remaining customers who still had hand or radio read meters need to be addressed as it has been an ongoing problem for many years, over five, for most of them. Westby made a motion to have James Valente send a letter to these customers to comply within 90 days or receive penalties afforded to

North Branch Fire District under our current ordinance Seconded by Prial. Motion passed.

- Krzeminski reported there are 8 accounts that are past due 180 days. Montello asked to get an update from Valente on letters sent out to these customers.
- Krzeminski reported that documentation has been found to confirm the contract for 9 lots at Someday Properties (2016) was paid in full and asked to have those funds, \$51,000, transferred from the Priority account to the operations account.

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

#### Operations

- Two spare pumps for MT Snow pumpstation have arrived.
- One Spare pump for the School pumpstations and the parts to rebuild the second have arrived.
- Our computer that reads radio frequency meters has broken, so we are not capable of reading them remotely for billing. I have swapped CDMA and radio heads that were MT Snow from the list. That leaves 11 that we can swap to cellular when homeowners grant us access.
- We have numerous small items like portable pumps, hoses, portable generators that were set to be purchased this year totaling approximately \$13,000. I plan to purchase all this after the meeting to have them for spring.
- I called Insight and the sewer camera is still on schedule to be here for May. I plan to purchase risers to bring all the manholes from the school down up to grade while we are camera inspecting it.
- Badger never sent us the last shipment of 240 endpoints under the CDMA replacement program. So, we do not currently have enough to swap everything. I am working with them to get these shipped. The expected cost is approximately \$14,800.
- We should be purchasing an additional 48 endpoints & registers to have some available for new construction/places without meters and to have spares for 4G endpoints that stop communicating. While the 4G's will be covered under warranty, we should have some on hand to avoid large delays as they have to go back to Badger before being covered. The expected cost is approximately \$16,400.
- One of our spray pumps has faulted and needs replacing. It was scheduled for replacement next year. I have contacted our sales rep for a quote and lead time.
- Howes received quotes back for repairing and painting the Administrations building. He suggested North Branch go with Sprague Painting for painting and SMR to replace the rotten wood. Prial made a motion to approve \$4,200.00 for Sprague to paint the building and \$10,300 for SMR to replace rotting wood with synthetic wood. Seconded by Westby. Motion passed.
- Montello asked Howes for the capital plan update. Howes responded he will have it so that it can be approved in the budget for next meeting.

- Howes stated that North Branch's engineer inspection will be next week.

**Treasurer's Report:**

- Westby stated that there is 2.3 million in cash plus receivables, with \$800,000 being in cash beyond the capital reserve requirement. Westby reported the budget is in a better place than it was a year ago with expenditures lower. He anticipates that North Branch will be able to maintain the \$25.00/1000 gallon rate next year.
- Westby and Montello are still working with Fidelity Bank to set up the investment accounts.

**Ordinance Update:** Krzeminski stated the amended ordinance has been in effect since April 9, 2023.

**Old Business: Peak Week Charges:** Prial reviewed the trial that he, Westby and Krzeminski had been working on for excessive use. He noted that North Branch was only able to use one of the peak weeks due to the non-communicating cell heads. Prial's recommendation was to collect only the customers that were 200% or more over allotted gallonage. Prial made a motion to charge all those customers who went over their gallonage allotment by 200% or more, \$50.00 for each day over and \$00.50 for each gallon over, for this May billing. Seconded by Westby. Motion passed. Letters will go with bills to explain these charges and future excess use charges.

**New Business:** The amended ordinance now enables our appointed enforcement officers, Steve Montello and Deana Covieo-Clark to issue civil citations for ordinance violations.

**Executive Session:** None

Montello adjourned the meeting at 10:58.

*Helen Krzeminski*  
Respectfully Submitted,

Helen Krzeminski  
Assistant Clerk

The next, regular meeting of NBFD#1's Prudential Committee is on May 10, 2023, 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).