

**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 8, 2023.

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, Ken Westby, and Jon Prial.

Also Present: Deana Covio-Clarke, Bartholomew Howes, Helen Krzeminski and James Valente.

Public Comments: None

Minutes: Prial made a motion to approve the minutes of January 11, 2023, regular meeting. Seconded by Stone. Motion passed.

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

- Prial suggested we keep an updated Excel sheet of emails so that Randy Capitani, our contractor providing web support services, has it for distribution of new information, particularly access to InvoiceCloud.
- There will need to be a meeting set up between InvoiceCloud, North Branch and Muni Smart to find out why some billing aspects are not being integrated between the two systems.
- There are still approximately 500 cell heads to replace before April. It was discussed to replace all the ones that can be accessed through the property managers first, then schedule with individual homeowners who want to work with North Branch directly.
- Prial made a motion to hire an administrative assistant for 20 hours/week at \$20.00/hr. Seconded by Westby. Motion passed.
- James Valente will send North Branch a list of letters he has sent out for delinquent accounts.

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

Operations

- Pump#2 at Ellis PS had a seal failure alarm. We replaced the pump with our spare and ordered another at a cost of \$5567.85. This pump was sent out for inspection and a repair quote.

- I will continue monitoring our pond levels, but it cannot reach 21’ without triggering a dam safety violation. If holding pond continues to trend filling every week, I will have the crew spray extended hours to help mitigate getting to that level. We currently have approximately 6’ and approximately 8.5M gallons before hitting our limit.
- I hired an electrician to come wire the new sump pump and RAS pump VFD.
- Pump # 1 at Mt Snow pumpstation has a short and needed replacement, using our last spare on 2/6. On 2/7 pump # 3 shorted and faulted our control wiring leaving us with only two working pumps in a triplex pumpstation. I have two replacements on rush order at a cost of \$19,600, with no expected arrival time yet. I am bringing the two shorted pumps over to Keene for inspection and possible rebuild. Champlin Associates can down with a new duplex panel at a cost of \$9,073.93. We probably want to rent or buy a large portable pump for Presidents Week at a minimum. I will email costs around when I can get them.
- I have a trade in/direct replacement quote from Milton Cat for a new backhoe totaling \$105,000 after giving us \$15,000 for trade in. Estimated lead time is 9 months, could be longer he said. They have yet to respond with estimates on repair. I recommend we purchase the new one to get it started with such an extended lead time. Montello stated that the backhoe was not on the replacement list until 2026 and would like to move forward with the repairs.
- I contacted Guardian Water & Power, about their program and its interoperability with ours. They did send me a PDF report but, have yet to send a CSV file for me send it to Harris for an estimate on creating a custom import into our billing. I have asked if they can do custom reports like individual daily usages from Dec 20 – Jan 10 and Feb 11 – 28. This covers a good range of the two peak holiday weeks as it moves around in the weekly calendar. Their reply was “Guardian does not offer automatic reports that include individual daily usage. If a report is needed, a request would have to be made to our support team for that information”. I’m of the opinion that their setup will not work for monitoring leaks and peak usages as we would like.
- During that arctic blast our clarifiers iced over and broke some of the plastic skirting. I have contacted the manufacturer to inquire on what is needed for repair parts and a cost estimate. In the meantime, we will bandage it back together in the hopes it doesn’t get worse.
- 2022 Uncommitted Reserve = Gallons left to sell

DISPOSAL CAPACITY GPD	AVG DAILY INFLUENT FLOW GPD	COMMITTED RESERVE GPD	UNCOMMITTED RESERVE GPD
475,000	155,690	40,437	278,873

- Krzeminski asked what the warranty is on our meters and cell heads. Howes said he would contact Badger to clarify the warranty.

Treasurer's Report: Westby reviewed the Profit & Loss and Budget which is now on an accrual basis.

- Westby stated that the draft of the 2021 audit from Love Cody & Company will back this week, with all the changes he recommended. He stated that the 2022 audit will be starting in June. Steve Love will be retiring in June of 2023 and that North Branch needs to seek a new firm, who specializes in municipalities, to continue its audits.
- Operation's budget will need to be approved in May.
- Health Equity will be reimbursing \$81,717.19, 30-60 days from the runout date (for claims) of March 31, 2023 for the 2021 plan for former employees. They also will be reimbursing \$64,410.93 for unused funds from the 2022 plan, which included roll over from 2021, for current employees. As of the 2022 plan, there will be only reimbursement of unused funds, no rollover into the 2023 plan.
- Westby stated that he is still working on redistributing North Branch's solar credits.

Ordinance Update: Prial said that the ordinance has been reviewed and changes made. Prial made a motion to approve the revised ordinance so that it can be posted for review by the public. Seconded by Stone. Passed unanimously.

Old Business: Monthly minimum vs. access fee. Prial stated after doing an analysis of Fall and Spring bills, only 2.5 % of those in the Fall and 6.7% of those in the Spring receiving a minimum charge were full time residents of the district. He felt that the current system of charging a minimum bill verse only for actual gallonage used, was equitable to all customers and necessary to maintain the treatment plant.

- Prial wanted to address the customers who have master meters and those who use the master meter system. North Branch will be analyzing the number of customers who utilize those master meters to see if it would be fair and equitable to charge an access fee.
- Montello asked Krzeminski to have a list of the master metered properties available for March's meeting.

New Business: Addressing homeowners who have never had meter installed.

Montello stated that the administrative staff had found 18 homes that have been hooked up to North Branch but never had a meter installed. It was discussed that an overt effort needs to be made to find any more, rectify the problem and make it publicly known the ordinance must be followed. Possible legal ramifications, for non-compliant customers, will be discussed in executive session.

- Covieo-Clarke asked for clarification on a recent inspection that was allotted to a commercial property but now is residential. When the property is renovated, do they can sell back gallonage that will not be needed. It was discussed that it is not the policy, at the time, for North Branch to "buy back" unused gallonage. It was

noted that there needs to be considerable time spent to agree on what should be on the commitments list for available gallonage for certain properties and situations.

- Covieo-Clarke informed the board that she had done an inspection report for the sale of the Sanpete property. The Inn recently announced their opening and have been non-compliant in replacing their meter or requesting another inspection, as was in the report for closing. A certified letter stating the non-compliances will be sent to the new owners.
- Covieo-Clarke updated the board on the last meeting with Badger meter and the options for moving forward with their ongoing issue of not being able to send North Branch reads for approximately 400 meters. It was decided to have them do a complete reboot of data and archive the history of the meters. It will still be accessible to North Branch, but going forward, the history will only show from the reboot, on Eye on Water, to the customers. This will be completed before April 1, 2023.

Executive Session: Prial made a motion to go into executive session, to discuss personnel and legal issues at 11:30. Seconded by Stone. Motion passed. The Prudential Committee came out of executive session at 12:30.


Decisions: The board authorizes James Valente to do the following:

- Apply for a tax rebate from the Town of Wilmington, for the property owned by North Branch, in Wilmington.
- To send a letter to Vail Properties to see if they are interested in purchasing the lot currently owned by North Branch.
- To draft a letter to homeowners who are non-compliant with their meters.
- To request a list from the state of all permitted septic systems within the Fire District.

Prial made a motion to modify the North Branch Fire District's employee handbook to add that employees shall be allowed to take PTO in 4-hour increments. Seconded by Stone. Passed unanimously.

Montello adjourned the meeting at 12:35.

Respectfully submitted,


Helen Krzeminski
Assistant Clerk

The next, regular meeting of NBFDF#1's Prudential Committee is on March 15, 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.