

**BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS' MEETING
HYBRID MEETING MINUTES
March 21, 2023
7:00 P.M.
CHERRY VALLEY & ROCHDALE WATER DISTRICT**

I. CALL TO ORDER - The meeting called to order by Chairman Bergin @ 7:00 pm

The following were in attendance:

Kevin Bergin, Chairman	1 in person subscriber
Arthur E.J. Levesque, Commissioner – call in	0 online subscriber
Benjamin Morris, Superintendent	
Robert H. Lemieux, Sr., Commissioner	
Jennifer Wood, Treasurer – call in & recorded minutes.	
Cheryl Balkus, Clerk - absent	

- II. District Member Forum** – Per Subscriber Buteau was listening at the Select Board meeting they mentioned a meeting that was supposed to be held with respect to hydrant replacement. They were going to go over a letter that was signed by Michael Knox and people have questions on the hydrants are not being fixed and that they can turn to the water district? I recommend you rely on the LCAC tape. Per Chairman Bergin did not see the meeting and cannot comment what was said however he and Superintendent Morris did meet with the Fire Chief, Hillcrest, Leicester Water Superintendent, member of the select board and the Town Administrator. We were discussing exactly who does what where and why in regards to the fire hydrants. We in the CVRWD when we notice they are out of service they guys get the parts go out and fix them the town supply the parts we fix them. The bigger issue was more a staffing issue with the other two districts for them to get them fixed. The prior Superintendent and a prior Town Administrator and it was a statement not an agreement it basically outlined we do this, and you do that. That letter has been updated and sent out to all the districts with David Genereaux Town Administrator signature. It was a copy of the old letter just updated letter and dates and people. There has been no change in the way we do things. Per subscriber Greg Buteau back in the day when he was on the advisory board and believes there was a separate budget item that the town for parts for the fire hydrants. It is important to have working hydrants. Per Chairman Bergin it was not a letter from Mike Knox it was a letter to Mike Knox back in 2014. The Fire Chief did provide a list of the fire hydrants that were out of service we only had two that have been addressed already. Per Superintendent Morris we do own some hydrants that are in the North Oxford area, maybe 15 at most. The other districts are outside of my scope. Commissioner Lemieux asked, what does this mean the town provides parts? What is this situation? Per Superintendent Morris it is the understanding that the town owns the physical hydrants in the town of Leicester but if there is a problem with the hydrants, we reach out to the town they provide the parts, and we fix the hydrant because it is attached to our water system. A lot of the time the highway will provide the excavation if they can. So, the parts are provided by the town through the fire department, and we provide the labor. We flush the hydrants and put pressure tester on it make sure the valves work we track that on a sheet if we have the part in stock we try and fix it right away. If we do not have it the town will order it for us we will contact the fire chief if it is out of service we put a bag over it. If they get broken its typically a part if it is out for a long time it is usually, we are waiting for an insurance company to pay for it because it was damaged in an accident. Commissioner Lemieux is the fire department prepared in case a hydrant is out of service? Per the Superintendent yes there are protocols in place. There were no questions or comments from the commissioners, the listening or attending audience. Commissioner Lemieux motions to suspend the district member forum. Seconded by Chairman Bergin. All in favor. Approved. The district member forum ended in 13:54 Seconds.

III. APPROVE MINUTES

- A. March 7, 2023, Meeting Minutes** - Commissioner Levesque motions to approve the March 7, 2023, meeting minutes. Seconded by Commissioner Lemieux. All in favor. Approved.

IV. FINANCE

A. Approve March 13, 2023, Warrants – Commissioner Lemieux motions to approve the March 13, 2023, warrants. Seconded by Chairman Bergin. All in favor. Approved.

B. Approve March 20, 2023, Warrants- Commissioner Levesque motions to approve the March 20, 2023, warrants. Seconded by Commissioner Lemieux. All in favor. Approved.

C. Draft Budget – Per the Superintendent not a lot of changes. We have cracked down a lot of the numbers for electricity we have revised the amount in the budget to reflect just the water portion this is 70% of the electric consumption for the office part. Everything else stayed the same. The only line item that may change is the accounting line item by next meeting. Treasurer Wood just did our free cash calculation, and the State is no longer is going to accept the format that we do ours do it in. Our auditor company is not familiar enough to do the format the DOR needs. We reached out to three companies still waiting to hear back from two other companies. That is the goal I do not see it changing much but the accounting may go up a little bit. That is the only potential change I see right now. We have not seen any more invoices to change anything to give us more concrete numbers. Commissioner Lemieux is it Spinelli that we use? It sounds like the data needs to be done a different way so why can we not just take the numbers that Spinelli gave us and change it. Per Treasurer Wood the accounting now to be used is UMIS. She has attempted and above what she can do we need someone who specializes in this for the Department of Revenue as Spinelli unable to provide this. They were great to work with and the Commissioners also agreed.

Commissioner Lemieux stuck on payroll and the service agreement and need the most current one to understand. The stipend for on all coverage for the operators. Friday at 3pm we have to have someone on call for emergency – prior to well online they would watch SCADA and ensure no mechanical issues. Now coming Saturday more paperwork, consumptions, dosages and grab samples to ensure chemical feed working property, run chlorine tests matches and a phosphate reading and balance out may need flow setting change. When they go home well still runs till 8:30 at night. Ben prior to the well was \$300.00 and was approved in 2018 when we automated the interconnection with Worcester. Per Chairman Bergin prior to the operation before that it was manual and they had to turn the valve on/off. Per the Superintendent that was different being paid overtime and on call and it was changed to a flat rate of \$300.00 and is an 80/20 split with sewer. The response is now to alarms to the system and if unable to see why remotely needs to come in to investigate why the alarm. If more work involved such as broken pipe they are also paid time and half. The increase to \$350.00 covers for the extra time being spent for the added duties. The current way the time was being divided between the two operators and the Superintendent and with his current contract he is not paid when doing it and would like to change his contract to be compensated for it and it is in the budget. He is concerned that if he does not do the coverage and it falls on the two operators they will decide to leave, and the superintendent does not want to lose them. Per Chairman Bergin executive session will need to be set up for the Superintendents contract.

Subscriber Buteau asked about the City of Worcester line item. Per the Superintendent to be taken care of in his report.

Given the high usages staff has done their best at how much in electricity is used and asked about the possibility of having a separate meter installed. Per the superintendent with the costs to do this does not believe that we would see a quick return. Buteau agreed.

As for insurance Buteau feels that sewer should be paying an additional \$3,700.00 as it is a fairness issue.

Commissioner Levesque asked if we are voting to accept the budget now. Per Chairman Bergin we are not at this meeting.

V. ADMINISTRATION – Nothing to report.

- A. Tata & Howard Lead Service Line –** Per the Superintendent it has been changed to a grant program, the information has not been released but should have a formal board vote to have the authority to file. This is to put us a step ahead when the grant is available for when we can apply. The first plan was that it would be required to temporary borrow and this has since been removed. Commissioner Lemieux motions to authorize the submission of the authority to file and certify file and form to Tata & Howard so we can comply with this Mass DEP program for the lead pipes initiative. Seconded by Chairman Bergin. All in favor. Approved.

VI. OPERATIONS

A. Superintendent Report

Free cash certification amount approved for \$651,887.00 going into FY24.

Pumping more out of the well and increase in daily usage. Developments in Rochdale area and started looking at meter usage and added grow rooms at Vanguard. They were filling tanks, and this is where consumptions were going. That is why system usage saw this spike and why did not make the change to the City of Worcester line item.

Commissioner Lemieux asked does this put us at any risk for pressure issues if there were a fire. Per the Superintendent tank level stays consistent and would not affect pressure flow. We do not have a restriction with them, we are contracted with the City of Worcester 270,000 gpd and permit of the well is 118,000 gpd technically 388,000 gpd right now does not see it as detrimental. If there is an issue down the road with them, we will need to address it.

One Stop Grant – could be a 25% or 50% match and does not say if you need full amount to get the grant. We may have to allocate monies first and then get the reimbursement. Tata & Howard getting more information on this. The projects are in the \$1-\$3 million dollar range we are a small project, and we may be overlooked because it is so small of a project. Typically, they like to see tied to large developments. We will word it for our best avenue to go after and speak with our local representatives for assistance if need be.

Met with gentlemen at the former Carleton Woolen Mills. They are supposed to be closing on the property this week. They manufacture and do a lot of wood truss work for the Northeast. They are looking to renovate and get his business running. We addressed the issues that will be required to get water to the building. It is all in the preliminary stages right now.

VII. DATE OF NEXT MEETING – Commissioner Lemieux motions to hold the next meeting April 4 & April 18, 2023, at the Town hall if available. Reminder that the Hybrid meetings end as of March 31, 2023, unless it is extended. Seconded by Chairman Bergin. All in favor. Approved.

- A. ADJOURNMENT-** Commissioner Lemieux motions to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Commissioner Levesque. All in Favor. Approved. Meeting adjourned at 8:17 pm.

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