

**BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS' MEETING**  
**MEETING MINUTES**  
**April 18, 2023**  
**7:00 P.M.**  
**CHERRY VALLEY & ROCHDALE WATER DISTRICT**

**I. CALL TO ORDER** - The meeting called to order by Chairman Bergin @ 7:09 pm

The following were in attendance:

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

**II. District Member Forum** – Per Chairman Bergin he had asked the staff to come up with what the average bills were for the last few months. The average bill for the month of January \$84.16, February \$75.29, March \$76.16, April \$82.83. There were no further questions or comments from the commissioners or online. Commissioner Levesque motioned to suspend the forum. Seconded by Chairman Bergin. All in Favor. Approved. The district forum ended at two minutes and forty-five seconds.

**III. APPROVE MINUTES**

April 4, 2023, Meeting Minutes –Commissioner Lemieux motions to approve the April 4, 2023, meeting minutes. Seconded by Commissioner Levesque. Subscriber Buteau asked if he could ask what was written after we convened executive session. Chairman Bergin read section VIII of the minutes; (Is to vote on the contract as discussed. Commissioner Levesque motions to open meeting to vote on terms of any new or amended contract with Superintendent Morris. Seconded by Chairman Bergin. All in favor. Approved. The open meeting began at 8:37 pm. Also, present Subscriber Gregory Buteau. Per Chairman Bergin extensions to change of contract, clarifications as to be paid for the superintendent of sewer side and weekend coverage. Subscriber Buteau asked what the changes, conditions and clarifications are. Per Chairman Bergin informed Subscriber Buteau that he can make a request for the contract. Specifics have been given and numbers will need to be requested. Commissioner Levesque motioned to approve the contract with the changes, Seconded by Chairman Bergin. Commissioner Lemieux not in favor. Approved. Subscriber Buteau asked that his verbal request had been denied be added to the minutes. Commissioner Lemieux motions to approve the minutes have been presented. Commissioner Levesque seconded. All in favor. Approved.

**IV. FINANCE**

- A.** Approve April 10, 2023, Warrants – Commissioner Levesque motions to approve the warrants of April 10, 2023. Seconded by Chairman Bergin. All in Favor. Approved.
- B.** Approve April 14, 2023, Warrants - Commissioner Levesque motions to approve the warrants of April 14, 2023. Seconded by Chairman Bergin. All in Favor. Approved.
- C.** Budget Approval – Per Superintendent Morris nothing has changed since the next meeting tonight would be the last chance to make any changes. Overall, we did pay off a loan, so the bottom line of the budget does show a small decrease. Commissioner Lemieux asked if the budget has to pass with overall or majority vote. Chairman Bergin stated it has to be a majority vote. Arthur motions to approve the budget as presented.

Chairman Bergin Seconded. Commissioner Lemieux is not in favor. Chairman Bergin and Commissioner Levesque are in favor. Motion approved.

- D.** Annual Warrant Articles Approval – Per Superintendent Morris amendments to the warrants, nine articles in total and the first seven are the boiler point articles we have every year. Article eight is the lead service article and we are hoping to get a grant to fund this, but we still must put the money aside to apply for the grant. The goal is to just put the money aside and get the grant funding so we can return the money to free cash next year. Article nine is the Sargent St. water line project we are going to apply for a grant for this project as well but putting the money aside in case, we do not get it as this is an essential water main because a majority of our water still comes from the City of Worcester and if something happens we need to be able to still provide the water to the District. We can hold off on spending the money until we find out about the grant. Commissioner Levesque asked what is involved in this lead project. Per the Superintendent the first phase of the project is to get an inventory list by going through permits and drawings to find out what the material is in the house and service lines for all the customers we serve. The second is the verification process we must investigate to find out what the material is if we cannot find records. People can either allow us into their house to find out the material or we can dig up the yard to find out what the material is. The \$110,000 covers our engineering firm to go in and do this work so we do not have to worry about finding a way to get into people's houses as well as interfering with our day-to-day operation. We would be hiring Tata & Howard to do all the work and fill out all the State forms. Commissioner Levesque asked what happens if we find something that needs to be corrected. Superintendent Morris says that's another phase that we have not even investigated yet. That comes after this is all completed. The biggest challenge for us is our district bylaws state that the customers own the whole service line from the Main. Typically, where the lead would be is from the Main to the curb stop Superintendent Morris did look at our records from what he can find he does not think we have any. We could come across one or two goose necks which is a 3-foot piece of lead pipe. But typically, the town owns from the Main to the curb stop its easier for them to go out and just change out that line. We do not have that ability so we will be putting a lot on our customers to go out and fix it. Commissioner Levesque motions to approve the warrant articles as presented. Seconded by Chairman Bergin. All in favor. Approved.

- E.** Terminations – Per Superintendent Morris from the last meeting we let you know that we were starting termination and Chairman Bergin requested a list. We have a list for him to review. Last week we were up to 54 customers up for termination we are down to 38. Today we went out and blue doted and put notices on the doors of tenant properties to make them aware of the pending termination. We will go out tomorrow and start doing actual terminations. The termination list shows about \$55,000 in outstanding balance.

**V.** Administration

- A.** 12-month payment plan – Per Chairman Bergin stated they have before them a payment plan from April 4<sup>th</sup>. The plan starts on May 1<sup>st</sup> for twelve months. Everything appears it is in good order; they made their down payment on April 10<sup>th</sup>. Commissioner Levesque motions to approve. Seconded by Chairman Bergin. Commissioner Lemieux did not have a chance to vote. Motion Approved.
- B.** 2-4 Dale Ct Application – Per Superintendent Morris this is a duplex that has been abandoned for several years due to a fire. The water services had been terminated and the new owner was to redo the water line. The application is for the new water line, one renewal, its own meters. Commissioner Levesque motions to approve the application. Seconded by Chairman Bergin. All in Favor. Approved.

**C.** Tata & Howard Grant – Per Superintendent Morris from the prior meeting we were discussing the Rural and Small Town Grant. The MVP Grant would be for the engineering and design of the crossing of the brook on route 9 by Macs Auto. It would be a very comprehensive and detailed grant and feels this grant is a reach for us to get. He sat in on a meeting and the grant is more to fix the problem and not do a fix around for the problem. The problem would be the damn that is upstream which is not our territory. For Tata & Howard just to write the grant is \$4,600.00.

The Small Town Grant is for the Sargent Street Water Line project which is article nine on the annual warrant. Chairman Bergin commented that the warrant article is to put money aside in case we do not get the grant we will have the availability to use free cash to fund the project. For Tata & Howard to write the grant application for this would be about \$2,800.00. The Superintendent asked the board if we wanted to go after both grants or just one. They have a lot of the work already done to put the grant application together for Sargent St and easier where the route 9 crossing project they do not have any work done, would require a lot of site visits to write the 50–60-page document for the grant.

Subscriber Buteau commented that with the Sargent St grant we have done the design for its for construction. The Mac Auto grant is solely for money to get the design done not for the construction. Per Chairman Bergin we need to take one grant at a time for a vote. Commissioner Lemieux makes a motion to pay for the \$2,800.00 Sargent Street project Small Town Grant. Seconded by Commissioner Levesque. All in favor. Approved.

Per Chairman Bergin the Mac Auto crossing is \$4,600.00 to apply for a rural grant which by our Superintendent thinks it would be a stretch and it is strictly just for design not construction. Per Chairman Bergin he does not think it is in our best interest to spend money if it is a stretch and should put the money towards something else. Per Commissioner Lemieux he feels the same way. Commissioner Levesque votes in favor of the grant. Motion fails to go after the Rural grant for the Main St. crossing at Macs Auto.

**D.** Annual Water Use Restriction Notice – Per Superintendent Morris a motion and approval are needed to in act our annual restriction effective May. Commissioner Lemieux motions to approve the Annual Water Use Restriction. Seconded by Commissioner Levesque. All in Favor. Approved.

*Per Chairman Bergin that this has nothing to do with the water we purchase from the City of Worcester or from the water we pump from the Grindstone well. The restriction is due to Henshaw Pond and us still holding the drinking water license for it.*

## **VI.** Operations

### **A.** Superintendent Report –

Hydrant flushing began today we did 14 hydrants today and to do 14 tomorrow. We start at Cherry Valley in the Sargent Street area and worked our way down Main St. to Chapel St. Tomorrow we will be out do rest of Main St to Willow Hill down Henshaw St all the way back to the plant. After that we will start with the neighborhoods. We hope to be done with Cherry Valley Next Friday.

Rochdale will begin May 1<sup>st</sup> and it should take about 10 days.

Underwater Solutions was here doing the cleaning and inspection of the tanks. They had a few things noted on the inspection, they did exterior cleaning on the tanks on West St., changed out the gaskets and the screens that needed to be done. They had not been power washed since we had the tank cleaned so they had a lot of mildew built up on them. They did it all in about a day and half.

Trying to wrap up the CCR (Consumers' Confidence Report) that goes out as a notice in the June 1<sup>st</sup> bills.

Last week when we met with the contractor at 2-4 Dale Court who was doing the work to see how everything was being done. There is a sewer manhole between the buildings we found water coming into the manhole and found the service to 6-8 Dale Court was broken. We talked to them, and they have had low water pressure for a little while, so we ended up fixing that leak last Thursday night. We couldn't just cut and replace the line, we had to redo the service line. The owner of 6-8 was responsible for the service line portion. The district did have to pick up some of the cost of it because we wanted to make sure it is done the correct way. We sent off a copy of the bill to the customer for their portion of the bill.

The Water Annual Meeting is booked for May 18<sup>th</sup> at 7:30PM at the Leicester Town Hall.

Went back to look at what we purchased for water in 2021-2022. The first quarter of 2022 we purchased just under 14 million gallons and the first quarter in 2023 we purchased just under 11 million gallons, so our usage did go down from Worcester. When you factor in what we are pumping from the well as well for 2023 we would be close to 16 million gallons of water, so our consumption has gone up. The well is running great 60-65 gallons a day with potential to increase a little bit. Commissioner Lemieux asked regarding the amount purchased from Worcester and water generated by the well where the extra volume is going. Per Superintendent Morris we have one customer in Rochdale that was using 20,000 gallons a day in the month of February which has since settled down with a few spikes here and there. Superintendent Morris did talk to them and asked them to let us know when they are going to be using large amount of usage, so we know ahead of time. Commissioner Lemieux asked if we are charging them what it costs to produce the water. Superintendent Morris stated we are charging them the same rate as everyone else, and they hit all the tiers. Subscriber Buteau stated he has three questions all to do with solar. Per Superintendent Morris they were going to a trade show, did you see anything solar related there? Per Superintendent Morris stated no he did not. Second question, did you have time to reach out to New England Water Works about Solar. Superintendent Morris stated no he has not had time to reach out to them yet. Question three is Grafton Water went to solar so when you have time you may want to reach out to them to see who they used and how they went about doing it. Per Superintendent Morris he may have a contact there and will reach out and also stated that we are working with 38 Degrees North now to try and purchase more credits from them which will help a little bit since we will get 15% off of the credits. It isn't the full amount, but it is something. He also stated that the solar is on his radar, but it is the busy time of the year.

- VII.** Date of Next Meeting: Commissioner Levesque motioned to have the next meeting at the district office May 2, 2023, at 1:00 P.M. as a hybrid meeting. Seconded by Chairman Bergin. All in Favor. Approved.
- VIII.** Executive Session: Commissioner Levesque moves to close the regular commissioners meeting and further move to open executive session for the purpose of reviewing and approving executive session minutes and further state that at the conclusion of the executive session, tonight's meeting will adjourn, and no further business will be discussed. Seconded by Chairman Bergin. All in Favor. Approved.
- IX.** Adjournment: Commissioner Levesque motioned to adjourn. Seconded by Chairman Bergin. All in Favor. Approved. The meeting ended at 8:33 P.M.