

Approved 3-13-23



Town of Carver,

North Carver Water District Commission

Posted in accordance with the Provisions of M.G.L. Chapter 30A, Section 20B

Meeting minutes for February 15, 2023, The North Carver Water District Commissioners met, today, at the Carver Town Hall, Meeting Room #3, 108 Main Street, Carver, Massachusetts. This meeting is also being videotaped and rebroadcast by Area 58 TV.

Attendees: Mike Palimeri, Chairman, Eric Mueller, Vice Chairman; Doug Ficks, Commissioner

Absent:

Also present: Greg, SWSS (Phone), Sue Moquin (5:25)

Meeting called to order at 5:00 PM, by Mr. Palimeri

Taken out of order at the Chairs' discretion

Update from Small Water Systems Services:

- Water Operator's Report –

Greg –

- We installed the blower, wired it and tested it. It is working properly. Now we are waiting on the well. Once that's in and installed we are good to go. Mr. Palimeri – So we are looking at 8-10 weeks for the wet end? Greg – Yes, that is the last I heard. Mr. Palimeri – I will follow up with Joyce in a couple of weeks.

Mr. Palimeri – Any new meters installed? Greg – No we have not done any since 13 Green Street. Mr. Palimeri – There is one due at 166 or 168 Plymouth Street; water line has been put into the house. Greg – I don't believe so; I will check in on that. Mr. Palimeri – We are trying to tighten up that all parties involved with new water services are on the same page at the same time, rather than finding out a month later. When I see someone doing some digging, I will check for permits, etc.

Mr. Ficks – When you do connect the new services, the wells are completely disconnected? Greg – Yes, they are. Mr. Palimeri – The contracted plumber is actually doing the disconnect. SWSS will follow up and look at it.

NORTH CARVER WATER DISTRICT MEETING MINUTES 2/15/2023

Mr. Palimeri – At some point you will receive a call for a reinstall at 9 Hines Ave (new customer), the meter was removed without notification. There was a house fire. The contractor wanted to make sure they weren't taken or damaged when the demo crew came in. The builder has custody of the meter.

Mr. Palimeri – The billing dept is having a problem with the meter at Cornerstones restaurant. Has it been repaired or looked at again? Greg – I don't know if that has been looked at again. I will check and get you an update.

Greg left the meeting

- Backflow billing – Nothing tonight.

Approval for Determination and Consent of KP Law, pursuant to Massachusetts Rules of Professional Conduct, Rule 1.7 – Representation of Carver, North Carver Water District and Middleborough for the Drafting of Intermunicipal Agreement for Meter Pit:

Mr. Palimeri – You have this in the packet tonight. With the failure of the plant this summer, there has been an ongoing discussion with having a meter pit to divide North Carver Water District and Middleboro when we get their water. The law firm that represents Carver also represents Middleboro so there was a conflict. There were meetings that happened that I did not attend; essentially, Carver and Middleboro got together and came up with an agreement. You have a copy of the agreement in your packet. We need to sign that tonight. Mr. Ficks – Who owns the meter? Mr. Palimeri – Carver is paying for it but it belongs to Middleboro. Mr. Ficks – It's a one-way meter? Mr. Palimeri – Yes, but there is a bypass.

All board members signed the agreement.

Discussion:

- Rules and Regulations –

Mr. Palimeri – In the R&R, there are rules for us and there are rules for customers. There are a lot of gray areas with billing. When the radio isn't working on an existing customer's meter but they are still getting water, what do we do? Sometimes we have a difficult time getting into these homes. I see these choices

1. Charge an average rate for a specified number of reading cycles.
2. If we can't get in to fix the meter, we may have to go through the process of shutting the water/meter off until it is fixed.

Mr. Mueller – If we have a year's worth of usage, we should be able to do an average. There is usage fluctuation so we really need a year of history. Mr. Ficks – That is how it is usually done. Mr. Palimeri – SWSS will do the repair/replacement and they also work on the transponder issues and they do it in house. Mr. Mueller – They are usually very flexible with working with homeowners but there needs to be a deadline. I think 30 days is a good amount of time. Mr. Palimeri – I have spoken with upstairs as to the proper way to do it. Certified mail, etc. It was really difficult to get into people's

homes to put these radio devices on. I would like to see at least a minimum charge. I would like to suggest that we take a little time to think about it and readdress at our next meeting. We need to figure out what change(s) will be necessary in the Rules and Regulations.

Discussion:

- Charging a minimum Water Usage Fee for new customers that are receiving water with a bad meter and/or have a meter without a radio transmitter – See R&R discussion above.
- Repair/Replace various water meters - Mr. Palimeri – They are pretty well up to speed on that. They are working on the Cornerstones meter.
- 9 Hines Ave – Mr. Palimeri – I already mentioned this to Greg. They were a new customer and had the meter installed late last summer. There was a house fire; I went to see the house, it is gutted, no electricity and no water service. They removed the meter. The homeowner called the Town Hall who reached out to me. They were inquiring as to if they would be charged for water.

Motion to not charge from date of the meter being turned off until it is reinstalled: Mr. Mueller

Second: Mr. Ficks

Approved: Unanimous (3-0)

- Finance billing software

The current system being used to bill for water service for the NCWD is archaic and inaccurate. It is a Microsoft product that is no longer supported by Microsoft. In order for them to bill, they have to shut off all of the other computer systems to produce a bill, which takes them hours; we are paying them to do it. They have a bid to replace this with a company that has different software. This company will actually do the billing, saving multiple steps. I have also been told that we would save on labor costs. Mr. Mueller – Would it eliminate the \$60K in administrative? Mr. Palimeri - There will still be an administrative bill but this might help.

Bills Payable:

Motion to pay the bills in Batch #1 for SWSS, in the amount of \$6,250.00: Mr. Mueller

Second: Mr. Ficks

Discussion:

Approved: Unanimous (3-0)

Motion to pay the bill in Batch #2, in the amount of \$ 4,419.84: Mr. Mueller

Second: Mr. Ficks

Discussion:

Approved: Unanimous (3-0)

Topics not reasonably anticipated by the Chairman, 48-hours in advance of the posting of this agenda:

Sue Moquin, Finance Director (5:30 PM):

I gave you all the budget. You will need to set parameters on what your budget will be. Our new software is very integrated. The annual service will go into your indirect cost. Customers will be able to pay their bills online. I spoke with Elaine today, they are expecting ARPER Money to be paid back. You will want to look at that. The Annual Town Warrant needs to be posted by the 2nd Tuesday of March. You should schedule a meeting before then. I really want to work with you to make sure that what you need and what you can afford is part of that budget.

Mr. Palimeri – No one has ever told us how the budget works. We bill for consumption for roughly 100 customers, which cannot possibly support a water system. I know the Town infuses money into the district at the Annual Town Meeting but how does that even work? I need someone to sit with me and explain how it works. Ms. Moquin – I am slowly starting to understand it. Without having a subcommittee to discuss, it's hard to go before the board for discussion. Mr. Palimeri – Sue and I spoke a month or so ago to meet and come up with a budget for the coming year, based on the rules we know; pay the ARPER funds which will deplete half of what we have in the bank, etc. We need to understand the monies to make those decisions. We also need to have money in the bank for preventative maintenance. Mr. Mueller – There is not budget for preventative maintenance right now. Ms. Moquin – Is it possible that you don't have to pay it all back at once? We have until 12/2024 to spend that money? Initially you didn't ask for the entire amount. We bought an ambulance last year and they are paying it back over 5 years. Mr. Palimeri – That would be a conversation with the Town Administrator and the Selectboard. I believe the agreement was to pay it all back at the upcoming Town Meeting. Ms. Moquin – We can do an analysis and determine if rates are in range, etc. When was the last increase? Mr. Palimeri – 2019. Ms. Moquin – Are your rates lower than most Towns around us? Mr. Mueller – We are higher. Mr. Palimeri – We only have about 110 customers, most of which are residential. Avg about \$150 per quarter with some increase in the summer months. I need to understand the math. Ms. Moquin – You should have more control than you have had, based on your by-Laws. Mr. Palimeri – We have not exercised that.

Mr. Mueller – We are a brand-new group for this board; six months or less. Ms. Moquin – I am here as a resource for you. I do have a very good understanding of water districts. Mr. Palimeri – Why don't we set up a time that we can meet for a discussion. This would just be an educational discussion; no votes or anything. Ms. Moquin – Some members of the Finance Committee do not want to continue paying for your debt but I don't believe you can afford to pay for both ARPER and your debt in one year. Mr. Palimeri will reach out tomorrow to Ms. Moquin to set something up. We will also need to have a separate meeting for the sole purpose of budget discussion.

Ms. Moquin departed at 5:43

Minutes: January 3, 2023:

*Motion to approve the minutes of January 3, 2023, as amended: Mr. Mueller
Second: Mr. Ficks*

Discussion: Meters / backflows terminology mix up. Mr. Palimeri will send corrections to Mrs. Hannon.

Approved: Unanimous (3-0)

Correspondence:

Nothing tonight

Board Members Comments:

- Mr. Mueller – I did speak with the Permitting Department regarding the process for new water hook ups. Kevin Forgue said there is something there but it hasn't been put on the Board. We need to keep SWSS involved for inspections. Mr. Palimeri – I suggest that whatever is done up, a member of the NCWD is on the form and required to sign off on any water service from curb stop to house and any meter being installed. Mr. Mueller – Kevin did say that he is fine with himself or the plumbing inspector reviewing the trench. There also needs to be an As-built on file. I will circle back with Kevin. Mr. Palimeri – I am fine with Kevin or the Plumbing Inspector. I am also willing to do that. Someone that is in the loop needs to be involved. Mr. Ficks – What happens if they cut new pavement? Mr. Palimeri – It didn't end up happening in this case, but it has been addressed. The DPW has been advised.
- Mr. Palimeri –
- Mr. Ficks -

Discussion:

- Rte. 44 Development, Urban Renewal Plan –

Mr. Palimeri – We are not included in any of that discussion, since the water main tie-in. Mr. Mueller – So when they pulled out, the agreement is now void? Mr. Palimeri – Yes, that agreement was specific to that project. That means if a water tower were to be built, it would need to be by us. If new developer comes along, we will need to be a part of any discussion for a new agreement.

Next Meeting:

Our next meeting will be held on **Monday, February 27, 2023** at 5:00 PM

A second meeting has been scheduled for **Monday, March 13, 2023** at 5:00 PM

Adjournment:

*Motion to adjourn was made at 6:00 PM: Mr. Palimeri
Second: Mr. Ficks
Approved: Unanimous (3-0)*