

Trustees of the Belfast Water District met on Monday, January 13, 2020, at 1:00 p.m. at the Little River Station office. The following Trustees were in attendance: Stephen Hall, Kenneth Colby Horne, Bruce Osgood, Henry Chalmers, Eileen Dubinett, the Superintendent, Keith Pooler, and his Administrative Assistant, Tammy Morse.

Stephen Hall, the Chairman, called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

**VOTED:** On a motion made by Henry Chalmers, seconded by Eileen Dubinett and unanimously approved, to accept the Minutes of the regularly scheduled board meeting of December 9, 2019.

The Trustees discussed the date of the next board meeting and agreed upon, Monday, February 10, 2020, at 1:00 p.m.

The Superintendent, Keith Pooler, presented his report to the Board of Trustees.

The propane heater is installed in the Lincolnville Avenue excavator garage and is working properly. The total cost was \$2,400, including new weather strips and insulation around the doors. Special thanks are extended to Davey Small of ARC Electric, Maine Energy, and our crew members, Donald Hahn and Dustin Howes, for doing a great job.

Dustin Howes passed his Class II Distribution test on December 17<sup>th</sup> and earned 25 cents per hour raise. He is now studying and attending a 4-day prep course for the Class II Treatment license.

The chimney liner at the Little River Office needed to be replaced. Quotes were requested from Head of the Tide Masonry and G & L Masonry. Only Daniel Ladd of Head of the Tide Masonry responded to inspect to do a quote. When he opened the cleanout door, the bottom of the chimney frame fell out and shattered on the floor. Mr. Ladd explained that the State code has changed, and gave a quote for a new liner and cleanout door for \$2,900. The crew from Head of the Tide Masonry started the repair on December 26<sup>th</sup> and completed it by noon on December 27<sup>th</sup>. They did a fantastic job!

The Belfast Soup Kitchen's 1-inch domestic water service was activated on December 26<sup>th</sup>. Tractor Supply has submitted its New Service Installation paperwork for an 8-inch water line from Belmont Avenue to their first building with a 6-inch sprinkler line, a 1 1/2-inch domestic water service, and a fire hydrant.

Keith informed the Board that he met with the City Manager, Joseph Slocum, about paying the District's cost of the materials for the Belfast Public Works new water service on Crocker Road. Mr. Slocum agreed that it is a reasonable request, and to send the invoice to him directly. Mr. Slocum also mentioned that he intends to speak again with the City Engineers and the Department of Environmental Protection about the property on Crocker Road, where the Belfast Water District was supposed to build its new facility.

On December 17<sup>th</sup>, Steve Cummings of Maine Municipal Association Risk Management conducted our Annual Loss Control Inspection and gave the District a very good review. The only recommendation is to add a 'Return to Work' policy. This policy describes what the employee and employer need to do if an injury occurs. To encourage the employee to 'return to work', the District will work with the employee's limitations as directed by the medical provider with a modified light duty job description and under the Superintendent's supervision. Mr. Cummings approved the 'Return to Work' policy and the light-duty job descriptions that were proposed. Tammy contacted an impartial medical provider, Health Connections, located at 163 Northport Avenue, if an on-the-job injury were to occur. The District signed an agreement with Health Connections agreeing to use them as our ten-day provider for Workers' Compensation injuries; there is no cost unless we need their service.

**VOTED:** On a motion made by Henry Chalmers, seconded by Eileen Dubinett, and unanimously approved, to adopt the 'Return to Work' Policy as presented at this meeting.

Keith suggested some improvements and clarifications to the employee handbook for the Board's consideration. Increase personal time from 8 hours to 12 hours per year; increase the employee sick time reserve from 30 days to 60 days; increase unused sick leave pay from 1 hour per day to 2 hours per day over the 60-day reserve, and reduce the length of service years completed for earned vacation time. The Board suggested adding a provision to the employee handbook that will allow fellow employees to donate their earned sick time when an employee has a catastrophic situation and is need of additional time off, but has exhausted their own earned time: sick, vacation, and personal. The Board agreed that the Employee Handbook should be updated to reflect all changes then discussed as a whole at next month's meeting.

On December 13, 2019, Nordic Aquafarms, Inc. exercised its second right to extend the term of the Premises Option Agreement for an additional six (6) months for the period ending July 30, 2020. The District received a check for \$15,000 in accordance with the agreement. A public hearing in regards to Nordic's licensing applications to construct and operate a land-based Atlantic salmon aquaculture facility will be held at the Hutchinson Center on February 11<sup>th</sup> at 9 a.m. and will continue as needed on February 12<sup>th</sup> -14<sup>th</sup>. An evening session to receive testimony from the general public is scheduled for Tuesday, February 11<sup>th</sup>, at 6 p.m.

The District's accountant, Nick Henry of Horton, McFarland & Veysey, will audit our records in February.

The District received a Maine Municipal Association (MMA) Safety Enhancement Grant check in the amount of \$1,160 for the Flexible Safety Cable Ladder System that we applied for last Spring. This ladder was installed on the Back Searsport Road tank in November by Utility Service Co. Inc. Every Spring and Fall, MMA offers its Workers' Compensation Fund members the opportunity to apply for a safety grant to purchase safety equipment that assists in reducing workplace injuries. The grant award amount is 2/3 of the estimated cost up to \$2,000 maximum per application.

This past month the crew has:

- Checked hydrants (shoveled once)
- Rebuilt the chemical lines and pumps at the wells
- Painted at the wells and booster stations
- Turned on the Highview Terrace and Swan Lake Avenue blowoffs for the winter months to prevent our water mains from freezing
- Repaired the fence at Crocker Road tank that a tree fell on during the October wind storm
- Repaired a leak at 3 Waters Edge Lane
- Completed the year-end inventory
- Attended training at the MRWA conference at the Cross Center in Bangor

The dead trees were removed at Lincolnville Avenue Booster Station and the fence was repaired. Keith said he would ask for an opinion from Sorrentino Landscaping as to what type of tree or shrub would remain low to the ground. The plan is to remove the stumps and replant in the Spring.

For the upcoming month, the crew will change out the larger meters in the system and the older style meters that have R900's. They will also install a new cover on the dump truck.

There have been no updates for the MDOT Goose River Project on Searsport Avenue, and no known advertising for contractors to date. The 10-inch isolation gate valve is in stock and can be installed within a week when needed.

In regards to the Talbot Well, Central Maine Power recommended some changes, including underground power, instead of overhead. With overhead power, we will have to cross over our abutters' properties and the Union District Cemetery. To save a substantial amount of money, our crew can do the groundwork to install underground power. The District's engineer, Tim Sawtelle of Dirigo Engineering, has been keeping in contact with CMP about this project.

There are no updates on PFAS (Per and polyfluoroalkyl substances). The mutual consensus amongst the water and wastewater utilities in Maine is that PFAS is not very prevalent in the State of Maine, with only two public water supplies in the entire State finding PFAS near their source and having to do treatment for it. All agree that we should do regular testing for PFAS, and use the federal EPA level of 70 parts per trillion for a reporting and action level.

The expansion tank on the heating system at Little River Office was in bad shape. Maine Energy was here the next day to replace the expansion tank and the float type air vent at a minimal charge of \$305.

**VOTED:** On a motion made by Bruce Osgood, seconded by Henry Chalmers and unanimously approved, to adjourn the meeting at 1:38 p.m.



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Eileen Dubinett, Secretary

