

Trustees of the Belfast Water District met on Monday, January 14, 2019, at 1:00 p.m. at the Little River Station office. The following Trustees were in attendance: Stephen Hall, Kenneth Colby Horne, Henry Chalmers, Bruce Osgood, Eileen Dubinett, and the Superintendent, Keith Pooler.

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 10, 2018.

The Board discussed the date of the next board meeting and agreed upon, Monday, February 11, 2019, at 1:00 p.m.

The Superintendent, Keith Pooler, reported the activity summary for 2018:

The Back Searsport Road Tank Project was in progress from April - October. During this time, the District purchased the property abutting the tank site, built a new altitude valve building, installed a new driveway, added 37 feet of new 12-inch ductile iron water main, and made improvements to the tank itself including installing the last pax mixer.

Purchased the property at 86 Smart Road which ensures a treatment plant as new state regulations occur for the system. This property provides fifteen more acres of protection over the aquifer, along with the property on Baker Road, and the Holmes property across from the Smart Road well. The District has 100% ownership around Smart Road well within at least a 600-foot radius. Keith expressed his appreciation to the Board for their ability to see the long-range plans.

Services added to the system during 2018 are as follows: one 3/4-inch, six 1-inch, one 3-inch, one 1 1/2-inch sprinkler, and two 6-inch sprinklers. Three 3/4-inch services were discontinued on Church Street and Market Street where the Unified Court System built their new facility; and renewed seven 3/4-inch services and two 1-inch services. A new hydrant replaced the existing hydrant on Starrett Drive, and discontinued two hydrants one on Pierce Street and the other on Franklin Street.

All of the main breaks in the system were cast iron pipe: five 6-inch on High Street and Upper High Street; one 4-inch on Bayview Street; and one 8-inch on Church Street. We repaired nine service leaks throughout the year.

Keith provided the Board with an upcoming project list:

- Remove the buildings at the 86 Smart Road property,
- Install a generator at Crocker Road Tank,
- As part of the Capital Improvement Plan, replace the 12-inch main from the hospital on Northport Avenue to Mayo Street.
- Pending the sale of the Little River Station property to Nordic Aquafarms, build a new office facility on Crocker Road.
- If Nordic Aquafarms continues to buy over 100 million gallons per year beyond the six-year agreement, then we should connect the Talbot Well into the system.
- The Maine Department of Transportation (MDOT) Goose River Project on Searsport Avenue will not take place in 2019 as originally planned.

Keith gave the Trustees a map of the Upper Reservoir and Lower Reservoir. Nordic Aquafarms may consider donating \$120,000 (half of the assessed value) to the City of Belfast to buy the Upper Dam from the District and then place the property into conservation. Between the Upper Reservoir and Lower

Reservoir, there are 140 acres of which 90 acres will be conservation land for recreational use. The rest will create jobs and revenue for the Belfast residents.

The District received Nordic Aquafarms' letter dated 12/18/18 electing to extend the period as defined in the Evaluation Agreement for one extra period of six months to July 30, 2019. Per the Evaluation Agreement, the extra \$15,000 Options Consideration was deposited with the Escrow Agent, Mintz-Levin. A total of \$45,000 is in the escrow account.

At the last board meeting, the Trustees recommended to trade in our 2014 John Deere 310SK backhoe for a new machine. A broker came last week to inspect the backhoe; therefore, the trade in value is in the works. The search came down to a Wacker Neuson EW100, an all-purpose excavator, which is highly versatile to maneuver in narrow streets along with our trucks and equipment without blocking both sides of the roadway. This excavator is from Germany and Central Maine Equipment is the dealer in Maine. Maine Earth owns two, and Brunswick Water has purchased one. It is more expensive than a backhoe, \$149,419 versus \$120,000, but get much more as seen on the quote. If the trade in value is \$50,000 for our 2014 John Deere backhoe, then it's a good deal. A John Deere backhoe, with the same number of hours as the one we have, sells for \$65,000. The Board compared and discussed the details of a new excavator versus a new backhoe and concurred that Keith buy the new excavator if the trade in value of our John Deere is reasonable.

Keith evaluated the Searsport/Belfast Interconnect agreement with the Board. One change that is agreeable with Searsport Water District is to change the review period to every five years instead of biannually. The option remains to amend as needed by either party.

**VOTED:** On a motion made by Henry Chalmers seconded by Eileen Dubinett and unanimously approved, to amend the Searsport/Belfast Interconnect agreement to be reviewed every five years instead of biannually.

As mentioned at last month's board meeting, the employee evaluations are now complete. Keith provided the Trustees with a wages and benefits sheet defining each employee's compensation.

Keith proposed to the Board a 3% cost of living raise and a 50 cent merit raise for both Suzette Harford and Dustin Howes. The Board discussed the percentage increase while taking into consideration the health insurance increase of 4% this year.

**VOTED:** On a motion made by Bruce Osgood and seconded by Henry Chalmers and unanimously approved, to grant a 2.5% per hour increase to all employees and give the 50 cent merit raises for Suzette Harford and Dustin Howes as proposed by the Superintendent, Keith Pooler, and effective January 1, 2019.

Keith presented the highlights since the last board meeting:

- Crew fluid filmed the trucks; handy to have the lift
- Year-end Inventory is complete
- Activated the 6-inch sprinkler service at Central Maine Power on 1/3/19
- Upgrades at Jackson Pit Station: scales and chemical tanks
- All hydrants were checked twice
- 4-inch cast iron water main break at 94 Bayview Street; lost 500,000 gallons
- Installed stainless steel cabinets at the wells

- Thawed three frozen hydrants. Hydrant#135 was installed in 1958 near Airmail Lane. The stem broke when trying to thaw, we cannot get parts for it, and so the crew assembled the parts out of an old hydrant. The crew's savvy-ness saved shutting down the main and digging.

This month, the crew will start changing out the 200 older Trident and Sensus meters that have an attached R900 radio-read antenna. The change out program started in 2012 and finished in early 2018 to have all meters in the system radio-reads. The crew will continue with maintenance at the wells and checking the hydrants.

Nick Henry, of Horton, McFarland, Veysey, will do the audit in February and then report his findings to the Board in May.

**VOTED:** On a motion made by Henry Chalmers seconded by Bruce Osgood and unanimously approved, to adjourn the meeting at 1:48 p.m.



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Eileen Dubinett, Secretary

