

Trustees of the Belfast Water District met on Monday, November 19, 2018, 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 Eileen Dubinett seconded by Henry Chalmers and unanimously approved, to accept the Minutes of the regularly scheduled board meeting of October 15, 2018.

The Board discussed the date of the next board meeting and agreed upon, Monday, December 10, 2018, at 1:00 p.m.

The Superintendent, Keith Pooler, reported on the following:

The Back Searsport Road Tank Project is complete except for a new fence around the tank site. The final cost is \$154,000, not the \$180,000 as reported at last month's meeting, much closer to the estimated amount of \$150,000. Keith distributed pictures of the new altitude valves, the building, and the new manway covers in the tank. More fill is needed around the tank to bring it up to grade to get equipment such as man-lifts all the way around. It is also necessary to remove more trees to eliminate the sap from degrading the paint on the tank. The existing easement across the abutter's property will remain in use while the water main is active.

Harlan Pease, Industrial Instruments, has done an excellent job of finishing the connection of the new ATI treatment analyzers into the SCADA system at Lincolnville Avenue Booster Station. Keith showed pictures that demonstrate the pattern and variances on the SCADA system every second of every day, all on the same screen, the pH, the chlorine, and the fluoride.

As reported last month, one of the two 30-year-old pumps and electric motors failed at Lincolnville Avenue Booster Station. They both have over 40,000 hours on them. The cost new to replace the pump and motor is \$7,200 or rebuild for \$3,700. The pump and motor are being rebuilt.

Keith informed the Board of Nordic Aquafarms' current events. Ransom Consulting is performing a large pump test on the six drilled wells on the property. It is a 96-hour test with all the wells constantly pumping while monitoring the reservoir and surrounding wells in the Herrick Road area to see if there is any drawdown effect. Keith mentioned to the Board that he attended Nordic Aquafarms' open house at their office located at 159 High Street on Saturday, November 17, 2018. The Board commended Keith for the well-written Belfast Water District statement dated 10/26/18 published in the Republican Journal. There was a considerable amount of information in the statement, and Keith thanked Bruce Osgood for his assistance in making it clear. The Board expressed that they are pleased with the timely Belfast Water District statement to its customers, and all the residents of the City of Belfast.

To date, the District's attorney fees for the litigation initiated by Eleanor Daniels and Donna Broderick against Nordic Aquafarms and the City of Belfast also naming the Belfast Water District are \$2,500.

The Maine Rural Water Association 38th Annual Technical Conference is December 4 - 6 at the Cross Insurance Event Center in Bangor. All Trustees are invited to attend the Tuesday evening dinner and session.

Keith informed the Board that the District received the Maine Municipal Employees Health Trust (MMEHT) letter announcing the 2019 health insurance percentage increase for the benefit plans. The

District currently has the MMEHT POS 200 plan at a premium of \$2,146.58 which will increase by 4% to \$2,232.45, a monthly increase of \$85.87 (\$1,030.44 per year) per employee/family coverage. This coverage includes life insurance for the employee. The higher deductible plans with the least amount of coverage will increase by 7%. Keith expressed to the Board that the Belfast Water District employees realize the health insurance benefit is costly and feel very fortunate to have it. Keith referred to a comparative analysis with other water utilities of the same size. The analysis with these utilities showed that the Belfast Water District is at or below the average cost of health insurance premiums. Eileen mentioned that in 2018 the Board covered a 7% increase in health insurance for the employees, and in turn, the employees' wages stayed at the same level as 2017. Bruce asked if the employees are aware of what their total compensation is. Bruce recommended, and the Board concurred, that each employee should receive an annual Total Compensation Report from Keith in conjunction with their evaluation. The Board expressed that they understood that paid health insurance is an attractive benefit to help get and retain good employees. After discussion, the Board concurred with Keith's recommendation and voted to fund the increase in the health insurance premiums for 2019.

VOTED: On a motion made by Bruce Osgood seconded by Henry Chalmers and unanimously approved, to accept the 4% increase with the Maine Municipal Employees Health Trust POS 200 health insurance plan; and pay 100% of the monthly premium for the District's employees and family for the 2019 year.

Keith asked the Board to consider adding to the District's employee benefits package the Dental Plan and the Vision Plan offered by Maine Municipal Employees Health Trust (MMEHT). Participation is optional. An employee who chooses to enroll will be responsible for the insurance premium set by MMEHT, and the premium will be a weekly payroll deduction from the employee's paycheck. The employee handbook will be edited to add the plans. The Board discussed adding these two benefits.

VOTED: On a motion made by Bruce Osgood and seconded by Henry Chalmers and unanimously approved, to add to the employee benefits package the Dental Plan and the Vision Plan offered through the Maine Municipal Employees Health Trust for full-time employees, their spouses, and eligible dependents. The employees are responsible for the insurance premium through payroll deduction.

Keith reported the crew activity since the last board meeting:

- Finished the Back Searsport Road Tank Project
- Drained hydrants and started the second round
- Discontinued two hydrants; one on Pierce Street Hill #111 and the other on Franklin Street #54 up from Post Office with permission from the fire chief
- Removed brush off dams
- Lowered gate boxes before snowplowing
- Fall cleanup
- Assisted the City's Public Works Department at 12 Anderson Street. They hit one of the discontinued water services that was located in one area.

The crew will work on the following for the upcoming month:

- Resume with the second round of draining the hydrants and flagging them
- Continue lowering gate boxes before snowplowing
- Cleanup of all projects that took place this year
- Routine winter maintenance at the wells

The Holiday Dinner will be held at the Comfort Inn Ocean's Edge Restaurant on Sunday, December 9th, at 1 p.m.

Keith reported that all the utilities are off at 86 Smart Road. The Board asked if the house could be habitable. Keith stated it would be costly because the foundation is in bad shape. Keith's recommendation is to remove the house and fill in the foundation. An estimate will be obtained for an excavator to remove the house from the site.

The Board asked Keith about harvesting the wood from the District's properties. Keith stated that he has not heard from Wayne Tripp, W. C. Tripp Forest Products, and will contact him about a plan to harvest our forest land.

VOTED: On a motion made by Bruce Osgood seconded by Henry Chalmers and unanimously approved, to adjourn the meeting at 1:56 p.m.



Eileen Dubinett, Secretary

