



Hill Water Works – Commissioners Meeting

Meeting Minutes

* DRAFT *

June 12th, 2024

Regularly Scheduled Meeting – A *special Water Commissioner's meeting was held in the Hill Public Library at 6:30 p.m. located at 30 Crescent Street Hill, NH 03243 after the Regularly Scheduled meeting was postponed. The meeting was properly posted in at least two public places noting the cause for the special meeting.

Board Members Present Charles Estes, Stephen Thomson and Anthony Cartier

Public Attendance – David Thomson

Digital audio recorder was started at 6:30 p.m. Stephen Thomson declared the meeting open at 6:31 p.m.

Approval of Previous Minutes – Charlie provided commissioners with a copy of May Meeting Minutes. Charlie had a couple typos to correct and prepared amended minutes from the email that was previously sent. Charlie made note that the principal previously stated on the State Revolving Trust Loan was \$8, not \$18, because we have recorded a \$10,500 payment this year. Stephen made a motion to accept minutes as presented. Tony seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Old Business-

- The Board discussed the Tank Inspection that was completed on May 30th, 2024. The report has been received. It is 40 pages which includes some recommended action items. Charlie will print a file copy. Copies have been sent electronically. Records will be kept electronically.

Issues to note of the Tank –

- Charlie met with the inspecting company previous to setting up, providing them access to the Eversource gate that had been addressed a week prior. The lead inspector / diver requested a key to the tank's upper hatch. Charlie contacted Lisa and got a key from the Selectmen's office. Then the key was provided to the lead inspector. Charlie helped the dive team gain access the upper tank area. (At which time - sharp stones punctured one of Charlie's truck tires causing an irreparable repair.) Shortly after Divers had set up and reached the tank, they reported that the hatch was slightly ajar and had no lock. Charlie purchased a new lock and provided it to the Inspector for when the inspection was complete. The invoice was received and was paid within 5 days of completion and then the report was provided.
- Tank is not "Roto-Lined" as was believed. Anyone seeking definition of the roto lining process, should research it on-line or request a copy of the meeting minutes.

The interior of the water tank is "Painted" with an epoxy-type paint that was manually applied. There are various and numerous places where the paint is compromised with rust & corrosion which is forming on the interior and exterior of the tank.

- The inspection identifies areas of the tank that require attention. The tank vent is compromised by debris. The exterior hatch and drain have rust and debris that requires attention. Many aspects of the Tank

interior and exterior were discussed including the minimal amount of the Tank being utilized due to low pressure in the system. Stephen noted that the section of the Tank that is not being utilized is subjected to corrosion from moisture and air opposed to being under water. The commissioners will each review the Tank Inspection in preparation for discussion at a future meeting.

- Recounting previous discussions Stephen and David Thomson raised again the State Revolving Trust Loans, NHMBB Loan balances, Refinancing done in 2019 and the calculation of Retained Earnings. Charlie again tried to explain discussions about retained earnings had previously but those just do not support the way the accounting has been done for recording of retained earnings. Charlie notes the equitable value of the water system has been recorded and accounted for in an entirely different manner in the past than has been maintained since 2021. One thing abundantly clear is that retained earnings no longer appears to be cash sitting in capital reserves in the trust accounts of the town. Charlie will obtain the key for the archive room and will progress the audit of the records in those immediate areas. David Thomson asks how much money was appropriated to use on the water tank? The actuality of all these questions are pure speculation without historic data from water works records, town records and from recollection of memory. This is partly, the purpose behind the requested meeting with the executive board and other town officials. Stephen again questioned the accrual of equity reported in the town records. Charlie explained the difference between retained earnings and equity. They are not the same thing and you cannot report equity as retained earnings. Stephen notes the accounting of retained earnings changed when the current water commission took over.
- Stephen asks the question – how and why are Judy producing these monthly reports that she has been producing for a year+. Judy produces 5 reports from the treasurer that began a couple months after week took over as commissioners. Charlie explained to Stephen and Tony his actions to reconcile the first 5 ½ months of 2024 so that Judy can reproduce the first half of the year records. Stephen asks what part of the accounting functions were separate for the town and water works prior to us taking over. It's impossible to perform the actual accounting function in a manner that is consistent with the software system, without being connected to the live data within the Avitar software. The town treasurer was previously producing a separate manual accounting software system based upon printed data and bank receipts that were provided to her by the billing agent. Tony said that this is quite a lot to think about. It is really confusing but he is generally understanding.
- There needs to be a collection of historic records and complete review of all previous records to begin an assets management assessment. The records that the water commission have in its possession currently, which include the Provan Engineering records, note numerous recommendations and suggestions of improvement that simply were not put in place. **We need to locate and review the actual records of funds applied for, funds received, work that was approved and performed, funds paid out and how it was accounted for. Without the actual records, we are just guessing.**
- Charlie stated that one aspect of the proposed meeting is that other town officials are afraid that they are being gathered for the purpose of being attacked by accusations. It is a reasonable but unsubstantiated FEAR. Charlie stated that we are not going to bring Jerry Desrochers back into the discussion to accuse him and Shaun Bresnahan of things we don't understand. "You cannot accuse Frank Razzaboni of things that occurred before he moved to town. We are seeking any historic information about the Town of Hill Water System from facts and not accusation. We are not going to get anything more than hear-se out of people who weren't involved and have only heard things from others about what occurred 15 or 20 years ago. Stephen states that there are so many aspects of things that need to be discussed. David states that he truly hopes this meeting on the 25th is an information gathering sessions that doesn't go off the rails.

New Business / Continued Discussions -

- The commission identified area of discussion for the June 25th Joint departmental records.
 - Tank Inspection – Lined.
 - Retained Earnings – What does accounting of Retained Earnings relate to?
 - Who instructed Judy to perform the Records production for the Water Commission?
 - How much money from the original loans taken in 2006-2009 / 2012 and NHMBB went to the Water Works and how much was utilized by the Town? What Departments received funds – Fire Department, Streets and Highways?

- Charlie asked Stephen what questions to do you to have answered from this meeting on the 25th? The commission discussed at length their hopes and expectations of a successful meeting.
 - Property Ownership, Maintenance, Insurance, System Upgrades, Responsibility,
 - Who is the system? Hill Water Works or Town of Hill? Who owns the equity? How to handle R.O.W.s, Why are the Water System customers solely responsible for Debt Service, Upkeep, Improvements, and realize no benefits from system, etc.,
 - Tony asks who is going to mediate this meeting?
 - Charlie asked – Tony - What is creating this divisiveness in Departments? Tony answered Power Struggle. Stephen asked if Tony thinks this is coming from this end? He said no I don't. Charlie suggests that we stick to the topics at hand. What is creating this divisiveness is the HATE being directed at others. Its from the Power Struggle people are unwilling or incapable of letting go. Stephen states that if we are unable to have a workshop of inter-departmental gathering and are unable to remain civil then we have much bigger problems.

- The Board reviewed the Bank statements and billing Warrant for June billing. Approved. Charlie asked Steve about his credit balance. Stephen table for further discussion. The board agreed to meet again in a Non-Meeting on June 20th at 6:30 in the Commissioners Office.

Having no other business – Stephen made a motion to adjourn Tony 2nd. Motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 8:06 p.m. The recording was stopped.

Respectfully Submitted - Charles Estes