

BOARD OF WATER COMMISSIONERS MEETING MINUTES

Date: December 2, 2021

Time: 4:30 PM

Location: Norwell Water Dept.
345 Main Street, Norwell

Present: Jack McInnis, Superintendent and Commissioners Fred St Ours, Peter Dillon, and Steve Ivas.

Guests: Shawn Brennan (resident on Lot Phillips) & Nathalie Vining (resident on Tiffany Road)

Prepared by: Donna Snow

1. **Resident Inquiry** - Jack McInnis discussed water quality with two residents who arrived prior to the start of the meeting. Jack McInnis advised that Grove Street Well #10 and South Street wells are offline as a result of the chemical feed pump failure. Currently only four wells are on-line, and Jack McInnis hopes these wells will sustain us. Peter Dillon and Jack McInnis informed the residents that they are planning to implement a GAC filtration system to remove PFAS from the water supply. A request will need to be made at Town Meeting for the funding. Peter Dillon explained it has been a balancing act managing PFAS levels since the alternative wells have some organic color. Nathalie Vining asked about the impact to the water supply from the Hanover project. Peter Dillon explained PFAS are found in the environment, in things like fire extinguishing foams. Peter Dillon said the Department has been testing for PFAS over the past several years but the state's stringent detection standard at 20 ppt is difficult to manage without an immediate filtration process. Peter Dillon invited both residents to stay, Nathalie Vining said she would come back for the next Board meeting on 12/16/21. Jack McInnis informed them that South Street wells will be off for some time, these wells supply 50% of the water for the town. Both residents left and the meeting resumed according to the agenda.
2. **Meeting Minutes** – The Board approved meeting minutes from November 18th. Peter Dillon made a motion to approve, Steve Ivas seconded; all in favor at 4:59pm.
3. **Resident Inquiry** - Fred St. Ours asked Jack McInnis if he was able to follow up with the resident from 75 Pleasant Street. Jack McInnis indicated he had left messages and had not yet connected with this resident. Fred St. Ours offered to reach out to him.
4. **Discuss Water Quality Concerns from Weekend**- Fred St. Ours is concerned it took three days until the failure at the plant was addressed. Friday

a backwash was done, and the Treatment Plant Operator reported the water color was fine. The following day; Saturday color was noticed by the on-call operator. Fred St. Ours was surprised that when this was observed no-one reacted to it immediately. By Monday the office was flooded with water quality calls from residents. Fred St. Ours asked what physically happened, how did the intensified color arrive into the system without the on-call operator seeing it. Fred St. Ours asked the office Admin. (Donna Snow) where the complaints originated. Donna Snow noted calls originally came from South Street, Silver Brook Lane, Wildcat Lane, Pleasant Street, EA Joseph Drive and streets in that general vicinity. Eventually calls also came from Tiffany Rd, Brigantine, Bowsprit, River Street, Stetson Shrine, Till Rock, Lot Phillips, Highfield Lane, Barstow, Copeland Tannery, Leonard, Hillcrest, and Summit Drive. Fred St. Ours said this can't happen again, we need to be able to recognize and manage an equipment failure. Fred St. Ours asked if a backwash got mixed in, and Jack McInnis assured him that water entering system was clear. Fred St. Ours suggested talking to staff and getting them to understand the importance of this recent situation. Jack McInnis said he talked to the Treatment Plant Operator and the Department Foreman already. Jack McInnis explained the turbidity meter was broken and parts were on order. Fred St. Ours wanted reassurance that they recognize the seriousness of the situation. Peter Dillon proposed that staff check critical systems to ensure they are functioning correctly. Peter Dillon asked if we used more water this weekend than normal, Jack McInnis responded that he believed so.

5. **Discuss Damaged Laundry** – Two residents submitted request for damage laundry. Jack McInnis suggested offering residents a product called "rust-be-gone" to add to laundry. Fred St. Ours feels as though if the laundry was already washed and dried the red-be-gone product will not be impactful. The product is formulated to remove rust stains from clothing. Fred St. Ours suggested obtaining photos and an itemized list of damaged laundry for the office admin to review so long as it is reasonable. Peter Dillon suggested a cap for the reimbursement at \$100. Donna Snow will follow up with both residents that emailed her.
6. **Review Overtime Policy** – Fred St. Ours wanted to review overtime for the October storm since it cost the Department a lot of money. Jack McInnis explained he had no SCADA system which resulted in 3-4 days with extra hours for 2 distribution employees who monitored the system. Fred St. Ours asked how many overtime hours were worked during this outage and asked to see the payroll. Fred St. Ours reviewed the payroll worksheet for 3 employees who earned a substantial amount of overtime in addition to their regular 40 hours. Jack McInnis noted this will not happen again since he has ordered a second time clock for the Treatment Plant. Peter Dillon asked if it is biometric time clock; Jack McInnis indicated that he spoke with the Distribution staff, and they

were not comfortable with a biometric clock. Fred St. Ours explained the Board can set policy if it is needed; both Steve Ivas and Peter Dillon agreed. Fred St. Ours stated he is not trying to take any overtime away he just wants to make sure we are guarding these hours responsibly. Jack McInnis says this is an atypical storm and this has not happened before. Jack McInnis does not feel he needs a biometric clock. The Board feels overtime may need to be reviewed on a regular basis. The Board members expressed appreciation for the hours that were put in during the storm, but it must be managed responsibly.

7. **Discuss EMS Alerts** –This most recent situation with discolored water affected streets closer to the South Street Treatment Plant. The office staff at Town Hall fielded over 50 calls on Monday and a high number on Tuesday as well. At the offices request the Fire Department initiated an alert Tuesday afternoon. The EMS alert does not reach all residents. Residents need to enroll through the Fire Department to receive these notifications. Peter Dillon and Steve Ivas both residents of Norwell had no color in their water from this event.
8. **Update PFAS Quarter 3 Results**–Jack McInnis informed the Board that a public notice is required and shared the document that the DEP wants sent out. South Street has exceeded the PFAs threshold by 3 ppt (parts per trillion or ng/L). The limit is 20 ppt and South Street is 23 ppt, for Quarter 3. It would help to be able to communicate to residents that in an effort to manage PFAs this summer, wells had to be taken out of service which resulted in discolored water when alternative well sources were used. Fred St. Ours explained when we have reacted to PFAs levels in the past it caused issues with color, and residents seem to have more of an issue with color than they do with PFAs; (PFAs are colorless). It is possible to bring PFAs levels lower but at the cost of putting out color which causes more of a stir among residents. The water supply is not the only place where residents are exposed to PFAs, it is in many other products in the environment. Peter Dillon offered to share the concentration of PFAs found in food with Fred St. Ours.
9. **Update on Treatment Plant Manager Position** – This has been an open position within the Department for a while. Peter Dillon noted maybe Jack McInnis can consider Dan Gage the current Meter Reader for this position. Fred St. Ours noted Dan Gage did show interest in this opportunity. Peter Dillon suggested he could get licenses for T1 & T2 if interested. After Dan Gage obtains T1 license, it is a year before he can get his T2. Peter Dillon noted he appears to have a good rapport with the current staff and seems to have the necessary computer skills. Steve Ivas thinks this could be a good option assuming Human Resources does not have any viable candidates now. Jack McInnis will allow him to take a course in January and see how he does. The Board suggested maybe the job description can be changed to

replace the current degree requirements. Jack McInnis will follow with Barbara Childs to see where she stands with existing candidates right now.

Additional Items:

- Jason Federico was at the Treatment Plant today. Jack McInnis provided costs for boring in center of Median Strip at Rt. 3 to be \$23,500 including drilling and permit fees. Peter Dillon is not surprised by this number at all.
- Update for South Street Treatment Plant - Jack McInnis advised LaViolette was in today and took apart the chemical feed cabinet. Fred St. Ours noted we can't operate with just Well #6. Jack McInnis was able to fire up Well #1 for a few minutes today and turbidity drops like a rock. Turning on Well #1 doesn't matter at this point according to Peter Dillon, the wells can be blended if we need to. Jack McInnis informed the Board currently he is only running wells: 4,8,2,5. Fred St. Ours asked would it help to run Well #7? Jack McInnis informed the Board if he uses Well #1, he will need to do a Public Notice every three months. Peter Dillon suggested maybe we shouldn't be afraid to use certain wells since we are over on PFAs anyhow.
- Leonard Lane resident – resident called during meeting and the office will coordinate a hydrant on her street to be flushed tomorrow.
- FY23 Budget Planning can be added to next meeting. Peter Dillon said we need to start looking at ordering things now since the supply chain is backed up.
- Peter Dillon motioned to adjourn the meeting, Steve Ivas seconded, and it was voted unanimously at 6:46 PM.

Accepted: Stim P. Ivas Date: 27 Dec 21