

**MERRIMACK VILLAGE DISTRICT
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
JULY 15, 2024
MEETING MINUTES
(approved August 19, 2024)**

A regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners was conducted on July 15, 2024, at 5:00 p.m. at 2 Greens Pond Road, Merrimack, NH.

Chairman, Donald Provencher presided:

Members of the Board present: Kenneth Ayers, Vice Chairman
 Erin Clement

Members of the Board Absent: Wolfram von Schoen, Personnel Liaison

Also in Attendance: Ron Miner, Superintendent
 Jill Lavoie, Business Manager
 Kristen Maher, HR/ Finance Director

FINANCE/HUMAN RESOURCES REVIEW – Kristen Maher

A. Analysis of Revenue and Expenditures

Director Maher informed the commissioners that being through the month of June, MVD has completed the fiscal year. As of this report, which was created July 10th, the net ordinary income is roughly \$1.3M. However, since then, Maher explained that she was able to put more into the system and MVD is currently sitting at \$1.7M for the net ordinary income. This was due to the amount of billing that was done with the increased usage of water over the last month. Maher noted that this, coupled with the lower usage of chemicals, resulted in roughly \$0.5M underspent.

At this time, Chairman Provencher asked about account 50015 (annual meeting- super/moderator) being a \$0 line item and asked if MVD did not pay the moderator for the annual meeting. Director Maher explained that the moderator was paid out of petty cash this year. Chairman Provencher also asked for a description of account 50220 (turnover costs – treat/distribution). Director Maher explained that if/when someone leaves or retires, any payouts of sick days, vacations, or severance comes from this account. It was also noted that on the finance report, “CIP” stood for construction in progress, not Capital Improvement Plan.

B. Capital Reserve Balance

Director Maher informed the commissioners that of the unassigned fund balance, the operating is just shy of \$21M and the grand total over all the projects is \$21.9M. Of that, \$2.4M is convertible cash.

Maher noted that as of the end of June, the fund balance for land is roughly \$1.5M, equipment and facilities is about \$4M, system development charges is \$1.2M, legal is \$110,000, water purchase and O&M is about \$568,000.

REGULAR SESSION

1. Board of Commissioners to conduct the annual review of the Investment Policy.

At this time, it was noted that the Investment Policy was the same as the previous year. Director Maher informed the commissioners that there are three policies that need to be approved by the board each year. Those policies are the Investment Policy, the Payroll Policy, and the Deposit Policy.

MOTION BY COMMISSIONER K. AYERS TO APPROVE THE INVESTMENT POLICY AS PRESENTED

MOTION SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER E. CLEMENT

MOTION CARRIED

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This policy will be in effect July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025.

2. Board of Commissioners to hear update on the two Mainline Extension Projects.

At this time, Superintendent R. Miner informed the commissioners that he would be providing the update on the two Mainline Extension Projects. He clarified that this was for the Saint Gobain Mainline Extension Projects. Superintendent R. Miner informed the commissioners that Saint Gobain is looking to get started soon and has applied for a permit with the Town of Merrimack. The town asked them to wait, as they had seen nothing in regard to this request. MVD has a meeting with the town and WSP, the engineering firm used by Saint Gobain, tomorrow, July 16, 2024. It was noted that there were some concerns with the proposed trenches and the asphalt repairs. Superintendent R. Miner shared that he had spoken with Ed Gano of WSP and he seems to think that there will only be 2-3 crossings. It was noted that Superintendent R. Miner had shared with Saint Gobain many times that they needed to be in touch with the town during the planning.

3. Board of Commissioners to discuss request of Matt Casparius, Director of Parks and Recreation, to possibly abate an invoice that was high due to a leaking pipe.

At this time, Chairman D. Provencher informed the public that a request had been made by Matt Casparius, Director of Parks and Rec, to abate an invoice that was high due to a leaking pipe owned by the Town of Merrimack, not MVD, at Wasserman Park. He noted that he was confused as to why the commissioners had received a copy of some of the older parks and rec department's water bills. Business Manager J. Lavoie explained that it was so the commissioners were able to compare their regular usage to the high invoice. It was noted that MVD will typically notify a customer if there is excessive usage, however, because this was Wasserman Park, the usage fluctuates frequently and seasonally. It was noted that based on these bills, it appears that the water gets shut off during the off season. It was noted that the bills seemed to be all over the place, but it could be due to events being held on site and bills this high have been seen in the past. It was also noted that if this abatement was approved, it could create a "slippery slope" in the future, because similar requests have been denied to other customers in the past, and it would be unfair to those customers to make exceptions. Commissioner E. Clement stated that the fact that it is Matt's department, she is inclined to help because of everything he does for the community, but if this will set a precedent that can cause issues in the future, she understands not doing it. MVD will work with customers to set a payment plan if the bill is high. It was asked what the policy is for reducing

bills. It was answered that while it is not policy, the standard procedure is that the request goes in front of the commissioners. The commissioners decided not to reduce the bill, noting high usage in the past. Commissioner E. Clement requested that MVD share with Casparius that while they would love to help him, it would set a precedent that would be difficult for MVD to maintain, however, they are happy to help with no-charge events, such as the Reeds Ferry Fun Day.

4. Board of Commissioners to discuss the cost of water for flushing Wells 7 & 8 GAC media due to high iron content in the fresh GAC media received from the supplier.

At this time, Chairman Provencher explained to the public that the fresh new granular activated carbon (GAC) initially received came to MVD contaminated with iron, which took an “exorbitant” amount of water to flush the GAC media before the wells could go back into service. This cost of damages was estimated at roughly \$185,000. It was noted that MVD is no longer a customer of Evoqua, the GAC supply company, that there is a history of the company being difficult to work with, and that there is no reason for MVD to give the company a break. It was noted that Evoqua provided instructions to MVD to flush the media, and this was not a decision that MVD made independently or against the direction of Evoqua. MVD is looking to have the cost of damages recovered. The commissioners suggested that MVD go through legal counsel to have a letter written and allow Evoqua the opportunity to respond.

5. Board of Commissioners to review the minutes from the June 17, 2024 regular BOC meeting.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Board of Commissioners Regular Meeting..... June 17,
2024

No amendments were offered.

**MOTION BY COMMISSIONER E. CLEMENT TO ACCEPT THE MEETING MINUTES OF THE JUNE 17, 2024 BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS REGULAR MEETING AS PRESENTED
MOTION SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER K. AYERS**

MOTION CARRIED

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6. Board of Commissioners to review Action Items from previous meetings and those to be added from this meeting.

The Commissioners reviewed the list of Action Items, removing tasks that have been completed, and making necessary additions. New dates were added to many of the action items. At this time, Superintendent R. Miner informed the commissioners that the meeting associated with action item #67, Inquire with NH DOT about moving no salt sign closer to exit 67, was on the agenda for tonight’s school board meeting.

7. Old Business

At this time, Chairman Provencher stated that he wanted to discuss the PFAS vessel monitoring summary. He noted that the table states that there is no data for Wells 7 & 8. Superintendent R. Miner clarified that Wells 7 & 8 were offline. Chairman Provencher noted that based on the summary, there was PFBA breakthrough at the lead vessels of Wells 4 & 5 and Wells 2 & 9. Chairman Provencher stated that the lead vessel at Wells 4 & 5 should be changed out in December, and at Wells 2 & 9 in September. This was confirmed by Superintendent R. Miner. Breakthrough of the lead vessel has not been seen in Wells 7 & 8. Chairman Provencher expressed that the table provided was confusing for customers and suggested wording it differently. It was clarified that this table is for the commissioners and shows testing at the ports, and what is published for the customers shows testing for finished water.

At this time, Chairman Provencher directed the commissioners to the graphs of raw well water PFAS concentrations provided by Underwood Engineers. He noted that the PFOA for Well 9 was at 30 ppt, but was previously at 2 ppt, and appears to fluctuate significantly. Superintendent R. Miner shared that Well 9 right now is pumping at a reduced 500-600 gallons per minute (gpm) because a circuit was lost in the VFD at Well 2. Well 2 is currently running on a soft start without the VFD at roughly 1,200 gpm while Well 2 was being diagnosed. Commissioner E. Clement noted that NH's very wet spring required MVD to be pumping Well 9 at a lower volume, so it makes since that the PFOA was lower, and increased when Well 9 was required to be pumped more. Chairman Provencher confirmed that historically, PFAS has been seen to generally increase with higher pumping.

Business Manager J. Lavoie informed the commissioners that the position for the open seat for Commissioner had been posted on the MVD Website, the MVD Facebook page, and at the Merrimack Town Hall, the Merrimack Post Office, and the Merrimack Public Library. It was also posted in the MVD office and sent over to Merrimack TV.

8. New Business

Superintendent R. Miner informed the commissioners that he received a letter indicating that the town is looking to start the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) planning process early and would like to receive MVD's CIP by August 16, 2024. The Town Planning Board would like to get started prior to doing the draft budget that will be presented to the Town Council. It was noted that the town and MVD run their CIPs differently, and MVD provides their CIP to the town as a courtesy. Chairman Provencher expressed that there wasn't much he could see changing on the current CIP, other than possible date changes. It was determined that the commissioners would review the MVD's CIP at the August meeting.

At this time, Chairman Provencher brought up the cancer study that is being put on by the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). He shared a one-page request with a web link to the DHHS cancer study asking for public participation. The DHHS is partnering with community members in Merrimack to investigate and understand concerns around health issues related to Merrimack and surrounding areas. They are looking to connect with more community members at this time. The department would like residents with or without kidney cancer to participate in the survey, as well as a discussion group. Chairman Provencher expressed his belief that it was in the best interest of the town to have as many people as possible participate, and he shared that the last cancer study indicated that Merrimack had a 42% higher occurrence of pelvic renal cancers than the rest of the state, but the sample size was small. Chairman Provencher suggested that MVD include this one page survey and / or web link to the survey in MVD water bills in order to get the word out. It was noted that sending a notice out in the paper bills would come at a cost of over \$800. It was questioned whether the billing software could send out a notice, but clarification was provided that explained that a link to the DHHS survey

cannot be added, and only minimal communication can be made. Chairman Provencher stated that he thinks this is important and expressed that he believes spending the \$800 would be worth it. It was asked if anyone had discussed this with the Town of Merrimack. Superintendent R. Miner said that he would call the Town. Vice Chairman K. Ayers asked if the Town could put the link in a Nixle text. Superintendent R. Miner answered that he would ask that in his call. The point was raised that the entity putting on the study should be the ones reaching out to Merrimack residents, and funding any public notices.

9. Superintendent's Report

Superintendent R. Miner informed the commissioners that the pump for Well 8 should arrive on July 16, 2024. New pumps for Wells 7 & 8 were ordered and they should arrive by the end of the week. The new pump for Well 7 will be installed and the old one will be repaired and kept as a backup. The new pump for Well 8 will be kept as a backup.

Superintendent R. Miner shared with the commissioners that the previous Foreman's last day was July 10, 2024, as he took a new position with NHDES. The position of Foreman is still open, and MVD would like to keep it open for a little bit, noting that they have someone in mind for it, in-house.

At this time, Chairman Provencher shared that, after five years, it was the last meeting for the Recording Secretary, Amanda McKenna. The commissioners wished her and her family well.

10. Questions from the Public/Press - None

ADJOURNMENT

**MOTION BY COMMISSIONER K. AYERS TO ADJOURN
MOTION SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER E. CLEMENT**

**MOTION CARRIED
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The July 15, 2024 meeting of the Board of Commissioners was adjourned at 6:51 p.m.

Submitted by Amanda McKenna, Recording Secretary