



CITY OF NEW BEDFORD

Department of Public Infrastructure

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER

May 12, 2017

MINUTES OF THE NEW BEDFORD WATER BOARD HELD ON MAY 11, 2017 DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE CONFERENCE ROOM

CITY CLERKS OFFICE
NEW BEDFORD, MA
2017 MAY 19 A 11:43
CITY CLERK

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Jonathan Mitchell at 3:38 P.M.

Present: Mayor Jonathan Mitchell
Marilyn Gonsalves
Carl Natho
Councilor Naomi Carney

There was no one in attendance for open session.

There was no old business.

On a motion by Carl Natho and seconded by Marilyn Gonsalves the minutes from the November 09, 2016 meeting were unanimously voted to approve and accept.

New Business:

A. Commissioner's Report

1. Report on Billing- Erin Lopes, Water Register

- The single billing cycle started in January of this year and it has been going quite smoothly, it has made understanding of the bill for our residents much easier.
- We are strictly sticking to our quarterly shut off procedure for any account overdue by 45 days, and we are currently in this procedure now.
- We are also working on our Inter municipal Agreements for Potable Water as well as Wastewater Services with the town of Acushnet.
- I have spoken with the new Commissioner of Freetown (Bob Parker) where our agreement is only for Potable water that we would like to renew, but he is also looking to possibly have some new construction in an area where wastewater could be available and wants to look into having the service in the future.

Commissioner commented, "None of the Inter Municipal Agreements right now have been signed. They have not been signed in a couple of years. I met the new Town of Acushnet Administrator; he wants to get this resolved. We have a few issues on the Water and WasteWater side we need to resolve. In the next couple of weeks, we are going to get the Inter Municipal Agreements brushed up and signed, and then we will sit down with the towns. There unfortunately is no government and nobody there to talk to; they have always relied on New Bedford in years past. We want them to pay their fair share, of course they squawk at the value of our water, they don't want to pay an increase, because they know it will be passed on to their customers. We have to pay so they have to pay also."

Councilor Naomi Carney asked the Commissioner, "What is their increase?"

The Commissioner responded, "Their increase is what our increase is."

Carl Natho asked the Commissioner, "How many agreements are there?"

Commissioner responded, "There are 4- Freetown, Acushnet, Dartmouth and Fairhaven."

Councilor Naomi Carney asked, "The only issue is the Billing?"

Commissioner responded, "Yes."

Mayor Mitchell asked, "How much of each of these towns in general are served by our water system?"

Charlie Kennedy responded, "In Freetown roughly 500 customers, coming in from the transmission mains from Quitticas going to high hill. Acushnet roughly has 7,000 customers, which is the whole west side of Acushnet, adjacent to New Bedford. Dartmouth serves between 9,000-10,000 customers; they draw out of our reservoir, to their pump station, which is near High Hill in Dartmouth. They can serve most of their town, if they have high demand. Last year they were using 2 million a day. They tie into our system in Buttonwood park area; however their public water system is throughout town, not too much in North Dartmouth, where it is more rural. If they have high demand and they can't meet their demand, they can draw from us. They have 2 large elevated tanks off Allen Street near Tucker Lane and also down on Smith Neck Road and near Wal-Mart on Cross Road. They have a wide distribution system. Fairhaven takes off of Coggeshall and The Fairhaven Bridge and their usage is Emergency only."

Mayor asked the Commissioner, "It is fair to say, that it is generally in the city best interest to expand the customer base because it spreads cost?"

The commissioner responded, "Absolutely. It is value for us. The plant is running at 2/3 capacity, we could ramp that up 3 times as much as its doing now, it only produces around 14 million daily."

Charlie Kennedy responded, "We have a registered volumn of 18 million we are averaging 12 million. We have never exceeded those values on an average daily basis. For the last 20years we have averaged around the 12 million mark."

2. Report on Treatment Plant- Charles Kennedy

- I would like to introduce our new Chief Operator, Michael Poitras; he's been with us about 3 months now. He is like my right hand man. He replaced David Texeira who retired in January. Michael oversees operation staff mainly; he assigns everyone work in the morning. We own 31 Acres of Watershed Property which we have to manage, which he has been working with the crew out there. Mike is learning both managing the plant, and operations of the plant. Also in regards to staffing we have 2 new employees that came in as grade 1, they are working toward their Grade 2 presently. To be an operator you have to be a grade 3, and they are working to their grade. In the fall they will be taking the pre requisite class for Grade 3, so by early next year, hopefully if things go well, we will have 2 T3 potential shift operators to operate the plant.
- Pond Levels- At this present time we are half a foot above what our target would be at this point of the season. In May, we target full pond and we are actually ½ foot above full pond. We are discharging quite a bit of volume down the drainage river (Nemasket River), which goes out to the Taunton River, then goes out through Mt. Hope Bay, and back to the ocean. This is normal this time of year. It is good that we had a wet spring. So things are going well on that end.

Mayor Mitchell asked Charlie Kennedy, "What would happen if we had really dry weather last year, and just for the sake of playing cautiously, we needed more than we otherwise would".

Charlie Kennedy responded, "Well what happened in 2010 was what could happen to us, and did happen to us. Prior to 2010 we would be a foot and a half above full pond, and be glad about it, because we could always eventually draw down. Unfortunately in 2008-2009 we had two rainy years.

March of 2010 we had 16 inches of water. Everything was flooded and everyone that lives around the pond was not happy. There is a lot of people involved, competing interest, that meet on a quarterly basis. The groups that meet are; the fisheries, the residents that live along long pond, and the DEP. We meet and hammer out seasonal targets. We have never got as low as we did last year, it was outstanding that we got that low last year, our guidelines work well. Even though we had a dry spring we have never reached full target going into the summer. We evaluate it on a quarterly basis with all parties involved, and go from there."

Carl Natho asked "Weren't we close to crisis mode last year?"

Commissioner responded, "Yes we were, we were asking for a voluntarily water ban last year."

Charlie Kennedy continued his report on the Treatment Plant:

- Our transmission main pipeline, we have cleaned a 1.1 mile stretch of pipeline. There were trees that had a 4-10 inch diameter that were growing in close proximity to the mains that were cleared.
- We will be doing sampling for lead in July, August and September.
- Repairs and Maintenance: The walls and troughs of all six filter basins were cleaned. All hardware was inspected and checked for tightness. Presently the sediment on all the basins are being drained and cleaned. Scraping equipment is being inspected for wear and repaired as needed.
- General maintenance is being done in the 3,000 acres of city owned watershed land.
- The electrical upgrade and chemical feed systems replacements design is complete, and is presently being advertised for bidding.
- The air conditioning equipment at the plant will be replaced soon.

3. Report on Distribution Process- Ymane Galotti, Superintendent of Water

Distribution Update since January:

- 10 Hydrants repairs/replaced
- 72 Lead services replaced, on track for 200 replacements per year.
- 8 main breaks/leaks repaired immediately.
- 620 hydrants flushed so stagnant water does not cause issues.
- 119 Gate Valves were exercised.
- We replaced large Diameter Valves- (2) 30", (1) 20", and (2) 12." We subcontracted this out to Revoli Construction as part of their contract.
- We initiated the Lucity Program to the Water Distribution Operations, as the guys flush hydrants they can enter it on the I Pad.
- We have cleared 1.1 miles of trees along transmission main.
- Annual Statistical Report- Happy to report that we were at only 6.9% of unaccounted for water. This is quite an improvement from previous years. There are cities in the country that are at 20% or 30% of unaccounted water. Unaccounted water could be leaks in the system or people stealing water.
- Consumer Confidence Report will be in the mail with the Water Bills, it includes our website information so residents can look up if they have lead service, and information on how to get it replaced. We passed all the requirements for the state .
- We have initiated this year's Forest Management Plan for Watershed. We have cleared out sections and have planted new trees.
- We awarded the AMI Radio Metering System to Neptune -Data Collection Unit Propagation Study and Installation. We will have uniform meters throughout the city, which will collect information throughout the city.
- 48" Valve Repair was completed.

Mayor Mitchell asked the Commissioner, "Do we have the right to inspect the large meters in big industrial buildings that consume large amounts of water, say, if they are a business of a certain size?"

Commissioner Arruda Responded, "Yes we can absolutely, that's our equipment." If we suspect something we can go and check it out, it's in the Water Board Regulations."

Forbes Street Water Main:

- 800lf ductile iron water main replacing AC
- Upgrading from 6" to 8" water main improves available fire flow in area and meets AWWA recommended standards
- 13 services replaced, all copper existing

Electrical Upgrade:

- Decommissioning and removal of (2) 25,000 gallon and (1) 3,000 gallon fuel tanks. We have large fuel tanks on site, which are double vaulted. They were primarily for our generator, we are upgrading to a gas generator, which will be much safer.
- Soda Ash and Lime Chemical Feed Equipment Replacement- This includes pumps, tanks, mixers, instrumentation, control panels, soda ash feeder, lime slaker, and the silo pumping.
- We are converting old C12-gas room to a new electrical room to fit new equipment.
- Average useful life of the electrical equipment including cables is 25-30 years, currently all are 43 years old.
- We are replacing 13.2 kV systems including the cables.
- We are upgrading to "Smart MCCs" for future automation once SCADA upgrade is in place. These will document data and monitor more of what the pumps are doing.
- Replacing all 480V feed system and 2,400V transformers.
- Upgrading Generator to Natural Gas- Cleaner Energy and reduce risk of contamination.
- Additive Alternate – Pumps, Motors, VFD's and MCCs for 2400V System.

Councilor Naomi Carney asked, "How long will the upgrades take?"

Ymane responded, "About 2 years."

Carl Natho asked, "Will you have to shut the system down?"

Ymane responded, "We have the capability of shutting down and use the reservoir and supply the system. We have had shut downs before and used the reservoir with no issues."

Councilor Naomi Carney proposed a question to Ymane, "What is the estimate of cost for the upgrades?"

Ymane responded, "The Estimate of cost is 15.9 Million."

Mayor Mitchell asked, "Do we have sensors that detect leaks, etc in the Water and Wastewater systems? What do we have in the way of sensors outside the plant?"

Erin Lopes responded, "We have had Ecoder Meters for the past 5 years that detect leaks for properties. It pulls readings twice a day. It is the register that is on top of the meters."

Ymane commented, "Jamie Ponte, The Superintendent of Wastewater and I, had met with a company called Innovations. They have a pilot program which would include sensors at discharge points. This is an extremely expensive program to purchase all the sensors and also to maintain them. The pilot program would only give sensors at 2 locations and this would not be effective unless at all locations." We are looking at this, but it is in the back of our minds at this point. There is the immediate need for the infrastructure where the funding needs to go before we get to that point. This was one of our ways of looking at outweighing it."

Commissioner Arruda responded, "We have Electronic Meters on the Wastewater Side at dozens of man holes in our system, measuring any dry weather discharges, from the tip of the Acushnet River all the way to Clark's Point. Dry weather discharges, we monitor them as part of our Administrative Order for EPA, they are at various locations throughout the city. When it rains it's a wet weather discharge, we can't

control that, it is uncontrollable. Once that subsides after 24 hours, you don't want any more going into the outfall, so if it goes after that point, it's a dry weather discharge, the rain didn't cause it so there is a problem, either someone has cross connected or their sewer is going into the drain. We have to go investigate upstream and we have to put dyes in the manholes and dyes in people's homes".

Commissioner Arruda addressed the Board Members regarding the budget, "We had budgeted our water budget for FY17 at \$11.974 million, and our projected revenue is \$14 million, so we will have a surplus of approximately \$2Million dollars, which is phenomenal. Our stabilization account sits at 3.5million dollars.

B. Commissioner's report: Current Projects

1. Quitticas WTP Rehabilitation- Electrical Dist. System & Chemical Feed Systems
Proposed Start Date: 2017-2020 Total Cost \$23,302,000
2. Lead Service Replacement Program Phase 1- We are one of the few communities that are doing this, allot of other communities are just doing it up to the curb stop, and leaving the rest on the residents. This is a Grand Slam.
Total Cost \$11,863,000
3. Large Meter and AMI Upgrade Program
Total Cost \$7,225,000
4. Union Street Project- On the Water side we are replacing the water main on Union Street. The council just gave final approval about 2 weeks ago, you will see dig safe out there sometime next week. The company will start doing a few test bits in there and order the materials. The next four or 5 weeks you will see them out there in earnest.
5. Valve Project- We have one more valve to do in the South Second Street area, once done that project is completely done and we can move on from there.

C. Proposed Projects:

1. Water Main Replacement on Forbes Street- We are doing that in house, far north end of city, it runs westerly off of Acushnet Avenue, the guys have been there for 2 days and we have probably about a 100 feet about in. The great thing is the only cost to the City of New Bedford and the residents is the material, because we are doing it ourselves, installing the water main in the ground.

The Commissioner had Ymane discuss the following: The whole project will be about 800 linear feet. We are actually really lucky that the DPI has the capability of replacing these water mains; it is a huge expense otherwise, especially when you know you have to pay prevailing wages to contractors. This is a replacement of an asbestos cement pipe, so we are abandoning in place, and constructing along side of it. The guys are really knowledgeable and work really effectively so we are really lucky we have an awesome crew that knows the Water System well enough to install it. I have been going to the distribution classes from other towns and they would not even touch a project like this it would be contracted out at multiples higher costs then what we are doing it for. That is similar with a lot of the lead service replacements that we are working on too, we have done 72 so far and we are very lucky that the crews are fast and are efficient at doing that and they do it well. I didn't mention either, the majority of those were all the way to the meter, as part of our last water board meeting we had the regulation changed so if it is on a road, where there is construction or a new water main being built that it would be on the city, to replace up to the meter so we don't have the partial that have been an ongoing issue. Areas that have been under construction we have replaced those and cleared out that whole area, it has been a really big improvement.

Mayor Mitchell asked Ymane, "Are we finding, or running into situations where the service line goes under the porch or something where we can't really get to it?"

Ymane Responded, "The guys got this, no problem. They haven't had any issues, they work with the homeowner, it might be a little more finagling they have to do, but they pull it right through they won't

dig. They will dig on one end and they will take it off at the meter, and to simplify it, you tie the copper to the lead service and pull. There is an art to pulling it, if you pull it too hard, you will break the lead, now you are in trouble. If you know how to do it, when you pull it out, it will pull the copper out right behind it.

With that being said on Forbes Street we are upgrading the water main from a 6 inch to an 8 inch, getting rid of the Asbestos Cement pipe which is another one of our priorities to get rid of asbestos pipe throughout the city. Not because it has an impact on our water quality, but mostly because if there are breaks, often they break frequently, and it is dangerous to the guys working on it, and you just don't want to have it in the city. Although it is a clean pipe, hydraulically it is a great pipe to have, at least in the city, but other than that there is no benefit to it. There are about 13 services on that water main that will end up getting replaced. They are all copper already, so we won't have any lead services to replace there, but it will still be an improvement at least on that end. It will also meet the AWWA recommendations of maintaining 8" water mains throughout the city; you want that to be a minimum where you have hydrants, versus a 6". It will be a big improvement. They have had several breaks on that street before."

Commissioner Arruda commented, "They have had several breaks on Acushnet Avenue, from St. Anne's Credit Union all the way down into Freetown. All the streets on the west side, we get breaks all winter long. Almy Street we just replaced the main last year, Morton Ave needs a new main. There are various streets that need new mains in there. What is unfortunate is those streets run at a grade pitch, from the avenue down, and these water mains for some strange reason, love to break at the Acushnet Ave side and they will take \$80,000 worth of pavement with them, that is the problem. The problem isn't going out there and replacing the water main and fixing it, that is something you can do without a problem, it is the damage it causes, that is the problem. It takes driveways with it, makes a huge mess. So we are chipping away slowly but surely at all the streets up in the north end there."

Charlie Kennedy commented, "That is all part of the high service zone too, we got a booster pump station right near Fire Station #5 and that boost that pressure, because that is a low pressure area without that booster pump station. If you get a main break, what it does is exceeds the capacity of the station, the station shuts down and the operators have to keep it down. Now everyone in that zone is going to have 20psi less pressure until that main break gets stabilized. We get customer complaints because of that. It's a fragile area because of the asbestos cement pipes and old cast iron pipes. So it is a good thing that we are doing this, and Forbes Street is one of the bad boys."

Commissioner Arruda commented, "And that is our presentation."

Mayor Mitchell asked the Water Board, "Does anyone have any questions?"

Carl Natho asked the Commissioner, "High hill is that just on hold, the new cover?"

Commissioner Arruda responded, "Yes, we are doing the electrical, once they are done with the electrical, we will go right into the next project. The cover is the next big project. The engineers, we need to give them one or two projects to focus on, once they design all of that, we will jump onto the next one."

Ymane responded, "We also didn't want to do both at the same time, having the plant at risk, and having to rely on the reservoir, or vise versa, we wanted to do one before the other."

Councilor Naomi Carney asked a question, "I just want to go back to the other cities and towns contracts that we have not renewed in a couple of years. Our residents water bills have gone up, we have increased it, so have the towns been paying less than the residents of the city, or have we increased them but we don't have a contract?"

Commissioner responded, "Their rates have gone up, we just don't have a signed contract."

Councilor Naomi Carney asked, "So when we are raised, they are raised?"

Commissioner Arruda responded, "That is correct."

Councilor Naomi Carney asked, "Do they pay the exact amount, or do they pay slightly more?"

Erin Lopes responded, "They pay slightly more, the city pays \$2.45 per CCF on water, the Town of Acushnet pays \$3.18. All the Towns are at the same rate as each other. This upcoming July we are due to increase again, due to the Water Board vote last year. The city will go up to, I believe, \$2.87, I'm sorry I do not have the exact number but the towns will go up to \$3.62 per CCF on the water side."

Commissioner Arruda responded, "We upgraded all the meters that go into the towns, again the meters were old and not calibrated, unaccounted for water. So when the new meters starting registering the new accurate numbers, that ruffled allot of feathers because that bill went up."

Councilor Naomi Carney responded, "So actually it is just doing their contracts over, bringing them up to date so we have up to date contracts and they follow the same thing from that point on?"

Commissioner responded, "Absolutely."

Councilor Naomi Carney asked, "When will be scheduling the next Water Board Meeting?"

Commissioner Arruda responded, "We would like to have 2 Meetings a year, in the spring and fall."

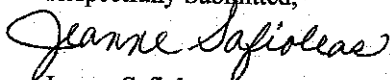
Councilor Naomi Carney commented, "If anything comes up, you can always call us, and we can schedule a meeting."

Commissioner Arruda responded, "Absolutely."

The meeting did not have to go into executive session; there was no one from the public present.

On a motion by Councilor Naomi Carney and second by Carl Natho, the Water Board Meeting was adjourned at 4:41PM.

Respectfully Submitted,



Jeanne Safioleas
Water Board Clerk