

**MINUTES OF THE FRANKLIN SELECTBOARD
PUBLIC HEARING
MONDAY, AUGUST 25, 2014 @ 7:00 P.M.
HOMESTEAD-FELCO ROOM**

Members Present: Peter Magnant, Yvon Dandurand, Brooks Sturtevant, Edmund Rainville and Andrew Godin.

Guests: John Kiernan, Phelps Engineering; Jes Alexant, Marshall Ploof, Robert Irish, Gerald Gates, Alan Brouillette, George Godin, Brian Barnum, David Bennion & Pam Greene, Gilbert & Betty Dewing, Maureen Sodaro, Kerry Boyle, Cecil King, Kim Gates & Burt Maynard, Corinna Stanley & Scott Korhonen, Richard & Mary Boudreau, Hugh Gates, Mike Lawyer and Justin Rainville.

Peter Magnant called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. The pledge of allegiance was said; agenda for meeting was reviewed.

Franklin Fire District #1 merger:

Peter stated that the Select board has approved the charter for the merger between the fire district and the Town; the fire district also voted & approved the merger. Peter introduced John Kiernan with Phelps Engineering who has been assisting the Town with this merger as well as all the new State regulations that need to be met.

John gave some back ground on himself as well as Phelps Engineering; there are many fire districts around the state that are no longer able to be run by volunteers and that are looking to their towns for assistance. John discussed the many different ordinances, bylaws, policies and procedures that must be done with a fire district as well as the clerical and financial responsibilities; a paid, state certified operator will need to be hired to support the water system. John noted that the infrastructure that the Town would be taking over is in very good condition because in 1990 the system was upgraded, low risk for having to make large repairs/investments right away. The State permit notes 7-10 deficiencies that need to be corrected, John and the select board have reviewed the deficiencies and there could be up to \$100,000 of potential infrastructure repairs/upgrades to come into full compliance with the water supply rules. On the same note, there would be the expectation that water rates would increase from \$200 per year per unit (possible doubling) due to that work begin done and the now incurred operator cost. The average household water system rate in the State of Vermont is \$400-\$600 per year. There is some grant assistance but they are dependent on the water systems user rates being at least \$450-\$500 per year. Peter M questioned whether the Town would have a better or less of a chance for obtaining any grants because it's municipally owned. John stated should not make a difference as the water district is its own municipality. Costs that were identified for things that need attention in the water system have been submitted in an application for funding request, John stated that the \$100,000 funding may be available at 3% for 20 years, but water user rates would need to increase to make that possible. Household income and interest rates was discussed further by John.

Kim Gates questioned the annual operating cost \$10,000-\$20,000 per year for operator; does that take into account any system maintenance? John stated it does not, it's just an estimate. Other line items in the budget such as administration, billing, permit fees, etc. were discussed as well as daily duties of the system operator. Marshall stated that one of the new requirements from the State is that the system be checked daily, it goes along with the installing of the main meter that needs to be read every day.

Kim questioned the line item for \$100,000 capital improvements. John stated that it entails the addition of the meter that monitors the water coming out of the source and another meter that monitors the outflow of water into the system for users; another part of that line is adding a system for chlorinating that is available daily and can control the quantity that is added as needed.

Robert Irish wanted further clarification on the state certified operator requirement. It was discussed with John and he also noted that the state encourages there to also be an alternate operator available, but that person does not have to be certified, only available in the event of an emergency.

Cecil King questioned the ph balancing of the water system. John stated at this time there is only sampling done of lead & copper, the ph balancing/testing is on the State's list of deficiencies for the water system. Monitoring locations of the system and chlorinating were discussed further.

John recommended that if the Town vote on Tuesday, August 26, 2014 is a positive one, that the fire district representatives and the Town set up a meeting at the State to review the specific issues with the water system and set up a timeline. Peter noted that the state legislature still has to approve the charter. Plan of merger is very important, may take months to get everything transferred over.

Hugh Gates questioned if the existing fire district loan could be rolled over to the 3% rate, John stated that the funding source that is being looked at does not refinance loans; the grant money comes from EPA to finance capital projects. Marshall & John spoke about the existing loan, user rates and what is done with that rate money as well as bond votes.

Robert Irish questioned what the options are if the vote fails. John stated that it's a municipal entity that will not just dissolve on its own, the permit to operate and ownership of the system will still have to be dealt with. Brian Barnum noted that the costs & duties will still be there regardless of which entity runs the water system, voting against the article will not save any money.

Peter read the ballot wording for article 1 out loud to all in attendance for the August 26, 2014 vote.

George Godin questioned who is going to pay for everything if they vote is passed. Peter responded that it will still be self-sustaining through the current rate payers; the Town will just be assuming all duties, bylaws, ordinances, policies, etc.

The board thanked John and he exited the meeting.

Northwest Solid Waste District:

Peter reviews our current SWIP requirements; in the past we shared costs with Highgate for Household Hazardous Waste but Highgate has joined the district recently, leaving the cost to be borne by Franklin alone. The Towns SWIP plan requires them to hold two HHW days per year, one event costs \$3000 plus printing, advertising and administrative cost. For the Town to host the two days it would cost \$7,015 annually; the Town does receive a \$2,000 ANR grant yearly to offset that cost. The cost to join is \$2.50 per capita (\$3,512) for buy-in to the assets/liabilities of the district and can be spread over 5 years; annual yearly cost of \$1.00 per capita (\$1,405); annual fee for the first five years would be \$2107.50 per year.

Kim Gates questioned the increase in rates at the NSWWD over the years. Peter stated it was his understanding that it had been stable at \$1.00 per capita for many, many years.

Vote has to be had Town wide to approve the joining of the district.

Peter read the ballot wording for article 2 out loud to all in attendance for the August 26, 2014 vote.

Traffic Ordinance:

Peter noted the addition of a stop sign at the intersection of Dewing Road and Towle Neighborhood Road coming from State Park Road. A stop sign has also been added coming off Lake Road headed westerly on to Morses Line Road.

The board has proposed reducing speed on Dewing Road from State Park Road/236 to the Berkshire Town Line, Dewing Shore Road is already 25 mph; current speed limit is 35 mph.

Justin Rainville questioned the status of the work on the Middle Road, Morses Line Road and Route 120 intersection. Andy talked about the intersection design, still awaiting final approval from the AOT Engineer before any pavement is removed. Peter stated that the board is trying to get VTrans to make that intersection a priority and have it redesigned to a 4 way stop. The placement of rumble strips was discussed.

Discussion was had on Dewing Road and Towle Neighborhood Road intersection as well as signage. Scott & Corinna gave background on the intersection and what has been occurring in the area of their house since the road was paved; there have been 3 accidents there this year with two of them causing damage to their fence, people are using this road as a shortcut now from Berkshire. Corinna stated that the issues have been increasing since the road was paved, would like the boards help in remedying the situation. Traffic signs were discussed as well as the reducing of the speed. The possibility of shimming the road to reduce the banking was also discussed. Board will revisit the traffic ordinance changes and take into consideration the feedback that they have received from this meeting before issuing a final draft.

Dewing Road Bridge Project:

Peter reviewed the timeline for the project:

Week one-starting September 2, 2014 will entail mobilizing and starting the porta dam process.

Week two-excavate and prep for the bridge placement, take the existing culverts out; Ruggiano Engineering will do a site visit to be sure that plans are being complied with.

Week three-set & place the bridge and back fill; Ruggiano Engineering will do a final site visit

Week four- finish stone, removal of porta dam

Week five- complete road work & guardrail

Brooks/Yvon made a motion to adjourn the meeting. All members voted in favor, motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Sara Rainville, Assistant Town Clerk
August 29, 2014

These minutes are not official until approved at the Select board's next regular meeting.

Approved September 10, 2014