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John M. Driscoll, *General Manager*

WATER DIVISION

Water Commissioners' Meeting December 15, 2020

Members present were: Clerk/Secretary Chris Stewart
Member Gregg Edwards

Employees present were: General Manager (GM) John Driscoll
Water Superintendent (WS) Ron Davan
Business Manager (BM) Jennifer Belliveau

The meeting was called to order at 6:03 p.m. by Chris.

The agenda was approved on a motion by Gregg seconded by Chris, 2-0 in favor.

The minutes November 18, 2020 were approved on a motion made by Gregg, seconded by Chris, 2-0 in favor.

Old Business:

The GM informed the Board that the Orchard Ln Total Reconstruction had been complete for several months now. He said that when the project was first looked at the estimated costs was going to be around \$1,600,000, with the Water Plant contributing \$108,000 towards the project. The bids came in at approximately half of the original estimate figure, reducing the Water Plant's needed contribution to just \$7,000. Chris asked what streets were possibly next, the WS said they would stay in East Templeton, and High St or Sawyer St were both possible next project sites.

The GM discussed with the Board the Maple St Well #2 Culvert that is necessary in order to access Well #2 with any kind of equipment or vehicle. The cost of this project is now significantly more than the GM or WS ever thought it could be, after all, at the end of the day it is still just a culvert. The Water Plant only needs Maple St Well #2 for a handful of weeks out of any water year, and the gallons that this well cannot be replaced by working Well #1 any harder, based on pump tests going back to the 1970s. The WS showed the Board the plans for this culvert replacement, which is now a \$500,000 job (mostly due to wildlife presence). The WS has reservations on this new culvert design on the fill material that is being called for to place in the culvert drain pipe; due to the Birch Hill Dam's being flooded most years in April/May he that all of this expensive fill will be repeatedly washed away. The GM suggested that the WS find out from T&B where another such culvert is in use nearby, but he was not sure where this would be. Tom B suggested that the WS contact Ron Amidon who supposedly builds these types of culverts. The WS said that he would contact him and find out.

The GM had second draft handout for the Board from T&B's Water Rate Study. The GM said that Page 4 represents our estimated Budget figures based on Page 5's capital projects to be completed. He said that at his request the Patriots Rd water main replacement project had been removed from the capital project list. The GM stated that the Water Plant would have to experience 30 or more water main breaks annually in order to justify a \$4,500,000 cost for this 2-mile water main replacement. He said that about a third of this cost would be the various fill materials to be used to cover up the new water main. The GM told the Board that the second draft still has the 2 scenarios "A" and "B" have rates by service type and by service size, respectively. Scenario A has strategic quarterly and usage charges which are the same rates across all seven of our water rate schedules. Scenario B features different quarterly charges for each of our water rate schedules. The GM thought that Scenario B may be more attractive this go-around since residential customers would pay the lowest quarterly charges. Examples of the scenarios' effects on our customers in FY2022 are shown below:

	Scenario A	Scenario B
Residential	\$171.29	\$161.99, -5.4%
Agricultural	\$1,886.09	\$2,412.05, +27.9%
Commercial	\$395.58	\$802.78, +102.9%
Municipal	\$347.46	\$674.95, +94.3%
Industrial	\$468.52	\$1,397.66, +198.3%
Other Institutions	\$78.06	\$73.84, -5.4%
Irrigation Only	\$51.97	\$66.06, +27.1%
All Rates:	\$206.69, +11.0%	\$195.52, +5.0%

The GM asked T&B to do some shifting of the capital projects so that the first 3-4 years of water rate increases wouldn't be quite as severe as in the first draft. The GM said that with either scenario we adopted that he would make sure the projects that are critical to infrastructure weren't left to permanent back-burner status. Used, that means the rates are extremely important. The WS said the people with the larger meters are making money on the use of the water opposed to a homeowner. Tighe and Bond is waiting for the GM to get back to them.

New Business:

The GM had a handout for the Board for FY2021 Water Gallons & Revenues thru Q2 (preliminary). The Q2 billing for residential customers was up 17% from last year. Overall sales from gallons used increased by \$46,000 for FY2021.

The GM informed the Board on the FY2021 Water Meters purchased. He bought 300 more meters than anticipated even though we are not replacing them at this time due to COVID-19. We will re-evaluate in March 2021 to see if COVID-19 cases are down so we can begin entering homes.

The GM spoke about the problems with Truck #33. He said that the Water Plant had spent around \$9,000 since July 2020 on it for repairs. The truck is 10+ years old and the cab mounts have rusted away. The WS had some quotes for a new Chevrolet and a new Ford for purchase; the former was 4-7 weeks out for delivery while the latter was on the lot at present. The pricing was comparable. The WS expressed concerns about taking water vehicles to Salvador's and having it sit there several days before it's worked on. Mathieu has historically been able to work on our trucks right away. Chris stated we should get what best suits our needs. Gregg suggested we hold off on a purchase vote till Dana is at the meeting to chime in.

There being no other Open Session business to discuss, on a motion by Gregg, seconded by Chris, 2-0 in favor, the Water Commissioners' Meeting adjourned at 6:54 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

John M. Driscoll



General Manager