

VILLAGE OF MORRISVILLE
WATER AND LIGHT REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

April 3, 2024
Wednesday

5:30PM
MW&L Office

PRESENT:

Trustees: Tom Snipp, Bob Heanue, Brad Limoge (via Zoom) and Carl Fortune

Staff: Scott Johnstone, Penny Jones and Kevin Newton

Guests: Todd Thomas, Etienne Hancock and Don McDowell

Public: Tom Cloutier

1) CALL REGULAR MEETING TO ORDER:

Chairman Snipp called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM.

2) CONSIDER AGENDA ADJUSTMENTS: None.

3) PUBLIC COMMENT: Tom Cloutier wanted to have a discussion about Green River as all he knows is what he has read in the paper. Scott pointed out that it was an agenda item for the Annual Village Meeting but he was more than happy to sit with Tom separately and answer any questions. Mr Cloutier pointed out that the Selectboard have on their next agenda a discussion about the future of the Oxbow and wondered if the Trustees would do the same as anything done at the Oxbow might directly affect Plant #2. He also questioned how the board can have an Executive Session to “discuss items excepted from open meeting laws...”. If it is an open meeting, then why would there be anything left for Executive Session. Scott stated that there are certain reasons in the State law that allows a body to deliberate and talk about things in Executive Session. This one, in particular, relates to a contract. So, if the folks we are negotiating with watch our video they can get an upper hand on us.

4) APPROVE MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING HELD MARCH 15, 2024:

The minutes need to be amended to reflect that Tom Snipp was NOT in attendance at the March 15th meeting. On a **motion** by Trustee Fortune and seconded by Trustee Heanue, the board approved (4-0) the amended minutes of the regular meeting held on March 15, 2024.

5) CHECK REGISTERS:

Questions were asked and answered on a couple of items. Then, on a **motion** by Trustee Heanue and seconded by Trustee Fortune, the board approved (4-0) the check registers.

6) PLANNING COUNCIL & DRB RE-APPOINTMENTS:

On a **motion** by Trustee Fortune and seconded by Trustee Heanue, the board approved (4-0) reappointing Josh Goldstein and Jamie Morris to the Planning Council and Mary Ann Wilson and Gary Nolan to the DRB.

7) OTHER BUSINESS:

a. Zoning Proposal Discussion:

Todd Thomas & Etienne Hancock were present to discuss where the Planning Council was in their considerations. They are looking to see if they have any big, fatal flaws. Todd stated that they were

pretty happy with their zoning process until the State upended the apple cart with Act 100. They are about to vote on a pretty significant zoning change. Act 100 basically makes single-family zoning illegal in rural areas and makes towns null out anything less than 4 units per dwelling in the village areas connected to water and sewer. The PC is proposing changing the minimum lot size outside the village from 80,000 to 120,000 square feet. To meet the State's density requirements in the Village, maximum lot size would be 8,000 square feet or less. This seems to be the most controversial part. New development will also need to "fit" in with the surrounding buildings in regard to architecture, size, etc. Scott feels that we are at the very beginning of a very long marathon with the State believing they have some mandate to do housing and to put it everywhere even though the biggest need is in Chittenden County and they are trying to have a one-size-fits-all approach. Towns will always be playing catch up with the State trying to figure out what they can restrict next to knock a town's solutions out. Without these zoning changes, if someone wants to build 4-unit apartment blocks on Elmore Street, DRB cannot stop them. If someone wants to build a building taller than our fire truck ladder, DRB cannot stop them. Hopefully they can with these zoning changes.

b. Annual Meeting Planning:

Shap Smith is all set to be moderator and Sara Haskins has secured the VFW for the meeting. The meeting will start at 6:30 PM and Village Reports are now available. Overall reaction to the recent news articles about abandoning generation at Green River and having the State own the dam have been positive with the exception of ANR acting like they had never heard of our proposal before.

c. Battery Project Discussion and Review:

A large-scale battery near the Hess Solar field is a realistic location for a future large-scale battery to help offset peaks better than Green River can. We are looking at a 20-year energy-service contract where MW&L will not own the equipment. While this will cost approximately \$60,000/month, all long-term analysis show a net savings of anywhere from \$2 million to \$7 million. Not a ton of money returned each year but the ability to shave our peaks will be priceless. Also, batteries soak up excess solar production and we have too much solar in that area. With the right inverter, the batteries could also be used to remove part of our system from the "grid" to avoid black/brown outs.

d. Management Update:

ERG has promised a timeline of the work ahead for both units at Cady's Falls. At Morrisville, we couldn't get the headgates closed on the 600-unit so the divers tried to send in an ROV to see what the problem was. While there was too much flow for the ROV to operate, the divers feel comfortable going in themselves once the river calms down a bit. Green River is running well and we are prepared for a peak this week. We continue to collect snow samples to determine recharge time for the loons.

There was a water leak on Bridge Street. It was determined to be a very old (1940's) service line that has now been discontinued. There was another water leak on Langdell Road that, again, was a customer-owned service line. The new ultrasonic water meter has been installed at Well #3 and tied into SCADA. The Best Street Water Line Project is about to go out to bid. The engineers have proposed a new water line for Harrison Avenue next year.

No sewer issues but plenty at the WWTF. A plastic spoon jammed up the centrifuge. This spoon travelled from the sludge holding tanks, through a six-inch line, through a six-inch grinder, through a six-inch double-disk pump, through its check valve underground 200' into the centrifuge room, into a three-inch pipe that necks down into a two-inch pipe and finally into a one-inch pipe. The spoon wasn't even chipped – fully intact! The last time the WWTF ran on generators (during a peak period to save \$), crews found the SBR was not separating the water from the sludge properly. Programmers found a bug in the

PLC programming and fixed it. Bugbee Springs logging continues as long as the access roads hold together. When complete there, they plan to relocate to Garfield to log a parcel MWL owns at the corner of Garfield Road and Green River Dam Road. The loggers are also going to look at possibly logging the 18 land-locked acres MW&L owns off Bridge Street. This would only be select cutting, not clear cutting. If the State “buys” the Green River dam, we would have no need to own that corner parcel. It contains a lot of gravel and, once extracted, could be developed into house lots.

We have re-issued the Request for Quotes for dredging at Plant #2. The upcoming storm is not expected to cause too many issues as winds are less than originally forecasted and temperatures are forecasted to be a little bit higher.

InvoiceCloud is still going relatively well. We only take payments over the phone in very limited circumstances. The audit is mostly complete. Penny is working on FEMA reporting.

Renewable Energy Standard passed the House and now moves to the Senate with 100% renewables by 2035. Right now the requirement is 75% by 2045. They are still pushing for a state-wide, low-income electric rate. In July and August, the Board historically only meets once per month. Scott presumes the Board does not want to meet July 3rd but July 17th instead. The Board agreed. The Futures Study just came in today so Scott has not had time to review it. However, we already know we will have to rebuild the Pratt-Read substation and Substation #4.

e. Any other Business to come before the meeting: None.

8) EXECUTIVE SESSION:

At 7:09 PM, on a **motion** by Trustee Heanue and seconded by Trustee Limoge, the Board moved (4-0) into Executive Session to discuss item(s) excepted from open meeting – Section 313 (a)(1)(A).

At 7:15 PM, on a **motion** by Trustee Limoge and seconded by Trustee Heanue, the Board moved (4-0) to come out of Executive Session.

9) ADJOURN REGULAR MEETING:

On a **motion** by Trustee Limoge and seconded by Trustee Fortune, the Board adjourned (4-0) the meeting at 7:15 PM.

Attest: Bob Heanue, Clerk