

VILLAGE OF MORRISVILLE  
WATER AND LIGHT REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

July 19, 2023  
Wednesday

5:30PM  
MW&L Office

PRESENT:

Trustees: Tom Snipp, Robert Heanue, Brad Limoge, and Carl Fortune  
Staff: Scott Johnstone, Penny Jones, Kevin Newton, and David Heller  
Guests: Robin Barnett (KBS)

- 1) CALL REGULAR MEETING TO ORDER:  
Chairman Snipp called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM.
- 2) CONSIDER AGENDA ADJUSTMENTS: None.
- 3) APPROVE MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING HELD JUNE 21, 2023:  
On a **motion** by Trustee Limoge and seconded by Trustee Heanue, the board approved (4-0) the minutes of the regular meeting held on June 21, 2023.
- 4) CHECK REGISTERS:  
On a **motion** by Trustee Heanue and seconded by Trustee Limoge, the board approved (4-0) the check registers.
- 5) AUTHORIZATION OF LIEN ON 380 BROOKLYN STREET, MORRISVILLE:  
On a **motion** by Trustee Heanue and seconded by Trustee Fortune, the board approved (4-0) the lien on 380 Brooklyn Street, Morrisville, Vermont, owned by Timothy & Leslie Magee, in the amount of \$919.33.
- 6) APPROVAL TO TERMINATE SAVINGS ACCOUNT FOR WATER DEPARTMENT:  
On a **motion** by Trustee Limoge and seconded by Trustee Heanue, the board approved (4-0) to terminate the savings account for the Water Department.
- 8) APPROVE PURCHASING POLICY:  
On a **motion** by Trustee Heanue and seconded by Trustee Limoge, the board approved (4-0) the purchasing policy for the Village of Morrisville, Vermont.
- 9) APPROVE DEBT MANAGEMENT POLICY:  
On a **motion** by Trustee Heanue and seconded by Trustee Limoge, the board approved (4-0) the debt management policy.
- 7) ACCEPT AUDIT FOR 2022 (time certain 5:45PM):  
Robin Barnett from Kittell, Branagan & Sargent was on hand to present the audit for 2022 and to answer any questions from the Board. On a **motion** by Trustee Limoge and seconded by Trustee Heanue, the board accepted (4-0) the audit for 2022.

10) OTHER BUSINESS:

a. Integrated Resource Plan Core Strategy:

Scott feels that the State will push 100% renewable standards by 2030. What the State often forgets, and the municipalities need to constantly remind them, is economics matter. If we are voiceless, there will be even more than the existing three-tiers of energy standards, there probably will be “low-income people can’t pay more than x-percent of their income”, net metering will be pushed so more net metering customers will not be paying their fair share, so everything will fall on the middle class. The Legislature appears tone deaf to this. The strategy is to get an IRP in place that adopts these policies that are coming at us anyway in expectation that we can have a seat at the table. This would allow us to bring a range of economic arguments on behalf of our rate payers. On batteries, we can go GMP’s route and push individual batteries in everyone’s basements. If you try to design a less-societally economic way to create storage, that’s what you do. You put a little, inefficient, potential fire hazard in everyone’s home. It is more economical to put in bigger, more centralized batteries to cover a neighborhood. Serve the most at the best economics of scale, the next largest group at the next best economics of scale, etc. Small individual batteries should be at the end of the lines to boost reliability. Again, we need to remind the State of the economics. An IRP allows us to make critical points that the State is seemingly not considering. No utility, including GMP, has a God-given right to be here. We are all franchisees. We have been assigned service territories by the State and the State can take them away. We have to be prepared to move forward. The Board did not have any disagreements with the proposed IRP strategy.

b. Management Update:

Penny informed the Board that the rate case has been approved at 5.16%. The State has given us 10 days to rewrite the tariffs and formulate a plan on how to refund the difference between what we applied for (and charged) and what was approved. We have asked for an extension in drafting that plan so Penny can work with our billing software company, so we can figure out how to refund to customers who have left our system, and how we will account for refunds under \$1, for instance. Penny wants to propose we figure out how much it costs for us to cut a check and use that as a cut-off level for minimum refunds. Penny also wants to propose 90 days to issue refunds.

Scott attended the recent VELCO/VPPSA meeting. The gathering was called out of worry that VELCO is trying to gain control of a lot of our electric data. They’ve always had transmission, now they want sub-transmission and even below that down to 150 kW generators. They have the authority to go to every solar panel on the system. It’s not hard to see that turning into “we’ll just operate that for you...”. There is not a single Muni in the state that is going to stand for that. It was a good, challenging, and frank discussion. Scott can’t say we reached any clear outcome yet but he did remind them that with past and current commissioners and state legislators wanting to make muni’s go away, with VELCO taking control of the electric distribution system essentially and Efficiency Vermont lobbying in the State House to take over control of load management which affects most of our costs, if you’re wondering if we are getting a little paranoid that

someone is setting up a way to get rid of us all, you're reading us right! VELCO seems to understand that we weren't just firing at them. We've got a lot more work to do with them. They made the commitment that they would not do it to us unless the State makes a law telling them to.

We've hired an architect to work on physical security at the office.

Scott finally had the big meeting with ANR on Green River Reservoir. They essentially said they could live with our framework that we presented to them. They then basically declined to do their job. The job of the ANR on issues like this is to convene all the parties and say "here is what it's going to be". Instead, they said we can live with this, now go and convince everyone else. Scott will take these actions. He did ask the Secretary and Deputy Secretary of the ANR to acknowledge that they can live with our framework which includes helping MW&L in finding a lot of money, seasonal drawdowns (less than historically done) and they will be comfortable saying that we are not creating any water quality degradation. The answer from both on all topics was affirmative. This is the first positive step in many years.

David followed up with the company we ordered a new bucket truck through. They cannot make a chassis until November which means Kiley can't take delivery until December to begin the modifications.

Scott reviewed the chain of events during the most recent flooding. Many thanks to all crews for all their extra efforts. The electric department continued to handle outages and has a lot of clean up to conduct around Plant #2, the office crews handled all customer calls (fortunately not too many angry calls), the water department worked tirelessly to clean up and get tests to Endyne in a timely fashion, and finally a big thank you to Eileen Toomey of Endyne. As a resident of this town, she put in many extra hours processing water tests not only for MW&L but many other entities. Well #3 is in good shape with the backup generator receiving most of the damage. Well #2 is probably done as it was completely flooded, all the pumps, motors, and controls were under water and are now under a very thick layer of mud and grime.

Gravel Construction has begun work on East Olive Street water & sewer lines.

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

11) PUBLIC COMMENT: None

12) EXECUTIVE SESSION: None.

13) ADJOURN REGULAR MEETING:

On a **motion** by Trustee Heanue and seconded by Trustee Limoge, the Board adjourned (4-0) the meeting at 7:11 PM.

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Attest: Robert Heanue, Clerk