

VILLAGE OF MORRISVILLE
WATER AND LIGHT REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

February 1, 2023
Wednesday

5:30PM
MW&L Office

PRESENT:

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

Staff: Scott Johnstone, Penny Jones, Kevin Newton and Pete Crowley

Public: Tim MaGee, David Ring

Absent: Travis Knapp

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 JANUARY 18, 2023:

On a **motion** by Trustee Heanue and seconded by Trustee Fortune, the board approved (4-0) the minutes of the regular meeting held on January 18, 2023.

4) CHECK REGISTERS (ACTION):

On a **motion** by Trustee Heanue and seconded by Trustee Fortune, the board approved (4-0) the check registers.

5) PLANNING COMMISSION APPOINTMENT:

Chairman Snipp verified that, as a member of the Planning Commission, voting on an appointment to that commission would not represent a conflict of interest for himself. The Planning Commission has recommended Tim MaGee to fill the vacant position on their commission. On a **motion** by Trustee Fortune and seconded by Trustee Heanue, the board approved (4-0) Tim MaGee to fill the vacant position on the Planning Commission.

6) OTHER BUSINESS:

a. Annual Meeting Planning.

April 10th will be the date of the 2023 Annual Village Meeting at the VFW at 6:30 PM. MW&L did not have anyone retire in 2022 to potentially dedicate the 2022 Annual Report to. Suggestions from management include the Grist Mill or the founders of MW&L in 1895, though neither seems like the best thought so ideas are welcome. Trustee Heanue had no problem dedicating the report to an inanimate object but suggested Green River or the hydro facilities in general. Trustee Fortune suggested dedicating it to the employees in general with a focus on the Christmas storm. Scott questioned whether the Board wanted to ask the Village voters for \$500 (or some other amount) for the Special Projects Fund given the fight about the proposed Town budget.

a. Management Update.

ERG showed up today to work on Cady's Falls. We have been processing some of Stowe's sludge as their centrifuge is down. We still send our sludge to Coventry (the only place in Vermont you can send sludge to).

The Electric Department is getting rid of the last 2400 voltage circuits. This will allow us to get rid of a lot of stock (especially transformers) for this specific voltage that will no longer be needed. We will be contracting with HBros for tree trimming. It is a three-year contract and HBros is pretty certain they can begin April 1st.

Penny has been working with Harris to get the proposed rate increase as a separate line item on customer bills. We have to get our old (pre-Covid) disconnect notice approved by the PUC.

Scott believes the next step for Green River is to sit down with the State and hammer out an agreement going forward. The biggest change in the last 14 years has been the State passing the Global Warming Solutions Act. When our permits were issued, there were no State laws about climate change. This left the State with a 1000% focus on their version of what the Clean Waters Act requires. Scott's appeal to the Secretary is that the Secretary's job is to balance that all laws have to be met while now balancing the Clean Water Act and the Clean Air Acts. The Secretary asked if we could make the case that there are negative climate impacts from this current permit, which we can. When Green River is not generating, the fall back is natural gas, which is environmentally friendlier than coal or oil. However, when there is peak usage (heat waves, cold snaps), the fall back is to coal or oil because there is not enough natural gas. By not allowing clean hydro, you are actually putting the dirtiest fossil fuels back on-line. Scott is working to complete our "case statement" to present to the ANR.

MW&L's purchased power costs for 2022 were up \$681,000. If we counted nothing else but this, it would require a 10% rate increase. \$400,000 of that was due to Cady's Falls being off-line for most of the year. \$85,000 increase is from NYPA due to increased capacity charges. McNeil Biomass did not run as much in 2022 as projected. When it runs, as part owners we not only get kWh but renewable energy credits (REC's). When McNeil is off-line, we not only have to buy replacement power but we have to buy replacement REC's.

The State approved the grant for Rock Art to install pretreatment equipment.

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

7) PUBLIC COMMENT:

David Ring believes that Town Meeting has been replaced with Australian ballot. He wanted to know what impact all the solar fields have had on MW&L. Some have been helpful as we have contracts to buy the power. Some of the solar fields have higher costs than the market but we don't have to pay transmission fees. Net metering on homes only results in homes using the power grid as their battery. During the day, they cover their own usage but at night they need power from the grid. The way that net metering is currently set up is the homeowner is not paying for the electric grid infrastructure. This causes everyone without solar on their house to subsidize those that do.

8) EXECUTIVE SESSION:

None

9) ADJOURN REGULAR MEETING:

On a **motion** by Trustee Heanue and seconded by Trustee Limoge, the Board adjourned (5-0) the meeting at 6:49 PM.

Attest: Robert Heanue, Acting Clerk