

VILLAGE OF MORRISVILLE  
WATER AND LIGHT REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

March 15, 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, David Heller

Guest: Todd Thomas

Public: Wally Reeve, David Ring (via Zoom), Etienne Hancock, Lenny Wing, Ron Stancliff, Sonny Demars, Dick Sargent and Jo

Absent: Travis Knapp

1) CALL REGULAR MEETING TO ORDER:

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

2) CONSIDER AGENDA ADJUSTMENTS:

Staff wanted to add Agenda Item 6a – Reappointments to Development Review Board (DRB) and Planning Commission (PC). On a **motion** by Trustee Heanue and seconded by Trustee Fortune, the board approved (4-0) the Agenda adjustment.

3) APPROVE MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING HELD MARCH 1, 2023:

On a **motion** by Trustee Fortune and seconded by Trustee Heanue, the board approved (4-0) the minutes of the regular meeting held on March 1, 2023.

4) CHECK REGISTERS (ACTION):

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

5) PLANNING COMMISSION APPOINTMENT:

Last night the Planning Commission voted to recommend Wally Reeve to fill the vacancy on their Board. On a **motion** by Trustee Fortune and seconded by Trustee Heanue, the board approved (4-0) appointing Wally Reeve to the vacant Planning Commission position for the remaining term of the position (2026).

6) DEVELOPMENT REVIEW BOARD ALTERNATE APPOINTMENT:

The DRB recommended Leonard Wing to fill the vacancy on their Board. On a **motion** by Trustee Fortune and seconded by Trustee Heanue, the board approved (4-0) appointing Leonard Wing to the vacant DRB Alternate position.

6a) REAPPOINTMENTS TO DRB AND PC:

On a **motion** by Trustee Heanue and seconded by Trustee Fortune, the board approved (4-0) the reappointments of Susanna Burnham to the DRB and Etienne Hancock and John Meyer to the PC.

7) OTHER BUSINESS:

a. Village Lands Discussion

a) Bugbee Springs & Bishop Marshall Path

Ron suggests the Village swapping our land-locked property with a parcel from Lamoille Family Center so LFC has a contiguous parcel and MW&L has access. Sonny Demars recommends the Village donate our land-locked parcel to the Town with the Town retaining the west side of the property and deed the east side of the property to LFC. The LFC would donate part of their parcel on Bridge Street and other property to the Town so that the Town would own from BJAMS to Bridge Street. BJAMS is only interested in conveying a permanent easement across their property adjoining the brook. Demars Properties would convey a permanent easement across their property. Trustee Heanue stated he was in favor of the trail, he was not in favor of giving the land away for nothing. Todd Thomas suggested that a deeded ROW be established on all three parcels that is big enough for a trail and possible access road in the future. That way, everyone gets access and no one is giving away land. The Board asked Sonny to see if the ROW across all three parcels would be accepted by LCF. Wally Reeve suggested the Village and LCF swap parcels with ROW's, giving LCF contiguous property with access and giving the Village land that is now accessible. Then if either party decides to sell their property in the future, they will be a lot more sellable as the parcels are no longer land-locked.

Ron would like to discuss Bugbee Springs at a future date.

b. Village Underground Utility Committee

In the new Town Plan, the Town has committed to forming a Village Underground Utility Committee. Todd Thomas stated that this future committee could not begin to find funding until they had a good understanding of the costs. Trustee Heanue pointed out that Stowe had a good reason for burying utilities – photos of the church. What does Morrisville have that would be as photogenic to justify the costs? Todd replied that was one point of the committee, to determine if there really is a need and can we afford it. Scott volunteered to sit on the committee on behalf of MW&L. The Board approved Scott volunteering for the committee with the Town appointing the rest of the committee.

c. All Electric Building Density Bonus

The Town is considering increasing potential density bonuses for all-electric building. MW&L is in favor of selling more electricity. Scott feels that MW&L can serve high-density all-electric homes. However, he feels that this is more about the direction of the development of the Village. Will the Village accept higher density? The Board was not opposed to this proposal at first glance and felt it was worth exploring.

d. Management Update

We are still waiting to hear from ERG on their schedule for work at Plant #1. They seem to be willing to have our staff assist in order to cut down on ERG's labor costs. The vertical unit will not be in operation for spring runoff but the horizontal unit will be ready in early to mid-April. Trustee Heanue recommended getting a quote for a spare set of bearings. With Mpower coming up here at the end of the month, we hope to incorporate A&E's gps mapping of the water/sewer system into our Empower maps for the electric system. Trustee Heanue has also heard of state funding for leak detection.

During the most recent snowstorm, the new linemen team worked out very well with David working in the office as Superintendent and assisting with dispatching. Crews worked for approximately 12 hours restoring power. Many thanks to Kevin's staff for bird-dogging for the line crews.

Bills have started to go out with the line item for the proposed rate increase. If the full rate increase is not approved, having it as a separate line item will make it easier for refund purposes. Tomorrow night is the State's public hearing on our proposed rate increase. This is the State's hearing and MW&L is not supposed to add input, although they did ask for an introduction statement from MW&L.

Scott had a productive meeting with Senator Welch. The Senator was curious about housing in the Village. Scott informed him that the needed infrastructure improvements that will be needed for more housing will be for with developer funds, grants, or some system cost. They also talked about Green River and how 4,000 rate payers should not bear the costs of a State Park that serves thousands of guests every year.

Environmental groups are asking FERC to make MW&L comply with the new 401 water quality certificate now rather than at the end of the FERC process. MWL will submit a response to this filing.

Scott is proposing possibly cancelling the April 19<sup>th</sup> regular meeting as there is nothing pressing and the Board will already have the Annual Village meeting to attend that month. We'll make a final decision after our regular meeting on April 5<sup>th</sup>.

In an attempt to improve our "transparency", Scott is planning on posting the Board packets on our website in addition to the minutes. They are public records but we may modify them slightly because the general public probably does not want to wade through 10-12 pages of check warrants for each meeting. The videos of the Board meetings are also public records and it would take little effort, and cost nothing, to set up a YouTube account to upload the raw videos.

VPPSA has begun their cybersecurity vulnerability assessments. VPPSA's assessment was completed yesterday and Enosburg is being done right now. MWL should have our assessment complete in the coming months.

- e. Any other Business to come before the meeting.

Chairman Snipp is concerned that our transmission line to Stowe runs right through the parcel that is being proposed as a "gravel pit" across from the airport and might be damaged by blasting and drilling the mountain. It is believed that there is no legal ROW/easement for our line but will have staff look at it. We can enter the planning process as an interested party. The Chairman asked, in absence of ROW's/easements, could we be asked/told to move our line? We have a legal right to be there and it will be very expensive to move the line, at the developer's expense. David's concern is the age of that line will not take shock waves of blasting, that it will disintegrate.

- 8) PUBLIC COMMENT:  
None

- 9) EXECUTIVE SESSION:

On a **motion** by Trustee Heanue and seconded by Trustee Limoge, the board approved (4-0) to go into Executive Session to discuss item(s) excepted from open meeting per Title 1 VSA § 313 (a)(1)(B) Union Contract at 7:17 PM.

The Board came out of Executive Session at 7:20 PM.

Page Four  
March 15, 2023

10) ADJOURN REGULAR MEETING:

On a **motion** by Trustee Fortune and seconded by Trustee Heanue, the Board adjourned (4-0) the meeting at 7:21 PM.

---

Attest: Robert Heanue, Acting Clerk