



**Cogswell Spring Water Works
Water Commission Meeting
Tuesday, August 15, 2023**

Members Present: Jerry Gilbert, Chairman; Jeff Connor, Commissioner; Bill Hall, Commissioner

Members Excused:

Guests: Jim Donison, Superintendent; New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services Representatives - Katie Curtis, Randal Suozzo, and Mat Deterling

Recording Secretary: Kelly McCutcheon

Review the Minutes from the previous meetings: 8/1/2023 regular monthly meeting.

Commissioner Connor moved to approve the minutes as amended. Commissioner Hall seconded. Motion carried 3-0.

Appointments. None

Visitors.

NHDES: New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services:

The water department has received a \$61,515.00 grant that is 100% reimbursable once submitted. There are 12 tasks to be completed on an 18-month schedule.

Task 1 will take place over the next 4 months when all assets will be located and logged in an updated map. An Arrow unit was purchased as part of the grant which has an accuracy of within 2 inches of detecting buried assets. Currently there are 580 service connections, 200 gate valves, 80 hydrants, and miles of water main.

80% of the pipes are original cast iron from 1914 – 1917 that were hand dug. Katie asked if EJ Prescott will be assisting the Water Department in this task. Jim stated they will not, and the department utilizes EJ Prescott software to manage department inventory.

One of the NHDES representatives stated that by October 2024 all water services need a lead service inventory per State ordinance, and asked Jim and the Commissioners if they are aware of any lead service pipes in the system. Jim stated he has not come across any records and Chair Gilbert stated there is no record. Commissioner Connor stated that since the majority

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were hand dug that he helped removed, 90% of the lead goose necks have been removed. Randy asked Commissioner Connor what the lead goose necks were replaced with. Commissioner Connor stated either PVC pipe or copper pipe that should be recorded on the physical cards. Task 1 is a 3-4 month project.

Task 2 consists of mapping all the pipes according to age of pipe, pipe material, and to grade the pipes on a 1-10 scale based on age and breakage records.

Task 3 will be completed with the help of the Rural Water Association that Jim met with a few weeks ago. The Rural Water Association stated they would not charge the Water Department for this service because they have also received grant funds and it would be considered double dipping. The Rural Water Association will assess the remaining life and value in the system. Jim Stated that since most of the system is cast iron from over a 100 years ago, those cast iron pipes remain in good condition. Jim stated based on the life cycle and value will determine the replacement value completed by the Rural Water Association and with Katie who will be the main NHDES contact.

Task 4 will consist of rating all the pipes and their risk factor for failure. Chair Gilbert stated there is limited risk with the pre 1970's installations and additions since historically it is all the post 1970's installations that have issues and breakage. Randy asked about the impact to the schools should there be a water main break. Chair Gilbert stated that it would not be an issue because they would be able to isolate it, so instead of being a 5 on risk of failure, that would rate as a 3 on a scale of 1-5. Katie had asked about training and ensuring the department sticks to the identified scope of work, maintaining hours worked on the grant. Jim stated he is already keeping track of hours spent working on the grant.

Task 5 will focus on currents rates and cash flow. This process will investigate steps for increased to rates based on water usage. A public town session will be needed to discuss.

Task 6 is the feasibility of levels of service. Matt asked if the department offered a higher level of service for higher rates. Jim asked Matt if water users in other towns have asked for a higher level of service. Matt stated no. Jim stated having levels of service is interesting. Randy asked if all the valves in the system work and how long has the town been without water when there is a break. Chair Gilbert stated he cannot recall a water main break that has lasted for days. Commissioner Connor agreed.

Task 7 will utilize the assistance of the Rural Water Association to determine what to set the rates at.

Task 8 is asset prioritization focusing on the life expectancy of the underground water storage tanks.

Task 9 is long term funding. Commissioner Hall stated that all projects are based on water usage and the department has not had to rely on taxes, which he would prefer to keep the

department running self-sufficiently without having to rely on taxes to complete projects. Matt asked how the department receives authorization to vote. Chair Gilbert stated at Town Meeting, and that all residents are allowed to vote regardless of if they are on the water system. Chair Gilbert also stated he does not want to rely on taxes and prefers to continue paying for projects out of revenues.

Task 10 is decision training. Katie stated that both 3-hour trainings are not mandatory but attendance at one is expected. Matt stated he does not have any trainings or seminars scheduled until 2024. Matt asked Jim if he knew what software he would be implementing into the system. Jim has not committed to one yet, but him and Steve Knight will start tomorrow on task 1. Matt asked if he would use the *EssRee* software and Jim stated yes. Matt asked if the workload is manageable, and Jim stated yes.

Task 11 is outreach. Jim will speak with other communities and asked what NHDES involvement will be. Katie stated her and Jim need to determine if monthly or quarterly updates are best based on EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) regulations. Katie will be in touch regarding EPA updates. Katie also stated she would like to be invited to the level of services and wrap up. Matt stated NHDES and the Water Commissioners need to have 3 meetings together in addition to copies of the minutes.

Randy stated the expiration for the grant is April 1, 2025.

Jim stated that Steve Knight will collect the information and rely it to Jim to add to the *EssRee?* Software, which will auto update the new inputted information. Matt asked who will maintain the software moving forward. Jim stated whoever takes over for him when he leaves the department.

Katie asked about the agreement with the Rural Water Association and if their pro-bono work with the Water Department is in a written agreement. Jim stated it is a verbal agreement. Matt asked if Jim had all the forms he needs, he does not and needs them. Dispersals for the grant only go out once a quarter in a calendar year. Jim asked how NHDES would like him and Steve Knight to record the hours worked on the grant. NHDES will get back to Jim on tracking hours.

Task 12 is the deliverables such as story map, training materials, screen shots, minutes, sample inventory, long term funding plan, level of service goals, and asset management plan. Once all the deliverables are received the final 20% of grant funds will be dispersed.

Superintendent's Report.

1. Final Meter Reads: 1 taken (73 Main Street)
2. Extractions – none taken.
3. Abatement requests – letter from 566 Western Avenue.
4. Dig Safes – 2 requests from 7/25/23 to 8/15/23.

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5. Deduct Meter application – 2 requests have been made.

Old Business.

1. Expenditures – **No update from 8/1/23 meeting.**
2. Depot Hill Tank – **No update.**
3. USACE update on Foster Well No 3 – **No update**
4. NHDES grant for \$61,515 -Asset Management Plan, **mtg 8/15/23 at 4:00 pm kickoff mtg with NHDES.**
5. Automatic Security gate grant. **No update.**
6. Patterson Road Bridge 2” watermain replacement: Henniker Directional Drilling, Jeff Martin 603-496-1912, Jeff liked the idea of boring across river to roadway with a deep pit rather than boring up the hill. He is working on a schedule and a contractor to perform this. – **No update**
7. Henniker Sand & Gravel, 72 Bradford Road cut and cap service connection and extend 6” watermain across Rte. 114 with fire hydrant –**No update.**
8. Insurance claim for damage to hydrant on Rush Road – I returned call to Police Dept (officer Amy) and informed her that the hydrant was damaged and will need to be replaced with a replacement cost of \$6,000 – **No update.**
9. Meter software for billing purchased \$15,300 with estimated annual fee starting in 2024 of \$2,000. Stiles Co has ordered and will be installing the new software in August. – **No update**
10. Develop plans for garage expansion at Davison Rd and sell garage at well field. – **No update**

New Business.

11. NHDES grant for \$61,515 -Asset Management Plan, **kickoff mtg with NHDES Discussed under Visitors**
12. Abatement requests – see attached letter from 566 Western Ave.
 - a. Commissioners appreciate the resident reaching out, but the water was processed through the system and must be paid for.
13. Cemetery Water Bills – see attached email question.
 - a. It is assumed both accounts have been merged into one account creating the confusion. Commissioner Hall stated to bill the cemetery for 2023 in January 2024. With no billing in July and only in January. Commission will abate 2023 usage.

Commissioners Concerns.

Commissioner Connor had a question on how Jim & Steve would log their hours on the grant, but that was already answered.

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Commissioner Connor asked about the property on Fairview Ave that was taken off the water system when a private well was installed. Commissioner Connor stated the property is still on town sewer and requested Jim find out how non-water properties with sewer are being billed.

Schedule next meeting: At 16:00 on September 19, 2023

Adjourn Meeting.

Commissioner Hall moved to adjourn. Commissioner Connor seconded. Motion carried 3-0.

Adjourned at 5:40pm.