



**Cogswell Spring Water Works  
Water Commission Meeting  
Tuesday, March 15, 2022**

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

**Guests:** Ryan Bumford, Chief Operator; Joe Damour, WSO; Charlie Damour, WSO;  
Josh McCutcheon, Broken Boat Farm LLC

**Recording Secretary:** Kelly McCutcheon

Review Minutes from previous meeting:

**Commissioner Connor moved to accept the February 15<sup>th</sup> minutes as amended. Chair Gilbert seconded motion carried 2-0.**

Appointments:

Joe Damour WSO and Charlie Damour WSO

Joe stated with Chief Operator Ryan leaving the water department, he wanted to propose a contract where WSO will operate the water department. There are numerous positive sides to WSO operating the water department such as not having to buy a new department vehicle. Joe stated WSO is looking for a 5-year operator contract where WSO will hire and train someone to run the department for 5 years. After the 5 years contract the employee would be ready to assume the Superintendent position should the water department wish to retain control of operations. Additionally, WSO would also put together an assets management plan for the water department.

Joe presented a spreadsheet with a list of services WSO would provide under the proposed contract. Joe stated WSO does not do snow removal, but would as part of the contract. He stated WSO would preform all the services preformed by an employee hired by the Commissioners. The contract price is \$204,000 each year of the contract or \$17,000/month. The price of the contract would be set in stone and not subject to increase for the duration of the contract.

Joe stated the contract would slightly change after the 5-year period if the employee decides to stay and work for the Water Commission, that WSO could still provide coverage if needed. Or if the Water Commission decides to extend the contract with WSO, a lower price can be achieved after someone has been trained for 5 years, since the biggest thing is getting someone trained to run the system as Superintendent.

Commissioner Connor asked if WSO would provide the same asset management service as done in Epsom. Joe confirmed and stated more with the budget.

Commissioner Hall asked if in addition to the \$204,000 yearly contract, if there would be additional charges for water main breaks and service installations. Charlie Damour stated yes but the department will already have one person there so the additional charge is for the second laborer.

Chair Gilbert asked if WSO would start the valve exercise program for curb stops, hydrants, and valves. Charlie stated yes, the department would be back on that program.

Joe stated they did not include plowing the storage tanks, but if there is 20ft of snow and the tanks need to be accessed, he'll get a loader but he is not anticipating plowing access to the storage tanks.

Joe stated as part of the asset management plan WSO would take all the department assets on google maps, water mains, gate valves, curb stops, wells, as part of the assets management plan, and list all the assets with a grade according to age and rated from high priority to low priority. This information would also be implemented into a Capital Improvements Plan.

Joe stated an engineer is needed for water main projects. Chair Gilbert stated it has been discussed getting an engineer out for Rush Road. Joe stated that they need to buy American made products and he is unsure if they will be able to buy American this year since ductile iron pipe is already 12 weeks out on backorder. Rush Road from Foster Road down has a bad valve and requires a 6inch pipe.

Joe thanked the Commissioners for their time. Chief Operator Ryan asked if the contract would be prorated for the rest of the year if the department accepts. Charlie stated yes it would be prorated for the rest of 2022.

Commissioner Hall asked for confirmation that contract will not be impacted by annual salary adjustment. Joe confirmed the price of the contract would not be impacted by salary adjustment for the term of the 5-year contract.

Chair Gilbert stated right now there is a difference of \$10,000 with two (2) water department employees including benefits and FICA. Joe stated if he was offered the position, he would accept for \$100,000/year with no benefits since the going rate for a superintendent is over \$100,000/per year.

Joe stated if awarded the contract WSO would hire someone younger and train them to run the Cogswell Waterworks system. After the 5-year contract the commission could choose to hire the employee as Cogswell Waterworks employee and make them Superintendent and hire an additional support employee. In the interim it would make the Commissioner's lives easier this year. Joe stated there are other companies that contract but they would not provide the same service as WSO and are not as familiar with the Cogswell system.

Chair Gilbert asked if the plowing included the hydrants. Charlie confirmed it does and Joe stated if WSO is unable to plow the hydrants they have a contractor they can hire to complete the job. Joe also stated on cross connections WSO would not be testing devices, they would be sent to New England Backflow for testing.

Chief Operator Ryan stated that New England Backflow bills the customers directly and does not report the results to the water department until the customer has paid the bill. The advantage to using New England Backflow is they maintain all the records making it easier to do State reporting.

Commissioner Hall thanked Joe & Charlie Damour for coming and giving the Commissioner something to think about. Joe stated he will email the monthly report with the work he completed while Ryan was scheduled to be unavailable.

#### Chief Operators Report:

- State Requirements
  - Monthly bacteria test was negative
- Final Reads -2
  - 60 Maple Street
  - Joe had done one when I was away
- Dig Safes -

#### Old Business:

Commissioner Connor asked about the trade in price for the current department truck. Chief Operator Ryan stated he has not received the price for the trade in. Commissioner Connor stated the department basically needs the snow removal aspect and may be able to work out a deal with the Road Agent and have the Highway Department plow like the department use to. Then there would be no more miscommunication or delays of when the Highway Department can salt/sand if they do the plowing at the same time like they used to. Chair Gilbert will speak with Leo Aucoin, the Road Agent.

The department truck is due for inspection at the end of the month. Chair Gilbert stated if they purchase a new truck and keep employment in house it is almost breaks even with WSO's proposal. Chief Operator Ryan's last day is May 6<sup>th</sup>.

Commissioner Hall stated his concern about WSO being able to hire an employee when he has seen Water Department positions listed elsewhere that have not been filled in months.

#### Broken Boat Farm LLC

Josh McCutcheon, Broken Boat Farm LLC, presented an estimate for monthly landscaping maintenance since with the price of gas he is pretty competitive. The Commission discussed the well field on Foster Road, the underground storage tank on Depot Hill Road, and the Davison Road Office & Storage tank.

Chief Operator Ryan will confirm the property and boundary lines of the Water Department property and escort Josh next week to the sites the Commission would like estimates for. Josh stated besides vegetation he can also clear little trees with loppers if requested.

Commissioner Hall asked for clarification on the estimate presented for Davison Road and 2 additional acres. Josh explained there is a \$300 discount for Davison Road if 2 additional acres are also maintained monthly. Josh explained the Davison Road price is slightly higher due to more manual labor involved in keeping the clearance around the Davison Road Tank fence.

Commissioner Hall stated he would prefer as-needed landscape maintenance rather than monthly and understands that will impact pricing. Chair Gilbert stated he had no problem maintaining the clearance around the outside of the Davison Road Tank and also agreed with Commissioner Hall about not needing to landscape monthly. Chair Gilbert also acknowledged the need for landscape maintenance at some Water Department properties and is interested in an estimate for the embankments at the Davison Road Office, Depot Hill Tank, and Foster Road well field for a spring clean-up.

The Commissioners thanked Josh for coming in.

#### New Business:

##### Abatelements

- 134 Western Ave – Meter is believed to be faulty and has been sent for testing - signed
- 544 Rush Road – This property does not have water service at this time - signed
- Money Reports from Russ
  - In past years the department was in the red until the department started using meters. The Commissioners had some questions on the Money Reports and Chair Gilbert will speak with Russ to have him explain the reports.

#### Commissioners Concerns:

Commissioner Hall stated with the proposal from WSO the department should issue an RFP (request for proposal) from other water management companies and compare the proposals. Chief Operator Ryan stated he will make the calls to have the other companies come and make a pitch before or on the April 19<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Commissioner Connor asked if they should post the advertisement for superintendent. Chair Gilbert stated they can. Commissioner Connor stated his concern about how residents will react if WSO assumes control. He stated he likes the idea but is concerned if WSO has the labor force to separately manage Cogswell Water and WSO's current operations. Cogswell Water requires weekend work to check the tanks.

Commissioner Hall suggested possibly a three-year contract instead of five since he would prefer to hire inhouse. The Commissioners agreed to advertise for the open positions with pay dependent upon experience. Chief Operator Ryan will call the other water management companies to request proposal before April 19<sup>th</sup>.

Chair Gilbert will speak with Leo, Russ, & the Concord Monitor tomorrow. Chief Operator Ryan will also post the positions on Granite State Well Water and New Hampshire Water Works Association.

Next Meeting:

April 19, 2022 at 4pm (1600)

Adjourn:

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

Adjourned at 5:45 pm