

BOARD OF SELECTMEN WORKSHOP
Minutes of 01-09-12
4:15 p.m.

Selectmen:

Colette Worsman, Chairman
Peter F. Brothers, Vice Chairman
Miller C. Lovett
Nathan J. Torr
Herbert R. Vadney

Town Manager:

Phillip L. Warren

Recording Clerk:

Karin Landry

Call to Order: Chair Worsman called the meeting to order 4:15 p.m. She introduced the Board, Town Manager, and the Recording Clerk, and made announcements pertaining to emergency exits and the use of cell phones.

W 12-01 Water System Committee Update

Chair Dave Thorpe presented the Water System Committee's Report No. 9 to the Board of Selectman, the Proposed 20-year Operating Plan. The Report archives prior information, studies, and reports; details the system as it exists today and future plans for maintaining and improving the system; and steps for retiring the committee. The Report includes operating recommendations, performance assessment measures, and requirements for future business planning. The committee recommends quarterly reviews in 2012, the last being an annual review. If all goes as anticipated, the committee would dissolve at that time and transfer the operation and oversight function it has been performing to Water and Sewer Superintendent Dan Leonard and Town Manager Phil Warren.

The Water Use Ordinance will be available for the Board's review in approximately one month. The major change to the Ordinance is the inclusion of clear definitions for all terms used, with particular attention to the definition of the Existing Service Area to avoid misinterpretation of who is eligible to tie into the system. A public hearing must be held before the revised Ordinance is adopted.

Mr. Thorpe reviewed the Report:

Defining the Water System: A physical description of the source, treatment plant, storage tower, and distribution system.

Defining the Existing Service Area: Defining the Existing Service Area is essential in avoiding misunderstandings surrounding who has a right to water. In order to prevent a situation where the town is required to provide to a very large user, if a booster station or pump station is required, it is not considered in the Existing Service Area. This does not negate the Board considering a request by a developer to connect with various provisions for a booster station.

Map of Service Area: The newly hired GIS technician developed a map of the existing service area, color coded to denote who is and isn't connected in the Existing Service Area. The map includes connected parcels, vacant parcels, developed land not connected, conservation land, the

largest mains throughout the system, blow off valves, booster pump stations, treatment plant, pressure reduction valves, and water tower. The Town Manager elaborated on the expanse of the system, which runs to Meredith Center and north on Rte. 3.

System Components - Assessment, Risks, Future Requirements and Contingencies: The volume of water that can be drawn from Lake Waukewan is not a concern; however, the advent of cyanobacterial blooms presents the potential for a disaster that might temporarily pollute the water. In addition, turbidity rates increase dramatically with wind and heavy rains. The committee continues to recommend a search for a groundwater source to be used in combination with the storage tower to provide potable water for a temporary period of time. Groundwater exploration is moving forward and arrangements are being made to drill test wells at this time.

A surface water source failure protocol for each component of the system was established, but is superseded by a formal emergency plan put together by Mr. Leonard.

A treatment plant failure protocol was established to address small failures that can be repaired quickly with the storage tower in place so there would be no interruption in operation.

A water storage tank failure protocol has been established. If the storage tower is lost, water can be pumped from the lake directly into the system, but not until the finished water pumps are equipped with variable speed drives that would maintain pressure in the system.

The plant can run at half capacity, and if the emergency generator is replaced, it would put a chain of upgrades in motion as the generator used at this time is passed along to another department.

The storage tower should be equipped with connections for trucks and rolling storage that are easy to access. It is in good condition with the exception of a small amount of spalling on the inside. At some point, divers will be utilized to further explore the condition of the tank. A 16" main from the storage tower to the distribution main should be considered to have the ability to connect the main location with temporary rolling storage.

The Mile Point storage tower was installed at the wrong elevation, and will lose prime if the tank is drawn lower than 15'. It would be appropriate to consider some sort of vacuum source that would pump water to that pump even if the water is lower than 15', or consider relocating the booster pump to a better elevation.

Mr. Leonard compiled a summary of criticality matrix wherein every main in town was assessed for vulnerability and color coded. In addition, he included a review of the matrix, setting forth the water mains deemed to be at the highest rate of risk in the water system - Jenness Hill Road, Rte. 25, and the upper section of Main Street. Dialogue ensued regarding considerations for replacement of said mains, including drilling a well on Jenness Hill Rd. and strategies and timetables for replacing the main on Rte. 25. Selectman Vadney suggested replacing the Rte. 25 main in sections as breaks are encountered, and pointed out that traffic control is a big issue in working in the area. Mr. Leonard elaborated on the difficulties faced in replacing the main on Rte. 25, including traffic, utilities in the road, water, and aggressive soil conditions. Additionally, the utilities are not located as set forth on the as built drawings. While he can explore spot installations, typically a project is addressed at one time. The town keeps an inventory of supplies that allows a project to commence immediately, and can get any supplies needed in a 24-hour period.

Proposed Operating Policy: The committee and Mr. Leonard made recommendations for maintaining records and publishing reports that are an indicator of whether the system is running well. The reports include a revenue report, which monitors revenue to make sure it is meeting or exceeding expenses, and coincides with formulas used by Director of Administrative Services Brenda Vittner. The actual revenue collected in 2011 meets or exceeds forecasts. It is expected that deficiencies in operating funds accrued for the water system will be fully amortized by 2013. Subsequent to that time, reserves will be built. The Board will employ quarterly updates to keep issues including rates and capacity in the foreground, and to ensure that continued capital support for the system is established in new budget goals.

In response to a question posed by Selectman Lovett, Mr. Thorpe explained that with variable frequency drives on the pumps the system can be operated without a storage tank, however, while it can be done on a special basis, it is not the correct operating procedure. Variable frequency drives extend the life of the pumps and promote energy efficiency. The drives will be factored into the upcoming budget cycle and/or capital improvement recommendations.

Actual water usage in 2011 was 84 million gallons, which is below the estimated forecast of 87 million gallons. In quarter three, which is the peak period, 48 million gallons were forecasted and 35 million were consumed. At this time, it is estimated that sometime around 2031-2032 it will be known whether strict conservation measures should be put in place or usage is much less than forecasted and whether the system is in need of major capital improvements. Selectman Brothers pointed out that some of the assumptions are based on build out projections presented by Community Development Director John Edgar, and that those projections are subject to change.

Mr. Thorpe explained that the biggest concern of the committee is the evaluation of the system going forward. At some point the town must be resurveyed on typical usage, perhaps at five year intervals, and the build out analysis adjusted for a lag or increase in building.

Water System Committee Dissolution: The committee has completed its charge, operations are running well, and there is competent staff in the town of Meredith. Accordingly, the committee wishes to spearhead quarterly reviews over the next year, with an annual review at about one year from now. If all is going as projected, the committee would dissolve at that time. The committee will reduce the frequency of its meetings from once a month to once a quarter at this time. Mr. Thorpe credited Brian Carroll and Dan Leonard for their unique rolls in bringing the system to where it is today.

The Board expressed its appreciation for the accomplishments of the water committee and the dollars the committee has saved the town. The Chair also expressed appreciation for other hard working committees in town.

Dialogue ensued regarding measures that can be taken to institutionalize annual reviews of the system. The Town Manager suggested making a review of the system an administrative regulation. The review would not be person specific, but role specific, and would refer to Report No. 9. Considerable attention will have to be devoted to the sewer system in the years to come, and in particular to the Winnepesaukee River Basin Program in the coming year. The Board acknowledged the value of an outside committee in looking at an inside department with a fresh point of view and perspective, and creating a valuable document and tool for the town.

The quarterly reviews will consist of:

- Demand history: Prepared by the water superintendent, and reviewed by town manager and Board of Selectman,

- Spare capacity, plant capacity, estimated demand forecast: Prepared by water superintendent and community development director, reviewed by town manager and Board of Selectmen,
- Dave Thorpe will call the next three quarterly reviews,
- Dan Leonard or the town manager should be the impetus for the annual review, and the Board of Selectmen should be involved,
- The guidelines set forth in the report section will be followed for identifying the parties responsible for preparing and reviewing each report, unless there is a decision to alter the method along the way,
- The town manager suggested that the quarterly reviews are done in conjunction with budget reviews,
- Mr. Thorpe is available to assist Ms. Vittner with the use of spreadsheets created by the committee.

There was a consensus among the Board to allow the committee to move from monthly meetings to quarterly reviews of the water system. The Chair expressed appreciation for the hard work of the committee, who has served the Town of Meredith and citizens of Meredith well.

Selectman Lovett recognized the Energy Committee for its work, and in particular the \$6,000 that the town will save this year as a result of an upgrade in lighting fixtures, which was subsidized by New Hampshire Electric Cooperative.

Selectman Torr motioned to adjourn the Workshop at 5:20 p.m. Seconded by Selectman Brothers. 5-0. All in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Phillip L. Warren, Town Manager

Colette Worsman, Chairman

Peter F. Brothers, Vice Chairman

Miller C. Lovett

Nathan J. Torr

Herbert R. Vadney