

# DENNIS WATER DISTRICT

## *Board of Water Commissioners*

Minutes of Meeting held

July 24, 2014

A meeting, having been duly posted, was held this date at the 90 Bob Crowell Road, South Dennis and called to order by Paul F. Prue, Chairman at 6:00 PM. Also in attendance were Water Commissioners Charles F. Crowell and Peter L. McDowell. The following District officials were also present:

David Larkowski, Superintendent  
Sheryl A McMahon, Clerk/Treasurer

### ***Public Comment - None***

### ***Customer Issues:***

***a) Leak Abatement Request: Harwich Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses, Acct. #05351, 316 Old Bass River Rd, S Dennis.***

Mr. Larkowski reviewed the customer's application for a Leak Abatement due to an extensive leak in the irrigation system. The Board's policy specifically states that the Leak Abatement cannot be applied for lost water from an irrigation system. On a motion made by Peter L. McDowell, and duly seconded, the Board ***UNANIMOUSLY VOTED: to deny the application of Harwich Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses, Acct. 05351, 316 Old Bass River Road for a leak abatement.***

### ***Clerk/Treasurer's Report***

Since the Board last met the Neptune meters were read and staff continues to do field orders for re-reads, miss-reads and repairs.

Mr. Joseph McGee of Sanders, Walsh and Eaton was on site for several days between July 7 and 17. The audit report is in its final draft and should be to you next week. The Board wishes to confirm meeting with Mr. McGee for a review of the audit at the Board's next meeting.

The two main focuses for this month and through early August will be on the preparation and verification of the water billing data for issuing water bills on or about August 8 and completing the account reconciliations and closing entries for FY 14.

### ***Superintendent's Report***

Mr. Larkowski reported that he had received phone calls from customers regarding the water quality in Dennis in relation to the news articles about Falmouth exceeding the allowable levels for disinfection byproducts. Any supplier that uses chlorine has to monitor for disinfection byproducts. The District uses chlorine as the first stage of the iron removal process and for disinfection. For trihalomethane there was no detection and for haloacetic acids the detection ranges are well below the limits. The results of these tests are published in the District's consumer confidence report.

The Superintendent reported that Wells 11 and 15 were cleaned over the past month. They are high in iron. The screens and the formations around them get clogged with the iron and diminishes the production capacity. Both wells were injected with CO<sup>2</sup> crystalizes the iron. The iron fractures and then the well is surged and pumped to waste until the well is clean. Well 15 was returned to close to normal and Well 11 was even better than normal. Well 4 is scheduled to be cleaned in a next couple of weeks. The amount of production redundancy in the system allows the District to take wells off line during the summer and still meet demand.

Mr. Larkowski reported that there had been a significant water main break on Setucket Road at approximately 12:30 in the morning during the prior week. It happened under the bike path. It had gone undetected until police noticed it at approximately 3:00 AM. The loss of water was approximately 7,000 gallons per minute. Fortunately, the water ran over a small bank through the side yard of a residence and ended up in North Simmons Pond. Side streets in the area were without water during the repair. Total lost water was approximately 2.4 million gallons. Chairman Prue said he met with the property owner and reported that he was pleased with the work and how quickly it was done. Mr. Larkowski did note that he had considered using the CodeRed system if the tanks did not recover quickly enough. He said that he was pleased that they did and it had not been necessary to use it. Mr. McDowell asked if there was an alarm system that could have notified personnel of a loss of water. The Superintendent reported that the monitoring system does provide for high and low level alarms. The system is very user friendly which allows personnel flexibility in setting the levels. While doing work recently in the tanks on the north side, the levels for the alarms were turned off as the tanks were being drained. They have since been reactivated to appropriate levels. What he did note was that the alarm does not indicate where in the system is the break and it is either discovered by driving around town or reported by a customer. He reported that the break occurred at the bell-end of the main.

Mr. Larkowski reported that ATT wanted to increase the amount of lease space (for generator) and extend the lease period beyond the twenty-years in the current contract. The ability to enter contracts for the time period necessary was authorized by District vote at the Annual Meeting in April. Shortly thereafter, ATT put the upgrades on hold so he continues to wait to implement the contract extension. Metro PCS, the newest lessee on the Route 28 tank, has notified the District that they had been bought out by T-Mobile. Both carriers had sites on the Route 28 tank and will need to eliminate one of them. More notification will be forthcoming on the intended schedule. He thought that perhaps they may decommission the site in October of this year. Total revenues are approximately \$260,000 annually.

***Consider Request by Dennis Natural Resources for a Controlled Burn in the vicinity of Wells 7, 8 & 10 (off Airline Road).***

The Superintendent advised the Board that the Department of Natural Resources is desirous of doing a prescribed burn. There are grant funds available so there will be no cost to the Town or the District. The purpose is to open the land for particular species, in particular rabbits. He distributed a map of the intended area for the burn. The DNR reports that there is a lot of “fuel” in the area and the burn would help reduce it. Several years ago, the District participated in a grant to open up the existing fire roads. He reported it would cover approximately 20 acres and take down trees less than 4” in diameter. They expect to do the work next spring. On a motion made by Charles F. Crowell, and duly seconded, the Board ***UNANIMOUSLY VOTED: to authorize the Town of Dennis, Department of Natural Resources, to conduct a controlled burn in the vicinity of Wells 7, 8, & 10.***

## ***Review Draft Request for Proposals for Developing Policies and Procedure***

Ms. McMahon reviewed the format of the Request for Proposals. It identifies and describes the Water District, purpose of developing financial policies and procedures, scope of services. From previous discussions she understood that the Board members wished to interview the prospective consultants, therefore, she had developed the solicitation for services as a Request for Proposals (RFP). An RFP would allow the Board to evaluate the proposers through an interview process. It requires that the proposers submit separate and sealed “non-price proposals” and “price proposals”. The RFP process requires the Board to rank the non-price proposals without knowing the cost. The Board, if they so wished, could then interview those proposers deemed most advantageous. Then the price proposals would be opened. The Board is then able to determine, if the most advantageous proposer’s price is not the lowest, if there is sufficient added value to warrant the additional cost. The Invitation for Bid (IFB) process, in accordance with Chapter 30B, does not allow for evaluating interviews with bidders. The IFB process requires the solicitor to set out the minimum criteria to determine responsible and responsive bidders and then to award the contract based on the lowest bid.

Mr. McDowell stated that he had has some uneasiness with signing the weekly warrants which is simply a listing of all the bills to be paid. He complimented Ms. McMahon for providing a statement representing that she had, to the best of her knowledge, had verified the bills to be paid. In terms of the draft of the RFP, he expressed concern about the receiving the non-price proposals and price proposals separately. He suggested that the Board open the prices first and then open the proposals. He noted his experience with RFPs with the Town and in each instance the proposal with the highest price was awarded the contract. Ms. McMahon stated that to use the RFP process, the non-price proposals must be opened first and evaluated, then the price proposals. She stated that the Board could set a minimum criteria for evaluating the RFP non-price proposals and then open the price proposals. She then stated that the process for simply awarding to the lowest bidder is to set minimum criteria. He wanted to know if this project will address the concerns he has previously expressed about compliance with law. Ms. McMahon said she believed it would as having written policies and procedures for implementing those policies provides reasonable assurances that there is compliance with law. She said it is important for the organization to have them and it is important for outside entities looking at the organization to know that they are in place. Using payroll as an example, she noted that it is the auditors that look to the policies and procedures to ensure that they are being followed. She noted that investors are looking more closely at the management letters that accompany audits. One aspect that they look for is the presence of policies and procedures. Ms. McMahon offered to go back and develop a minimum criteria bid process that would enable the Board to award the contract to the lowest bidder. \$13,000 has been appropriated but, Ms. McMahon was hopeful the bids would be significantly less.

## ***Future Concerns for the District***

Mr. McDowell expressed his concern about what would happen if either the Clerk/Treasurer or Superintendent were all of a sudden not available to work. Mr. Larkowski stated that despite cross training of staff, not everything either he did as Superintendent or Ms. McMahon did as Treasurer is cross trained with other staff. However, he felt confident that, in the case of the Clerk/Treasurer, while it might be hectic at first, with the assistance of the Board and office staff, they would be able to work through it. He felt that Ms. McMahon may know his administrative duties better than the water works staff, he noted that he learned as he went through it and any successor would have to

also learn as they proceeded with the job. Ms. McMahon agreed and said that she had learned through the years that it didn't pay to be indispensable and that as much cross training is done as possible. She was confident that the staff was in a good position that, if something happened to either her or the Superintendent, that there was sufficient cross training to fill in the gaps. Ms. McMahon noted that there is no provision in the general law that authorizes the appointment of an Assistant District Treasurer. There was a discussion about including a topic in the policies and procedures appointments in the event of a pro-longed absence or permanent vacancy of the Superintendent or Treasurer.

***Minutes: June 12, 2014***

On a motion made by Charles F. Crowell, and duly seconded, the Board ***UNANIMOUSLY VOTED: to accept the minutes of June 12, 2014, as corrected.***

On a motion made by Peter L. McDowell, and duly seconded, the Board ***UNANIMOUSLY VOTED: to adjourn the meeting at 7:15 PM.***

Respectfully submitted,

Sheryl A McMahon, Clerk  
Dennis Water District