

# DENNIS WATER DISTRICT

## *Board of Water Commissioners*

Minutes of Meeting held

June 12, 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***

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

This agenda item had been requested by Mr. McDowell to be routinely included on the Board's monthly meeting agenda.

1. The District has two meter reading systems. One is still in use but, is obsolete. ABB meters were read first beginning in mid-May and is now completed. She reported that having two systems is inconvenient but necessary until the remaining 2,800 ABB meters are changed out or this system is no longer operable. Reading of the Neptune meters with the newest system began earlier this week. It generally takes four to six weeks to read and process.
2. The new server and four replacement computers were installed and configured on June 2 &
3. Re-installation of devices and software continued for a few days. Troubleshooting settings and conflicts continues as they "pop up" on less frequently used applications. The ability of these four work stations to print work orders was just restored today.
3. The main issue for the water billing system on the work stations is compatibility issues with Windows 7. DataAccess, the software company that provides the language code for the water billing software, no longer supports Crystal Reports. She is working with the software developer to provide an update or work-around.
4. Three quotes were solicited for the FY 2013 audit and were as follows:

a) Clifton, Larson, Allen LLP	\$15,000
b) Lynch, Malloy, Marini LLP	\$11,000
c) Saunders, Walsh & Eaton LLP	\$10,800

Saunders, Walsh & Eaton is scheduled to begin the audit on or about June 16. It should be available for review by the July 24 Board meeting.

5. A new upgrade version of QuickBooks called Enterprise Solutions for Business, an Intuit product, was also recently installed. Staff is adjusting very quickly and it does have some features that will enhance efficiency. Staff is gearing up for the roll-over into the new fiscal year.

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

1. Following up with Ms. McMahon's report on meter reading, Mr. Larkowski took the opportunity to advise the public that meter readers will be out in the neighborhoods for the next couple of months. They generally wear bright yellow shirts with "Dennis Water District" largely printed on the back.

2. Flushing is being conducted in Dennis Port with South Dennis having been recently completed. Mr. Larkowski was hopeful that by the Fourth of July they will have completed Dennis Port. He anticipated that they would resume flushing in West Dennis in the Fall. He advised the public to watch for signs and if they notice “dirty” water to run it and it should come clean.
3. In regards to the Route 28 bridge project over Swan River, he advised that water main is nearly completely installed. Several years ago a 10” main under the river was eliminated. The construction project included the installation of a new 16” main hung under bridge on the south side and a new 10” main on the north side. There are no longer any mains going under the river.
4. Mr. Larkowski reported on the Household Hazardous Waste Collection that was held on June 7. Three hundred and seven cars (307) went through the collection and he thanked everyone that took the time to participate. There was a wait for those who came to the site early. He said that he tries to speak with everyone who drives through and asks how long they had to wait. Most people said it wasn’t bad but, early on when it first opens the wait can be about thirty minutes.
5. The Superintendent advised that the two new treatment filters are installed and on-line. When they were originally installed they were removing a significant amount of iron. They are up to 95 to 97 % removal from the water that is being treated. The next step in the project is to bring the raw water from Well 5 and Well 22 connected to their respective treatment plant. All of the pipe has been purchased and he anticipates the work to begin in a few weeks as a summer project and they will do their best to stay off the roads.
6. Mr. Larkowski advised that the District just completed round three of the Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule (UCMR). New UCMR lists are generated about every five years. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) develops a list of suspected contaminants to be tested. They aren’t sure if these are even in the environment but, if they are detected at what levels. The EPA uses the information to determine if certain contaminants need to be regulated. This year, out of all the samples taken by the District. The detection levels are in parts per billion. One contaminant that has been reported in local media as having been detected in Eastham was 1,4-dioxane was not detected in any of the District’s wells. There were a number of metals detected. Strontium and chromium, which are on the periodic table and naturally found in rock, were detected. Although, they were detected, there are no regulated levels. In conversations he had with the laboratory, they assured him that at the levels detected they would not be a problem because in other parts of the country the levels are “sky-rocketing.” Strontium was found at 19 to 53 parts per billion. He did find a health advisory for strontium at 25 parts per million. Chromium was detected at .048 to .24 parts per billion. He found that a possible future standard might be 100 parts per billion, the District being 100 times lower. The detected amounts will be reported in the Consumer Confidence Report next year. He anticipates no response from EPA at these levels. Another round will be conducted in the fall of this year.

Mr. McDowell asked for documentation on how the testing is done. Mr. Larkowski said that laboratories are often challenged to develop new testing procedures in order to detect such minute levels. Mr. Larkowski further reported that other Cape water suppliers had similar detection levels as did Dennis.

### ***Grant Award for Work Zone Trailer from MIIA***

The Superintendent reported that the District has received several small grants over the years, primarily for safety from Massachusetts Interlocal Insurance Association (MIIA). This year, staff attended a MIIA sponsored training class for work-zone safety. MIIA procured a bid for the purchase of work-zone safety trailers in order to provide municipalities with the outfitted trailers as part of their grant program. Mr. Larkowski applied for and was awarded a trailer valued at approximately \$5,000. He expects to receive the trailer in the following week.

## ***Discuss Drought Management Plan (DMP)***

The Superintendent distributed materials related to the USGS monitored well in Brewster. He stated that the District wants to be good stewards of the environment. The District is allowed to pump water from its wells based on a withdrawal permit issued by Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). The regulations pertaining to that issuance of these permits now includes a drought management plan. The State has proposed that it from May through September would be an automatic requirement for mandatory limited watering to two days per week. The District's current draft DMP outlines five stages for the management status of drought conditions. Last year we were in great shape. We are currently very close to the 50th percentile. We are trending below historical levels. The DMP outlines specific movement through the status levels. The trend indicates that the condition level should be reduced from "Normal" to voluntary odd/even watering which is the "Advisory". The Cape has an abundance of water but, we need to be good stewards of the environment and use this as an opportunity to educate the public. It is an opportunity to advise and educate the public by including an article about the DMP in the *Main-Line* newsletter. This year's rainfall is below normal particularly this past spring. Well 12 is below the 50th percentile even though the USGS well in Brewster has not.

On a motion made by Peter L. McDowell, and duly seconded, the Board ***UNANIMOUSLY VOTED: to accept the recommendation of the Superintendent and move the current drought management status level from "Normal" to "Advisory" in accordance with the Draft Drought Management Plan.***

Mr. Larkowski anticipates that DEP will not allow property owners to water lawns from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM due to high evaporation rates.

## ***Review Outline for Scope of Work for Policies and Procedures***

Ms. McMahon had submitted a draft of the scope of work for hiring a consultant to develop financial and accounting policies and procedures. Concerns have been raised by the Board, and in particular by Mr. McDowell, regarding compliance audits. She reported that municipalities do not conduct compliance audits unless there is some sort of trigger which may indicate fraud, waste or abuse. Compliance audits are generally limited in scope due to costs and focus on the specific area of concern. Ms. McMahon had recommended in March to the Board and Finance Committee a re-appropriation of \$13,000 from the FY 2014 Audit Line Item for the purpose of developing a set of policies and procedures. The article passed at the Annual District Meeting. By developing the policies and procedures, it will lay out a roadmap for how transactions are to be tracked. This will provide guidance to staff and management on handling transactions and reporting. An auditor will be able to review the manual and have an expectation that transactions processed are in accordance with the policies and procedures. If the auditor finds that policies and procedures are not being followed, it may indicate the need for additional training, supervision or that some level of fraud, waste or abuse has occurred and that a finite scope of work for reviewing compliance may be warranted.

She advised that there are policies and procedures in place but they are largely informal and unwritten. This is primarily due to the institutional memory and long-time tenure of employees. The development of the policies and procedures is expected to be very detailed and will take time. Ms. McMahon added that having the consultant develop them will provide another "pair of eyes" on what is currently being practiced and there will be opportunity for recommendations. It is expected that the guidelines will be followed unless there are special conditions or circumstances which would

be documented accordingly. From the scope of work, Ms. McMahon will develop a draft request for proposals for the Board's approval.

Mr. McDowell expressed his concern about signing the warrant each week and that he is being responsible. He wants the Board to have an opportunity for input. He said that he wanted to know what the law is that says what the Board is signing for. He wants some sort of certification or statement by the Clerk/Treasurer as to why the Board is signing and where the numbers came from. Mr. McDowell expressed his concern that he would like to know that what is being done financially at the District is compliant with law. He would like to have some assurance that the District is obeying Massachusetts law in handling our accounts.

Ms. McMahon said she heard the concern, and believes that the Board will find that the development of the policies and procedures by a consultant will provide them with assurances that the financial transactions being done at the District in accordance with statutes. She also stated that this will be an opportunity to review the warrant statements that accompany the signatures for the payment of bills. Ms. McMahon was confident that this process will ultimately provide the assurances for the concerns that have been raised. Mr. McDowell said that having the policies and procedures in place is important for the continuation of the work if either the Superintendent or Treasurer were no longer able to serve. He said he would like to have the opportunity to discuss the process with the individual who is selected to develop the policies and procedures.

Ms. McMahon noted that the scope did not include payroll. Mr. McDowell said that he thought everything within the Clerk/Treasurer's purview should be included. Ms. McMahon advised that the cost of the scope of work as drafted would probably be insufficient to include the Human Resources component of her responsibilities but, will include it as an option. Ms. McMahon anticipated having the draft request for proposal available for their review at the Board's Next meeting.

***Minutes: March 27 and April 9, 2014***

On a motion made by Charles F. Crowell, and duly seconded, the Board ***UNANIMOUSLY VOTED: to accept the minutes of March 27, 2014 as corrected.***

On a motion made by Charles F. Crowell, and duly seconded, the Board ***UNANIMOUSLY VOTED: to accept the minutes of April 9, 2014 as presented.***

On a motion made by Peter L. McDowell, and duly seconded, the Board ***UNANIMOUSLY VOTED: to adjourn the meeting at 6:51 PM.***

Respectfully submitted,

Sheryl A McMahon, Clerk  
Dennis Water District