



Approved: \_\_\_\_\_  
(date)

**TOWN OF PAXTON  
Water Commissioners  
Minutes of Meeting**

**Date: Thursday, January 20, 2022**

**Time: 7:00 p.m.**

**Meeting Place: John Bauer Senior Center, 17 West Street, Paxton, MA**

Present: John Malone (JM), Chair  
David Trulson (DT), Vice Chair  
Rodney Jenkins (RJ), Clerk  
Travis Thibault (TT), Director of Public Works  
Tiffany Sidhom, Administrative Assistant

The meeting was called to order at 7:09 p.m.

*The Board will enter into Executive Session later in the meeting.*

**Meeting Minutes**

Motion (RJ) seconded (JM) to accept the meeting minutes from the October 21, 2021 meeting.  
Unanimous, all in favor.

**Approval of October, November and December 2021 Billings Rendered**

The Board reviewed and signed the October, November and December 2021 Billings Rendered.

**SCADA System Updates**

A new computer has been purchased for the pump station and the new programming is being completed on January 21, 2022. The system has been set up to accept data from the Maple Street tank; hopefully the tank will get tied into the SCADA system within the month. The contractor setting up the system asked if the communication system could utilize the fiber lines at the Maple Street tank; (TT) is in touch with the Police and Fire Chiefs to get their input.

**West Street Water Main Engineering**

The American Rescue Plan Act Committee approved using ARPA funds to pay for the engineering for the West Street Water Main project. The expenditure went before the Board of Selectmen and was approved. The engineering has been contracted to Tata & Howard. To date, all wetlands have been flagged, some surveying has begun, and the borings are in the process of being completed.

## **Maple Street Tank Generator**

The Fire Department recommended to the ARPA Committee that ARPA funds be used to upgrade the generator at the Maple Street tank so that it will be able to handle both emergency communications and everything that the Water Department needs for power at the tank in the event of a power outage. Both the ARPA Committee and the Board of Selectmen have approved the expenditure.

## **Public Works Facility Update**

(TT) shared the options that the DPW Building Committee has researched thus far, a copy of which is available at the DPW Facility. Some of the main issues that the facility faces are lack of space for staff and equipment and a failed septic system. The Committee is looking into at least obtaining space for administrative offices, a locker room and a conference room as a first step. In the future, it would look toward obtaining additional space for equipment.

## **Approval for Energy Assessment**

In 2018, the Water Department received a grant under the MassDEP's GAP Funding program for energy upgrades at pump station. The grant is being offered again this year. The Department needs to replace the VFDs at the pump station. One is faulting for no reason. (TT) spoke to the DPW Building Committee about this grant, as well, because at the DPW facility there is a need to update the furnaces, garage doors and all lighting. An energy assessment, to be paid for by the Town, is required to be able to apply for the grant. The DPW Building Committee has approved moving forward with the energy assessment if the Water Department is in agreement, as the cost will be shared by both departments. The quote for the energy assessment is \$7,965. Motion (JM) seconded (DT) to contract for an energy assessment as stated and share the cost with the Highway Department. Unanimous, all in favor.

## **FY22 Liens**

In FY2022, there were 16 water customers that received liens for unpaid water bills, totaling \$12,910.98. This was in line with previous years.

## **Billing Late Fees**

The Paxton Municipal Light Department is re-instating late fees for unpaid electric bills. Motion (JM) seconded (RJ) to also reinstate late fees on unpaid water bills. Unanimous, all in favor.

## **Employee Updates**

On November 12, 2021, David Tardie resigned from the Water Department. David asked (TT) to share with the Board his sincere thanks for the opportunities he was provided as an employee of the Water Department.

On December 12, 2021, Andrew Clark, who was previously a Highway Department employee, took over the position of Water Operator. Andrew passed his D1 exam on January 11, 2022 and

is scheduled to take his T1 exam on February 8, 2022. Andrew will begin a course for his D2 exam on February 28, 2022.

(TT) requests that the Administrative Assistant obtain her D1 license so that the Department will have another licensed operator. The Department is required to always have two licensed operators on staff, and with a small department and issues such as COVID-19, (TT) would like to have one more employee who is licensed (i.e., the Administrative Assistant). Motion (JM) seconded (RJ) to have the Administrative Assistant obtain her D1 license. Unanimous, all in favor.

### **FY22 Financials and Consumption Data**

The Board reviewed the FY22 financials and consumption data to date.

**Motion (JM) seconded (RJ) to leave the regular meeting and enter into Executive Session at 8:09 p.m. The Board will return to the regular meeting following Executive Session. Unanimous, all in favor.**

**Returned to Regular Session at 8:18 p.m.**

### **FY23 Proposed Budget**

(TT) provided a proposed budget for FY23 to the Board and noted that FY22 is the last year that the Water Department will need to make a large purchase of water meters.

For non-Union employees, (TT) is suggesting a 5% pay increase in FY23 for the Administrative Assistant. Motion (RJ) seconded (JM) to award the Administrative Assistant a 5% pay increase in FY23 as recommended. Unanimous, all in favor.

(TT) suggests a 4% pay increase for the Water Foreman in FY23. Motion (JM) seconded (RJ) to award the Water Foreman a 4% pay increase in FY23 as recommended. Unanimous, all in favor.

(RJ) pointed out that with pay rate increases, the line item for overtime should be increased.

The Board will review the proposed budget and discuss further at the next meeting.

### **Director Updates and Reports**

There were two water main breaks recently. One was at Kettle Brook Golf Course. A private contractor repaired the break. It was found to be all plastic main and looked to have been leaking since the day it was installed. The second break was on Camp Street and was repaired by the Water Department.

It has been discovered that a water meter at Anna Maria College has never been billed for. (TT) is investigating further.

Motion (JM) seconded (DT) to adjourn at 8:30 p.m. Unanimous, all in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Tiffany Sidhom, Administrative Assistant