

**Town of Berlin Public Works Board  
108 Shed Road  
Berlin, VT 05602  
(802)223-4405 x304**

**Commissioners**

**Rob Allen / Ted Long / David Sawyer / Eric Chase**

**March 23, 2020  
Approved Minutes**

**In light of COVID-19 directives, meeting was held via video conference**

**Present: Rob Allen (RA) Chair, Ted Long (TL), David Sawyer (DS), Eric Chase (EC), David Delcore, Ron Mercier (RM) and Thomas Badowski (TB).**

**Absent: None**

**Meeting called to order at 7:03 PM**

RA thanked participants for attending the video conference and welcomed new Commissioner, Eric Chase.

**Staff Reports**

**Berlin Corners Congregational Church (BCC)**

BCC was informed by State of Vermont regulatory officials that BCC would need to obtain a public drinking water permit. BCC explored the option of extending Berlin Municipal Water to its property but estimated \$150K was outside of their budget. BCC submitted a concept plan to the Board consisting of a service line from Crosstown Road. TB distributed in advance a map depicting this service line. After discussion, TL moved a Motion, with EC second to allow the BCC connection with the following Conditions:

- Service line is engineer certified to deliver a minimum of 35 psi to BCC
- A meter pit at Comstock Road to be installed at BCC expense and as the Town is pursuing “Smart Metering” BCC may be an “unmetered customer” until such time smart metering is implemented
- No other connections off of BCC service line will be allowed
- Requirement that if and when municipal water is extended to the BCC property, BCC will be required to immediately connect to the main and forfeit its service line from Comstock Road
- BCC receives a Water Allocation from the Town with the above conditions

Motion passed unanimously.

**Route 2 Development**

TB shared in advance drawing of proposed new building development on Route 2 across from GMC dealership. The same owners of GMC are proposing a new dealership across the road. As the GMC parcel is served by Montpelier water and sewer service a discussion was had as to Berlin’s development of water and sewer assets in this section of Town. After a lengthy discussion TL moved and DS second a Motion to recommend to

the Berlin Development Review Board that any future development in the Route 2 corridor be Conditioned so that if and when Berlin constructs municipal water distribution and/or sewer collection assets, all development must immediately connect to Berlin utilities. Motion passed unanimously.

### **Fire District #1 (FD1)**

TB reiterated his meeting with City of Montpelier DPW deputy director Kurt Motyka where the City desires to formalize its management of FD1. TB suggested that the Board may want to consider an agreement with the City where Berlin assumes management of FD1. After a lengthy discussion, staff was directed to open a dialogue with the City to explore the concept of Berlin assuming FD1 management.

### **Budget 2020-21 Considerations**

1. **Billing of Non-Connected Allocation** – Continuation of previous discussions on non-connected allocation was had. TB stated that he has spoken to those customers that comprise 97% of the 70K gpd sewer allocation whose allocated parcels are not connected to the sewer system informing them that the Board was considering a FY 2020-21 fee on non-connected allocation covering Fixed Costs. A lengthy discussion followed. DS moved a Motion that as the Town of Berlin has a finite Wastewater Allocation from the City of Montpelier of 600,000 gallons per day. And as this Wastewater Allocation is an asset of the Town of Berlin and the Public Works Board is entrusted with the prudent management of assets under its charge. And those customers who have been granted a wastewater allocation and are connected to the system have borne all the costs of the system. Therefore, in accordance with Section 1-109 of the January 2, 2020, Town of Berlin Selectboard approved Town of Berlin Municipal Wastewater System Ordinance that for development of future Sewer Budgets that those customers who have been granted a wastewater allocation but have not connected within two years of the date of their allocation grant, pay a proportional share of the System’s fixed operating and maintenance costs. Motion second by TL. Further discussion entailed with staff being directed to present the formula for determining the “proportional share” at a future meeting. RA called the question and the Motion passed unanimously.
2. **Reimbursement of Allocation Fees** – In light of the Billing of Non-Connected Allocation decision TL moved a Motion with DS second that any customer which has paid an allocation fee and been granted a Wastewater Allocation but has not nor has any desire to connect their property to the Wastewater System, that upon proof of payment, their paid Allocation Fee will be reimbursed and their wastewater allocation rescinded. Motion passed unanimously.
3. **Master Meter Billing** - TB shared in advanced an aged receivable report. Of the \$16K over 120 days, 75% was from residents at the Lague, Inc, mobile home park. TB stated with the pending replacement of all residential meters with smart meters converting this park would come at an estimated cost of \$12K. After a lengthy discussion DS moved a Motion with EC second that in accordance with Section 1-109 of the January 2, 2020, Town of Berlin Selectboard approved Town of Berlin Municipal Wastewater System Ordinance, that the Mobile Home Park located on Parcel SA4-008, and owned by Lague, Inc., be deemed a Master Meter account with a quarterly sewer use rate of 343,000 gallons which mirrors the City of Montpelier formula for water billing to the park, effective with the first quarterly billing of the 2020-2021 fiscal year. Motion passed unanimously.

4. **Sewer Allocation Fee** – Noting that the City of Montpelier is discussing the raising of its sewer allocation rate to \$5 per gallon TL moved a Motion with DS second to raise the Town of Berlin Sewer Allocation Fee to \$5 per gallon effective July 1, 2020. After a brief discussion where the Board directed future allocation fee payments to be deposited in the existing Allocation Fee Savings account. Motion passed unanimously.

#### **PTN Sewer Improvement Project**

TB informed the Board that the PTN contract signing and preconstruction meeting occurred on March 13, 2020. Dubois Construction anticipates a start date of June 1, 2020 with a completion date end of October 2020. Staff to begin media campaign on the closure of Paine Turnpike North around April 15, 2020.

#### **Well #4**

1. **Option closing** occurred March 4, 2020. Still need Option Agreement 5 year extension on Well #5 which Rob Halpert is writing.
2. **Bond vote** on March 3, 2020, was 498 for, 241 against. This vote to finance smart meters and Well #4 connection to distribution system
3. **Meter replacement schedule** ideally mid-June 2020 to award hardware vendor and installation contract with anticipated November 2020 completion date
4. **OCE Well #4 Connection Contract** was discussed with no action

#### **Water Pump Replacement**

A well pump has failed and been replaced. Failed pump to be considered for rehabilitation into a spare pump.

#### **PACIF Grant**

Two options for 2020 PACIF Grant funding under consideration. First replacement of security fencing around Partridge Farm Pumphouse with TL and RM developing plans to take to fence installers. Second a Log Out Tag Out system for the Water System Pumphouse. TL moved a Motion with DS second to allow staff to submit the 2020 PACIF grant application for whichever project best utilizes PACIF and Town funds. Motion passed unanimously.

#### **Monthly Utility Usage**

February 2020 Water had 1,350,263 gallons produced and Wastewater had 4,594,500 gallons sent for treatment.

#### **Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be **April 13, 2020, via video teleconference.**

**Minutes** – DS moved and TL second a Motion to approve the Minutes of February 24, 2020, as written. Motion passed unanimously.

**Warrants**

- TL made a motion to approve Sewer Accounts Payable Warrant Report 20S14 for checks # 3376– 3382 for a total of \$41,013.45 with DS second. Motion passed unanimously.
- TL made a motion to approve Water Accounts Payable Warrant Report 20W14 for checks # 10414 - 10421 for a total of \$7,098.27 with DS second. Motion passed unanimously.

**Round Table**

RA expressed concern over receivables.

EC thought cost estimate for replacement smart meters was high. Suggested I Pearl meters be considered.

**Adjourned** – RA thanked everyone for a successful first video conference. More such meetings to follow. Motion made by TL with second by DS to adjourn at 8:51 PM. Motion passed unanimously.

Thomas J. Badowski  
Recording Secretary  
Berlin Public Works Board