

TOWN OF LINCOLN
Water Commission Meeting
June 14, 2023

Members Present:

Kenneth Booth, Chair

Julie LaBreche, Secretary

Louis Long

Abigail Altabef

Edward Fox

Robert A Anderson Jr., P.E. Chief Eng./Superintendent

Lewis A Prescott III, Assistant Superintendent

Anna Nascimento, Administrative Assistant

Stephen Antonucci, Representing Town Solicitor

Call to order: Chairman Kenneth Booth called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Public Comment: none

Motion to accept the Consent Agenda:

- 1) Minutes of previous meeting:
 - A) May 10, 2023 – regular meeting minutes
 - B) May 10, 2023 – Executive session minutes
 - C) Capital Accounts – May 2023
 - D) Account Transaction Report – May 2023
 - E) Correspondence
 - F) News Articles

A motion was made by Commissioner Julie Labreche and was seconded by Commissioner Louis Long to approve the consent agenda. All in favor.

Superintendent Report of Daily Activity May 2023:

1) Administrative- project management:

A) Water Rate (Cost of Services) Study: Professional Services Agreement. Agreement with B & E Consulting (BEC) executed on 1-27-2023. Superintendent Robert Anderson and Chairman Kenneth Booth met with BEC on same date to discuss scope of work. Collection of financial data (expenses and revenue) completed by BEC at an earlier date. On-going compilation and review of same by BEC. Updated progress status request made to BEC. BEC to meet with admin staff to discuss preliminary budget. Met with BEC on May 1, 2023 to clarify water rate study data and input for preliminary budget. Outstanding: preliminary report submission by BEC. Superintendent Robert Anderson spoke to the consultant today and the preliminary report is done and we will be getting it very soon.

B) Smartlink/AT & T Wireless – Antenna/Communications Equipment (Manville Tank Site): Soil sampling of immediate grounds, which relates to environmental liability provisions of draft lease agreement, was completed at the tank site in conjunction with lead paint testing. Test results and action items to be discussed under unfinished business Item 10d. We have to move forward and this does impact our activity with Smartlink.

- C) **Residual Chlorine Study/Chlorine Injection Assessment:** LWC reviewing costs for chemical feed and injection equipment. LWC to schedule meeting with Pare Corp to discuss equipment, design, and locations. And meet with vendor regarding same. Chairman Kenneth Booth asked if we can please get this scheduled. If we have an incident this summer, we need to be prepared to be able to deal with it.
- D) **RI Infrastructure Bank (RIIB):** RIIB Municipal Grant Award received by town at an earlier date in the amount of \$100,000, which will be additional funding utilized for the School Street Water Main Project. Grant Agreement recently received by Town and transmitted to LWC for review. Grant agreement completed by LWC, signed by Town, and returned to RIIB on May 26th for their final execution. All is in place.

2) Administrative – Personnel:

- A) **Future Job Vacancy-** Utility Labor Position: Garrett Donahue announced his intention to leave the employment of the commission. Last day of work will be July 21st. Written notice to be received for record purposes. Union posting of position performed on April 27th. Expired May 4th. Advertisement of job announcement to be issued during week of May 8, 2023. Town HR to assist with advertisement. Position posted and advertised on Indeed in mid-May. Several applicants responded during interim period. Applicants' resumes' to be reviewed and screened to determine qualified candidates for future interviews. As of Monday this has changed and he might not leave until January. He is no longer going to the Lincoln police training. We took the job posting down from the indeed site. Chairman Kenneth Booth asked if he did resign. Superintendent Robert Anderson said he had given him a letter. Solicitor Stephen Antonucci spoke up and said this is a personnel matter and it is not on the agenda.

3) Water Testing:

- A) PFAS sampling performed May 10, 2023 and samples were delivered to R.I.D.O.H. lab. Sampling results received May 23, 2023 – No issues reported. All done until next year.

4) Operational – Maintenance: Pumping Stations:

- A) All three (3) pumping stations checked daily.
- B) Ran Providence Connector generator for power load test.
- C) Removed centrifugal pump at the Old Louisquisset Pike Station for mechanical inspection and rehabilitation. We have obtained quotes from Carlson System of \$42,000 for new piping and value work with complete replacement. We also received quotes for rehab of existing pump at \$12,600. Lou is getting more quotes. Chairman Kenneth Booth stated that we will have to bid this so we should get a bid package together. Chairman Kenneth Booth asked what the purchasing bid regulations are. Solicitor Stephen Antonucci said it is MPA state bidding. Solicitor Stephen Antonucci reported that its \$10,000 for construction, and \$5,000 for services for bidding. Chairman Kenneth Booth said we have to be very specific with what we want. Assistant to the Superintendent Lewis Prescott stated that someone will come in to look at what specifics we need as the pump was installed in 1968. Chairman Kenneth Booth said we need stamped engineer plans on this so that the process goes smooth and bidders know what we want. Commissioner Edward Fox

asked if there is an emergency type of situation where we wouldn't have to go out to bid. Ken stated that is what we just did with the Smith St area. Superintendent Robert Anderson could go back to the people that we used for Smith St. Ken said is it an emergency though? Lou said there is a big concern and the pump needs attention. They haven't been taken apart and inspected like they should be every four years. They haven't been inspected for at least 8 years. Chairman Kenneth Booth asked if we can go back to the engineering firm ASAP to make sure these pumps don't fail? Chairman Kenneth Booth suggested to replace at least one of the pumps and to definitely check with engineering firm. Steve reported that there is no requirement that it has to be an emergency type of situation to go back to the same engineering firms.

5) Operational – Maintenance: Water Storage Tanks:

- A)** Requests for quotations for tank inspections to be sent to prospective tank inspection companies for all five storage tank facilities. Four tank inspections, including interior robotic inspections. The fifth inspection will be conducted for the Westwood Rd tank in September as it will require a tank draining for a suitable interior visual inspection. Chairman Ken Booth asked if this tank is absolutely necessary in the system. Lewis Prescott stated that we need something up there to retain the water pressure in the highlands.

Commissioner Julie LaBreche made a motion to accept the superintendent's report, and it was seconded by Commissioner Louis Long. All in favor.

Balance Sheet- Expenditure and Revenue Report- May 2023:

Motion to accept by Commissioner Louis Long, seconded by Commissioner Abigail Altabef. All in favor.

- A) Financial Report to Town Finance Director- May 2023:** Commissioner Julie LaBreche made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Louis Long to send the balance sheet to the Finance Director. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Account Balance Report – May 2023: Commissioner Abigail Altabef made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Louis Long to accept the Account Balance Report. The motion passed unanimously.

Direct Payments and Payables – May 2023: Commissioner Julie LaBreche made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Louis Long to accept the direct payments and payables. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Abatements: None

Unfinished Business:

- A) Leak Detection Program:** We contacted EJ Prescott and Superintendent Robert Anderson recently confirmed.
- B) Meter Technology:** Neptune completed study for coverage of Town. We will approach them about scheduling for a presentation. Chairman Kenneth Booth said that we

hopefully have room in the budget to move forward. Can we get Neptune to do a presentation at the July meeting?

- C) **Commission Meeting Clerk Replacement:** Robin Dimario agreed to do the June meeting to help out, but we need to address finding a new clerk. Kathleen Taraian from HR is going to help to see if anyone is interested internally. Maybe a court stenographer? Chairman Kenneth Booth asked if anyone knows anyone available to please reach out.
- D) **Soil Investigation – Manville and Old River Road tank sites:** Results of investigation of LED-letter of responsibility from DEM of what needs to be taken care of. The Albion tank was already sited with contamination. We need to fix these tanks! We need to budget money to remediate these tanks and get them cleaned up.
- E) **Preliminary Budget FY 2023/2024:** Anna Nascimento highlighted the updated budget. Chairman Kenneth Booth stated that there is no capitol expenses in this budget. These need to be in budget itemized in order to be approved. A financial advisor came in named Robert Strom and met with Superintendent Robert Anderson and Chairman Kenneth Booth to help out with the new budget. We are going to have to have another meeting towards the end of June to change the structural organization of this budget. Chairman Kenneth Booth stated that next year we need to increase the budget to fix issues moving forward. The Town Finance Director was going to help with this issue but is now retiring. This is why we brought in Robert Strom. We need preventative maintenance funding in our capitol plan going forward. Chairman Kenneth Booth asked if we can get BEC to come in too with the water rate study. Targeted date for next meeting is June 26th, and Solicitor Stephen Antonucci will check with Town clerk to see if available.

New Business:

- A) **Engineering Services Contract Award- Saylesville Water Main Improvements:** Superintendent Robert Anderson is making recommendation to the commission to select PARE corp. Superintendent Robert Anderson asked if he has the board's approval to move forward to recommend PARE Corporation. Commissioner Julie made a motion, and Commissioner Louis Long seconded the motion to move forward with PARE corp.
- B) **Financial Advisor Services/Investment Strategies:** Chairman Kenneth Booth thought it was very important to get the help we need. Robert Strom is charging \$50/hrs which we felt was a good deal. Chairman Kenneth Booth entertains a motion to allow Robert Strom to move forward in assisting us with finances. Commissioner Edward Fox makes a motion, seconded by Commissioner Louis Long to move forward hiring Robert Strom. All in favor except for Commissioner Abigail Altabef. Commissioner Abigail Altabef believes investments should be separate for finance/accounting. Chairman Kenneth Booth stated that typically a Finance Director does both. Solicitor Stephen Antonucci stated that Commissioner Abigail Altabef has a good point, but that this is a unique situation. Solicitor Stephen Antonucci feels comfortable based on his background and expertise. He is advising other municipalities as well. He is giving us a generous offer and things need to move quickly. Chairman Kenneth Booth asked that we vote to retain and have him come in and talk with us.

- C) Water Availability Options:** We run into a difficult situation in the summer with water usage. We have three options. First, is to do nothing. Second, is to ban outdoor water usage entirely. And the third option is to go into a modified restriction such as an odd/even water days. The third option of the odd/even days will hopefully get us past the issue of the water shortage, and won't be too bad at effecting the revenue. Do we stay with odd/even days for years to come instead of having a huge expense to fix the problem? Chairman Kenneth Booth believes that we have to switch to odd/even days and suggests reaching out to PARE to take the burden off of the water department staff. Chairman Kenneth Booth asked if anyone else had any thoughts. Superintendent Robert Anderson stated that last year we had three different heat waves and thinks it's a good idea to switch to odd/even days. Commissioner Edward Fox also agrees with odd/even. Chairman Kenneth Booth stated that he would like PARE to implement it and that some sort of enforcement has to take place. Can we implement a fine that goes through municipal court? Solicitor Stephen Antonucci needs to look into that. If we turn there water off, they would get a turn on fee. Commissioner Louis Long asked who would enforce this. Chairman Kenneth Booth stated that the commission would. Ken stated that the issue is some people really don't care if they get a fee. We can look at water meter readings by office staff pulling readings a day later. Solicitor Stephen Antonucci state that you might need an ordinance with the Town Council to go through municipal court. We need to move forward and come back to the next meeting at the end of June with how it will be enforced and informing the public. Commissioner Edward Fox had a point of question as to if we should still try to get water from other sources? Chairman Kenneth Booth stated that there are two options of Providence or Pawtucket. Pawtucket is reviewing how much water they can send us. Commissioner Louis Long stated his concern with us leaving Providence water and going to Pawtucket. Chairman Kenneth Booth stated that the water quality is good. Commissioner Julie LaBreche made a motion to have Superintendent Robert Anderson contract with PARE to implement odd/even outdoor water usage from July 1 through September, and Louis Long seconded the motion. All in favor. The motion passes to set up odd/even water days.
- D) Water Service Material Specification:** There are regulations on service materials for buildings being constructed. Water main to curb, and then curb to house. 90 feet or less has to be copper piping, but if longer it can be plastic. This concern comes from property owners that are building. Why can't they use plastic on their side? Chairman Kenneth Booth asked why plastic isn't good enough for less than 90 feet? Copper is much more expensive. Chairman Kenneth Booth asked if we can be consistent on allowing homeowner to use plastic or copper with no joints? We have people wasting money. The curb stop to the house should be rewritten. Commissioner Edward Fox makes a motion to have the option to use plastic pipes with chaser wire and flare joint fitting, and Commissioner Louis Long seconded the motion. All in favor.

Claims:

- A) 11 Reservoir Ave:** Date of Loss 3/31/2023 (Approved and paid on 5/16/2023)

Seek to adjourn to Executive Session According to RIGL 42-46-5 (a)(2); discussion on recent Local 1033 union negotiations:

A) Local 1033 Union CBA Negotiations:

B) Roll Call:

Edward Fox: yes

Julie LaBreche: yes

Abigail Altabef: yes

Louis Long: yes

Kenneth Booth: yes

Motion to seal the minutes of the Executive Session According to RIGL 42-46-7(c):

A motion was made by Commissioner Louis Long to seal the minutes of the executive session, and the motion was seconded by Commissioner Julie LaBreche.

A motion was made by Commissioner Julie LaBreche and was seconded by Commissioner Louis Long to open the meeting again.

Discussion and action on Contract with Local #1033: Ratified agreement of one year contract with employees receiving 3.5 % raise and \$1000 added to Voya account. Time to review our finances and move onto next year. A motion was made by Commissioner Abigail Altabef and seconded by Commissioner Louis Long to ratify the contract.

A motion was made by Commissioner Edward Fox and was seconded by Commissioner Julie LaBreche to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 p.m.