

Allan Kent
Chairman



Dean D'Alessandro
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TOWN OF MENDON WATER COMMISSION

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DEP Public Water Supply (PWS) ID #217900

mendonma.gov/water

Meeting Date: 5/5/2017

Meeting Location: 3rd Floor Meeting Room, Town Hall, 20 Main St. Mendon

Minutes Approved: 6/7/2017

Members Present: Allan Kent, Dean D'Alessandro, Kevin Rudden

Water Clerk: Dan Byer

Others: Dennis Fraine (Bellingham Town Manager),
Donald DiMartino (Bellingham DPW Director)

The meeting was called to order at 10am.

Dan explained that Kim, Rich, and Tanya were unable to attend the meeting. The commission discussed inviting them to a meeting Tuesday, May 16th at 1pm.

Dan discussed an opportunity through DEP for free GIS mapping of the water system. The commission is all in favor. Dan will look into it. They mentioned maps from 2004 which Dan can't find. All agree we need updated maps of the system.

Dan updated the commission on the meter readings. Kevin asked about the timing of the next bills. Dan says they will go out soon, he is just finishing up on a few issues.

Dan updated the commission that the Parks Memorial Field well repairs are complete and things are functioning properly.

Kevin asked about the New library. Dan says he asked Laura and they have not heard anything from the DEP yet.

Dan explained he met with a representative from RH White/Whitewater to get a quote for outsourcing the certified water operator position. They are going to send a quote with options. Dan explained they can completely manage the system or just do certain aspects. They are going to send several options.

Dan updated the board on the leak detection survey. The contractor is on vacation and will put Mendon on the schedule in June. The contractor also clarified that he does check the house service lines if leaks are heard.

11am - Dennis Fraine and Donald DiMartino entered the meeting .

The commission met with Dennis Fraine (Bellingham Town Manager) and Donald DiMartino (Bellingham DPW Director). Allan explained that our contract with Hopedale requires us to explore alternative sources of water for the Cape Rd. system. Allan said we used to get water from Bellingham back in the 80's but switched to Milford due to quality issues. Kevin thinks the connections may still be there. It appears Lowell's Restaurant and the Varney property are still on Bellingham Town Water. Kevin said we are exploring our options. Dennis said Bellingham discussed selling to Mendon in 2010 and it was defeated at town meeting but he thinks they may not have to get town meeting approval this time around. Kevin explained how the current contract with Hopedale prohibits any expansion beyond our existing 138 customers. Allan discussed the 35 Cape Rd property proposal to add 8 commercial lots and explained that right now they will not have town water. Dennis says Bellingham is generally interested and the proposed use would be pretty minor. Don says it would be a 2.3% increase in their water use. He also said it wouldn't affect water bans as the consumption would be minimal. Don is 100% in favor if it is up to him. Dennis says it would need to go before the Bellingham Selectmen for approval.

Don explained Bellingham's billing set up. They charge a \$210 fee per customer to cover capital impact. The commissioners explained that is similar to the fee we currently pay Hopedale. Don asked about the Grist Mill 40b development off Cape Rd. Kevin says that is long dead. That property is now being looked at for commercial development. Don asked about new connections. Kevin said there are the 8 proposed lots on 35 Cape as well as the property behind Gasco. There is solar going in across 140. There also may be future possibilities for the corner at 140 and Hartford Ave E. Don says they would want to set a limit and the commission agree. Dean says we are looking to maintain our existing system with limited expansion.

Dennis asked about Mendon's issue with Hopedale. Allan says they have a limited water supply and were essentially forced to supply Mendon when Milford dropped us. The current contract allows for no expansion of the system.

Don explained Bellingham would bill us directly for water at their maximum rate of \$4.40/1,000 gallons. Plus the \$210 per customer capital impact fee. Dan noted that rate is equivalent to \$3.29 per 100 cu ft to compare to Mendon's rates. There is also a buy-in fee based on the developer costs that would be around \$165,000.

Allan explained Dudley Rd is totally separate from our system on Cape Rd. Kevin suggests we attempt to sell it to Hopedale for a nominal cost.

Kevin says we would have to figure out how to cover the buy-in costs. The commission discussed paying it off over a few years. Dennis thinks that may be an option. Don thinks the old pipes and meters on Hartford Ave E may be gone and would need replacing. Kevin says we could replace the meters. Don says Bellingham would require annual calibration. Allan says the DEP would like to see additional connections for emergencies.

Dennis discussed the process. They will work on a proposal. Once they have the details worked out he would bring it to the Bellingham Selectmen and invite Mendon to discuss. Kevin thinks we could roll all the fees into our existing rates to cover the costs.

Don asked about repairs. Kevin explained that currently Hopedale does work for us but we are exploring options. Right now, we have the 3 elected commissioners, 1 paid 5 hour clerk, and a stipend water operator who also works for Hopedale. Kevin stated we are working on new meter replacements as well as some minor improvements.

Don says there may be some political issues. If they have to impose water bans people will complain about Mendon. They will have to figure out how to approach those issues. Allan asked about the Charles River Basin issues. Don says they don't have issues from that.

Dennis and Don will work on a proposal from Mendon. They requested copies of Mendon's recent ASR reports. Dan will get that info for them.

Don and Dennis left the meeting.

Dean asked about the pricing. Dan says their rate is \$3.29 per 100 cu ft, almost half of Hopedale's \$6. Kevin says we have to figure out the \$165K buy-in fees. The commission discussed borrowing the funds. They feel the total cost could be around \$300K for new pipes and meters. Dean says with more connections we could bring in additional profit to help cover costs. Also, more hookups would increase the value of the commercial lots on 140 and bring in tax revenue. Dean would like to see water run more like a self-sufficient department and not have to beg the town for funds. Kevin says this would strengthen the system and give us more control. Kevin discussed the possibility of an enterprise fund. We could look to set something up for Trash and Water. That would be a better set up for the town and save money.

All agree purchasing from Bellingham would be a benefit. We would gain a friendlier supplier, more hookups, additional connections to satisfy DEP, and modernization of the system. Kevin says we should keep the details quiet until we finalize with Bellingham.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:15pm.