

Board of Water & Sewer Commissioners

166 John Scoot Blvd., Norton, MA 02766

October 12, 2021

Meeting called to order

Pledge of Allegiance

Attendance: Assistant Superintendent John Harrop; Commissioner Chairman Steve Bishop, Commissioner Member James Jardin, Weston & Sampson's Tara McManus, Steve Pederson (call in), Jennifer O'Neil (call in),

Superintendent Updates: Water

- On September 29 the department responded to calls from KR Resendes working on East Main Street for the Mass DOT project. They believed they had struck the water main and water was flooding the area. Multiple personnel were dispatched.
- multiple gate valves needed to be closed to isolate this location, something we had previously planned for in case of an emergency
- Their pumps could not keep up with the water flow, and a complete shutdown was performed.
- water service was restored rather quickly, within 60-90 minutes
- There was a small amount of dirty water that was created by shutting the main off which changed the direction of water flow.
- The Town Hall was one location that indicated seeing some dirty water, along with a few other calls that came in.
- John posted an alert through the Norton Alerts platform
- Unrelated to East Main Street shutdown; staff have been out in the distribution system performing required low flow flushing of the fire hydrants to maintain/improve our distribution system residuals for sampling
- Each hydrant that's flowed for these operations is opened and let run until water is clear at the low flow rate, we do not shut them down dirty
- Staff has been working with Mansfield water and their contractor down on Azalea and Barberry Road off of Reservoir Street, their contractor is extending the water mains to feed new vacant lots for the Town of Mansfield.
- The New Water Main installations were inspected filled and flushed. Our Staff was on site to witness the pressure tests, chlorination's and sampling procedures. John does not believe all of the samples have cleared. Barberry Road passed.

- When we flushed the new mains, it did generate a few water calls on Reservoir St., Our Assistant Superintendent John went down and flowed the hydrants which cleared up very quickly
- Our Office staff was advised if additional customers call please tell them to let their cold-water faucet run several minutes to allow disruption to clear from their water services. Since doing that we have not received any additional calls in that area
- Two sprinkler flow tests were scheduled. One was on Woodlark Drive, across from our Cottage Street tanks on West Main Street. This location uses town pressure in their fire sprinkler system, two condo buildings they flowed two lines from each side. It was pretty simple, water cleared up pretty quickly.
- Letters will be sent out again to all of our commercial customers with fire sprinkler systems to remind them of rules and regulations pertaining to water use to test fire sprinkler systems
- We believe there are a few that have yet to comply with regulations, and may have been performing unauthorized testing which can create unwanted system disruptions

System disturbance:

- We received a call from Godfrey Drive resident saying there were dealing with dirty water, the responding technician found a company on site flowing the fire sprinkler systems and it was because these flows that the area had noticed a disruption.
- There are fines associated per event for individuals performing unauthorized sprinkler flow tests
- It is the building owner's responsibility to notify the water department of any sprinkler tests that they plan to perform, each test must be coordinated with the water department.
- The Fire department also needs to be aware of scheduled fire sprinkler tests
- Each Commercial Building can have different schedules as far as how often they are required to perform fire sprinkler tests

Well Three:

- Received the approval letter from the Mass DEP, this allows us to install a predetermined amount of watermain along with an analyzer to achieve the four-log virus removal based on contact time with the disinfectant.
- Our Foreman has made sure that all additional parts have been ordered that will be necessary to complete our project
- We will install 220 feet of 12-inch ductile iron water main along with assorted valves, tee's and fittings at our well #3 location
- We purchased and already installed the required erosion control, fence and straw waddles they were installed per the conservation requirements
- The work here will more than likely be performed in two phases.

- we are at the end of another quarter and were required by Mass DEP to post manganese at any source location above their action level
- Well #1 has been at or just over the action level for each sampling period, we are required to post the public notice any time a sample exceeds the action level of .30 mg/l.
- There have been some aesthetic complaints in proximity to the well #1 location
- The Manganese report was sent out to sun chronicle newspaper, and posted on town websites
- Both Well # 1 and Well #3 are low production wells, we try to use well # 1 on a limited basis, but it all depends on system demands.

Updates Continued:

- Town residents have been instructed to call 911 if it is after hours for water or sewer related emergencies and they are experiencing dirty water, because that is the only way that someone from either department will be notified of the issue, and will be dispatched to investigate and remedy the issue.
- Discussion on possibly setting up an alternative method of notification for water/sewer calls after hours so that 911 would not have to be called. Possibly an on call answering service for afterhours. Some system flushing was performed on Old Colony Rd.
- A message was left on the machine from Village way about flushing, it was investigated and a hydrant was low flowed to turn over that dead-end road in its entirety.
- The Mass EDEP computer system has been fixed and we were able to view and print our sample results. With the system back up John was able to finish the paperwork for the lead and copper sample results which will be mailed to the town residents, schools, daycares who participated in the program.
- We have also been working on completing and filing the sample results for manganese, HAA5's, TTHM's, and the chlorine and chloramine reports
- We maintained compliance with our lead and copper results
- We were granted reduced monitoring from Mass DEP because sample results have been so good.
- One location did have an exceedance, this location also had a previous exceedance, the resident/owner has and was notified and asked to replace the fixture in the home where the sample was taken.

Weston & Sampson updates:

Tara McManus – Well 5 and 6A

- At the last meeting I indicated that the PFAS results were non-detect for well 5 and well 6
- The pumping tests have all gone very well

- Not all of the test results have come back yet, Kevin McKinnon is going through the final application again before he submits it, but it will go in next week
- As far as well 6, we just need to wait for Mass DEP approval for the pumping and sample results that we submitted then we will pretty much be ready to go out to bid shortly after
- The DEP does have up to 72 days to review
- Well 6 is almost identical to the well 5 application, I am anticipating that well 6 will take a little bit less time
- We do need to submit our design plans to DEP as well for the modification upgrades in the vault
- As far as well 5, if there is a concern we did talk to DEP and now that well 5 pumping rate is at least approved if we needed to we could work with them to get a short order approval to put a temporary pump in as the source itself has been approved for the new pumping rate
- Tara has been talking to Frank, it seems okay for now.
- We are hoping to see a reduction in daily use especially now that we are moving into October, our winter demand is a little bit lower
- Having either of these wells on line would be helpful because we haven't been able to do our twice a year flushing program and it is starting to catch up to us (John Harrop)
- Once we can get these back up online, we can resume our flushing program (John Harrop)

Well # 1:

- Frank has been working with the Town Manager, sounds like there is going to be Federal money available that can be used towards upgrades
- There are several projects that the water department could fund through the ARPA funding This is likely one of them instead of having to go through town meeting process to spend money on repairs or replacements
- Initial step at well #1 is test drilling and water quality analysis \$35,000 for phase 1
- Then determine if it is effective enough to go to next level which would be to drill a larger sized well and perform a pumping test
- We want to do preliminary investigations first, if we are going to get low flow/poor water quality from each test location we would not want to proceed.
- Frank and I have spoken about a treatment process over there, which would be millions of dollars and likely not cost effective for that site based on the current yield
- Hope is that the test wells do find a nice little patch of perfect sand so we can get some good, filtered water
- Waiting for contracts and/or notice to proceed and then would be able to schedule a driller out there and start the work
- The timeline will vary to get piping and other materials

- Working with Frank, setting up projects, still potential for funding of the entire project for well # 4 as well as construction for wells # 5 and # 6
- Project has been put as a fast track and are currently in DC and Congress, we checked in with them and the update was that it was all still unclear, but the hope is that everything does push through with infrastructure bill. It will be listed as a special project.
- One of the front runners for the area
- Technically some of the work can't start sometimes until you get grant funding
- Will take several months just for the test drilling
- Overall project for well#4 will cost \$750,000
- Discussion on how long it will take to get the material needed for project and how difficult it is to get material and trucking right now with how everything was impacted so heavily due to COVID
- Frank and Tara are in contact almost daily trying to figure things out and updating John on projects, time frames, etc.
- Frank was going to reach out to the new conservation agent to introduce himself and touch base, and talk about work at well #3.
- Discussion about the four-log pipe, the length of the pipe and how it is going to be laid out in the trenches
- Update on the Mass DOT project, we performed a site walk with the state engineers and had an open discussion about concerns to make sure everyone is on the same page about the project and what needs to be done versus what has been completed so far, Frank, Chris, and Dave were onsite from the water dept. Keith from highway and the town manager as well.
- Discussion about the costs of the project itself, locations of gate valves for the project and how difficult shut downs would be

White Street:

- Surveyed on Friday, wrapped up that day
- Chris and Dave were on site with crew, they had met with the crew in advance
- It's in the office right now getting tweaked and we will be starting design on it in the next week or so
- It's about 1200 feet
- It will essentially eliminate the old water main in White Street. the new main will run along Rt.123 and connect tow existing 12" water mains with Newland St. at Rt 123.
- The new main will be larger in size than what is there now and will allow us to remove some cast iron fittings and ac pipe as well

Steve Pederson – Sewer

- We have the Cobb Street station contracts

- Frank sent them off to legal counsel and they had come back with some comments
- We have since taken care of those comments
- Tara has the contracts to return back with her tonight, we need to finish executing those so that we can get a notice to proceed out to Fall River Electric so we can get going on that project
- This has already been voted on and the intent is to award and issue the letter, it just needs a signature at this point (Steve & James sign)
- They have legal councils' signature; they still need the accountant's signature to prove funding is available
- Typically, accountant would sign first but instead of trying to get everyone together again it is recommended that two commissioners (James & Steve) sign them now, and then John and Frank, and then the accountant's signature
- Once all the signatures are collected there are dates that need to be put in and then they are ready to go, and you can start distributing them and issuing the notice to proceed
- Tara, Steve and Frank have been talking about the American Recovery Plan money and doing some water and sewer projects
- Steve needs to close the loop with Frank on a few things
- There have been several ideas on the wastewater side
- Frank has expressed his concern about emergency generators at Holly Road and Knollwood and needing to replacing those
- Frank has also mentioned looking into possibly the next sewer extension
- Discussion with Steve putting an email together about the possible upcoming projects and discussion with Frank and John about which ones should take priority
- Possibility that Steve will be able to present the next wastewater project at the next meeting
- Hoping to be able to utilize some of the ARP funding

Jennifer O'Neil – Call in

- Frank was going to give Steve and James some information on behalf of Jennifer's mother
- Jennifer is calling on behalf of her mother, her mother lives on Berkshire Terrace in Norton
- The most recent water bill was high, 75 cubic feet were used, compared to the 23 they typically use quarterly
- the office was called when she saw this to figure out what the problem was
- Technicians went to house to do three things, figure out why there was a huge increase in the water usage, replace the water meter, and mark out
- This home had a larger than typical size water meter, our technicians returned with a true $\frac{3}{4}$ " water meter. Jennifer had to leave for work but was able to find someone to be at the house to let technicians back in around 10:30 am they completed the work and left.

- Jennifer got home from work around 6:00pm and realized her entire basement was flooded
- Water meter was downstairs in closet, the water drenched entire closet and the landing and went through the wall underneath a built-in entertainment center underneath and flooded the entire living room there.
- Effected rugs and furniture and other miscellaneous items
- Jennifer noticed that the leak appeared to be coming from the valve, Jennifer put a bucket there to catch the water. Had to replace bucket twice within 12-hour time period
- Next day Jennifer called at 8:30 and spoke to same women she had spoken to previous day and the women told Jennifer they would send someone right out to address this issue
- Jennifer had to leave for work but was able to have someone at her house to let technicians in the second day
- Technician identified that they could not do anything about it, and that the leak was definitely coming from the pipe to the left of the water meter
- Jennifer is calling on behalf of her mother who has been going through a very difficult time in the past couple weeks
- Jennifer brought an emergency plumber in leaving them with the \$548 water bill and a \$440 bill from the emergency plumber
- Plumber said that the pipe was wrapped for some reason, because of this wrap it was difficult for Jennifer to tell that the leak was not actually coming from the valve but from the couple of inches of taped piping that the plumber pointed out to her
- Plumber had to take off big chunk of leaking pipe
- A person doing work outside her house moved a hose from the front of Jennifer's house to the back of the house to a faucet that is not frequently used, and the faucet was left on which is where the \$548 water bill came from
- Jennifer understands from the conversation that her and Frank had that it is plumbing that is outside the skills of what the technicians did, but Jennifer feels as though she did not have a flooded basement before the technician replaced the water meter, but she did after. Plus, additional bills
- The leak was not at the valve that the technicians replaced that day with the water meter, it was about a foot to the left
- The plumber's opinion is that the water meter was jammed in due to a poor fit, which caused pressure and then caused the leak
- The meter itself, and the valves, are NOT leaking
- Discussion on how water meters are designed, put in, and the potential for running into difficulties installing one, meters cannot be jammed in as setup is specifically designed for a meter to fit
- Discussion on whether or not Jennifer has gotten an assessment on damaged items, Jennifer mentions 3 large area rugs that she was attempting to dry out, does not seem successful. Jennifer believes she will need to have those rugs cleaned and is unsure of the cost to have them cleaned
- Drywall in closet where the leak started will need to be replaced

- Everything else was salvageable
- More discussion going over the sequence of events again, the time frames of water meter replacement, when Jennifer got home and saw the water, where the leak was coming from, and whether or not anyone was actually present to see if things were leaking right after technicians left after replacing water meter or not
- When Jennifer spoke to Frank after technicians left after first being there to replace water meter Frank did not indicate that there was an issue with the install
- Further discussion to try to figure out how long after the technicians left would the leak have started
- The Water & Sewer department are not responsible for plumbing inside people's houses
- More discussion on what valves were shut off by technicians in order for them to replace the water meter and whether or not what they did would have affected the wrapped pipe that was actually the cause of the leak
- Technicians did not touch the wrapped pipe to the left of the water meter that has been identified as the cause of the leak
- More discussion on replacing a water meter and how that should not affect the plumbing unless there is already an issue
- The Water & Sewer department is not responsible for the upkeep of the private plumbing, only the water meter itself
- Further discussion about the taped pipe and if that was a tell-tale sign that the plumbing already had an issue, and if the water meter had not been replaced in that long of a time period if a new water meter could possibly have changed anything
- Discussion on the high water bill the Jennifer received and who was responsible for leaving it on and then prompting everything else to happen
- Water meters are supposed to be replaced on average every 10 years; it is a department regulation. This water meter needed to be replaced since it had not been replaced since somewhere around 1986
- More discussion on who is actually responsible for the cost of all of this
- Jennifer would like the water/sewer to pay for the emergency plumbing bill so that her mother does not have to pay for it
- Discussion on whether or not the water/sewer wants to give some sort of rebate for damage, slippery slope to pay for plumbing when it is not responsibility of water/sewer
- Steve is going to get back to Jennifer about this issue once everyone has had the chance to look over the information and discuss everything

Motions:

Minutes from 9/14/2021-

James Jardin – I move that we approve the water/sewer commissioner minutes for September 14th, 2021

Steve Bishop – I second that

All in Favor: Commissioner Bishop – Aye

Commissioner Jardin – Aye

Motion passes unanimously

Brief discussion on painting water tower

Next meeting: September 26, 2021 @ 5:30pm

Meeting adjourned



TOWN OF NORTON
BOARD OF WATER AND SEWER COMMISSIONERS
166 JOHN SCOTT BLVD.
NORTON, MA 02766
(508) 285-0280

BOARD OF WATER/SEWER COMMISSIONERS
ACCEPTED AND APPROVED MINUTES FOR THE

BOARD MEETING HELD: October 12, 2021

Respectfully submitted,

Ralph M. L...

[Signature]
Steve Bishop, Chairman

11-9-21
Date Approved

[Signature]
James Jardin, Clerk

11-9-21
Date Approved