

LINCOLN WATER COMMISSIONERS

April 11, 2018

Regular Meeting

The regular monthly meeting of the Board of Water Commissioners was held at the Lincoln Town Hall with Commissioners Eric Fox, Edward Fox, George Hadley, Julie Labreche and Louis Long present. Also present were Water Superintendent Romeo Mendes, Anna Nascimento and Lewis Prescott. Present in the audience were Josh Giuliano from Citizens Investment, Patricia Fox, Jean Gagnon and Jason Gagnon.

The meeting was called to order at 6:04 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT –None

Motion to move 11a to the front of the agenda passed unanimously. (EdF/GH)

New Business

Josh Giuliano, Citizens Annual Investment Review

Superintendent Mendes introduced Josh Giuliano from Citizens Investment Services and relayed that he would provide an overview of the Board's investment accounts for the Board. Mr. Giuliano distributed a packet to each Commissioner and relayed the following:

- A breakdown showing total balances and the percentages of funds invested in individual accounts is provided.
- One of the accounts appears to be down but only due to a withdrawal to maintain specified Federal/IRS percentages.
- Account #1 is the stock account which had a return of 8.8% over the past year and account #2 which has the most funds returned -0.9%. The negative return was a function of investing so much in bonds so appropriate amounts of funds were directed toward Investment CDs to stem the tide.
- The Commission investments are in compliance with all required Federal/IRS requirements as far as percentages in stocks and other investment vehicles such as CDs go.
- The present status should be maintained and any change requiring immediate action will be communicated to the Commission immediately.

Chairman Fox, Commissioners and Superintendent Mendes thanked Mr. Giuliano for attending the meeting and providing the update.

The meeting returned to the regular order of business.

CONSENT AGENDA

The following items were considered for approval with the consent agenda at the April 11, 2018 meeting:

- March 12, 2018 Regular Meeting Minutes
- Capital Accounts – March 2018
- Abatements– March 2018
- Account Transaction Report – March 2018
- Correspondence
- News Articles

Motion to approve the consent agenda passed unanimously. (GH/EdF)

March 12, 2018 EXECUTIVE SESSION MINUTES

The Board reviewed the Session minutes. Motion to approve same passed unanimously. (EdF/LL)

SUPERINTENDENT REPORT OF DAILY ACTIVITY

Superintendent Mendes provided the following updates:

- Radio read program is at 99.9% with basically two handfuls of residences to be outfitted with remote reading units to achieve 100%. New equipment which would allow staff to drive the Town in a day and obtain all the readings should be considered for purchase and upon updating of the billing system, the Commission should proceed to monthly billing.
- The Chestnut Avenue Replacement project was initiated and half way toward completion. The Commission is fortunate to have assistance with the excavation which will allow the project to be totally completed before the end of the month.
- Plans for the Smithfield Avenue cleaning and lining project have been finalized and start up is anticipated toward the middle or end of May.
- Plans for Colonial Drive/Garden Street replacement are being finalized as well and start up is anticipated toward the middle or end of July.
- On call employees as well as the new Foreman, whenever he/she may start, will no longer take vehicles home but will instead be reimbursed for mileage whenever an after hour's response is required to attend to Commission business.

Superintendent Mendes stated that was all he had. Commissioner Labreche questioned if there was something in particular to cause the mileage reimbursement policy to be put into place. Superintendent Mendes replied the main reasons were insurance considerations as Commission fleet vehicles were now leaving the State due two on call employees living outside of Rhode Island. The mileage policy was put in place to address the insurance issue and attempt to limit wear and tear on the Commission's vehicles.

Motion to accept the Superintendent's report passed unanimously (EdF/GH)

MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORT

Commissioner Labreche questioned Anna Nascimento on the 2017-2018 Operating Budget Report asking if there was a way to generate reports from QuickBooks to provide more detail as what is routinely provided in the meeting packet does not provide enough information. Anna explained that entries for individual Balance sheet and Profit and Loss statement line items come from 3 different spreadsheets and totals come from QuickBooks. She transcribes some from the spreadsheets to the statements in question. Anna suggested that Commissioner Labreche come to the Commission offices and sit with her at the end of the month of April and she would demonstrate how the numbers for the entries were determined. Superintendent Mendes added that the immediate solution might be to generate more detail on the numbers making up the individual entries.

Motion to accept the expenditure and revenue report for the month of March 2018 passed unanimously (GH/EdF)

Motion to send the March 2018 financial status report summary letter to the Town Finance Director passed unanimously. (EdF/GH)

OUTSTANDING BALANCE REPORT

Motion to accept the March 2018 account balance report passed unanimously (GH/EdF)

CAPITAL ACCOUNTS

The capital Accounts report for March 2018 was passed with the Consent Agenda and will be placed on file.

MONTHLY INVOICES

Motion to pull Larry's Auto Repair from the payments passed unanimously (LL/GH)

Motion to approve payment of the March 2018 Accounts Payable in the amount of \$139,553.71 as well as Direct Payments in the amount of \$248,531.17 passed unanimously. (GH/JL)

Motion to pay Larry's Auto Repair passed unanimously (LL/GH) Commissioners Edward Fox and Eric Fox abstained from that vote.

ABATEMENTS -None

ACCOUNT TRANSACTION REPORT

The Account Transaction Report was passed with the Consent Agenda and will be placed on file.

CORRESPONDENCE

- a. The Trust Deductible Structure
- b. Public Employee's Local Union 1033

c. AECOM-Access to Lincoln Water Commission Properties

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- a. None

NEW BUSINESS

- a. Josh Giuliano, Citizens Annual Investment Review
- Moved to the front of the meeting
- b. Operation Service Award

Superintendent Mendes relayed that he would like to recognize a dedicated employee for his selfless dedication for more than half of his life in protecting the drinking water of the residents of the Town of Lincoln. This individual is a long standing employee and has demonstrated true professionalism under all four Superintendents of the Lincoln Water Commission. Superintendent Mendes asked that all join him and the Board of Commissioners in acknowledging Jean Gagnon for 40 years of service and presented Mr. Gagnon with a token of the Commission's appreciation. Mr. Gagnon thanked the Superintendent and the Commissioners.

c. Request for Waiver of TON Fee– Musket Drive

Superintendent Mendes relayed that he took it upon himself to request the waiver for the resident since she had been in rehabilitation for the past 3 or 4 months and obviously had not been able to take care of day to day matters. The account had a very small balance but unfortunately the billing system does distinguish between small and large overdue balances. A notice is sent when an account is greater than 30 days past due, 60 days past due and 90 days past due. In this particular situation there was no one at the house to receive the notices because the resident was in a rehabilitation facility. The resident did have someone looking after the house for her and that person notified the Commission that the house would be occupied soon. Superintendent Mendes added that he knew the resident would immediately bring the account current upon becoming aware of the situation and that was exactly what happened so his recommendation would be to waive the fee for the resident.

Motion to reimburse the \$100 TON fee for the Musket Drive resident passed unanimously. (EdF/LL)

d. Request for Waiver of TON Fee – Great Road

Superintendent Mendes relayed that the fee resulted from the customer being chronically late in paying on the account. With each bill cycle 1st, 2nd and 3rd notices have to be sent out to the customer. For example, during the most recent billing cycle the customer arrived first thing in the morning on the day of scheduled terminations to pay the bill but it was immediately after the field crew had left to do turn offs. Due to a number of factors including the history of service being terminated and an inability to keep the account current, a decision was made to leave the fee in place with instructions to petition the Board for a waiver if the customer chose. Staff's recommendation is to leave same in place.

Commissioner Fox questioned whether or not service was actually terminated. Superintendent Mendes replied no; however the termination notice clearly specifies that the account must be brought current before close of business on the preceding day in order to avoid imposition of the fee so the Commission was within its rights to leave same in place.

Motion to leave the \$100 TON fee in place passed unanimously. (EdF/GH)

e. Purchase of MRX920 Data Collector for Commission Meter Reading

Superintendent Mendes relayed that the MRX920 was equipment at a cost of approximately \$9,800 to allow reading all Water Commission customer meters in less than one day. Pertinent parts of the discussion were as follows:

- The unit will be an upgrade to the 2 hand held units presently existing which require the Commission to purchase a \$2,700 plan for their maintenance and potential repair if same were required. The new equipment will reduce read times from approximately 5 days to less than 1 day. There is no deadline to put the maintenance and repair contact on the two existing hand held units in place but should the decision be to not purchase the new equipment then same should be initiated immediately.
- Purchase of the equipment will allow monthly reading and upon the Board's approval facilitate the move to monthly billing. Although more work at the outset, monthly billing will eventually be less work for the billing clerk than at present with quarterly billing and more than likely free her to perform other tasks.
- Advantages with monthly billing will be, alerting customers to high usage in the summer, potentially inducing conservation, more consistent cash flow and lower delinquency.

Motion to table action on the purchase of the new reading equipment passed with Commissioner LaBreche opposed. (EdF/GH)

f. Evaluation for Potential Purchase of Muni-Link Cloud Based Billing System

Superintendent Mendes explained that the proposed billing system is an alternative to the billing software provided by Continental Utility Solutions Inc. that the Commission currently has in place. Muni-Link was on site to give a presentation of their billing system and the following was relayed:

- Other than a monthly fee of approximately \$2,100 for use of the hosted billing solution which is a Cloud based application, the only other cost is an expenditure outlay of approximately \$13,000 for set up and data conversion.
- The proposal includes a number efficiency improvements that will provide a savings to the Commission and said savings such as Cass certification and E-billing can be thought of as netting into the overall monthly cost. In the final analysis the new hosted solution will cost the Commission \$309 more per month than what is currently in place.
- The new system is very user friendly and will make the Commission billing whether quarterly or monthly much more efficient. It also has a number of additional modules that can be added at no cost such as Electronic work Delivery, Inventory, Inspections, maintenance and GIS mapping.

Commissioner Labreche questioned when the additional modules mentioned by the Superintendent would be available. Superintendent Mendes responded they are all available right now and it is a matter of comfort level on the part of the Staff and Commissioners as to how quickly to put same in place.

Motion to approve the purchase of the hosted billing solution provided by Muni-Link passed unanimously. (JL/GH)

g. Any other business that may properly come before the Board

Chairman Fox stated he had become aware that current Foreman, Jean Gagnon might choose to retire from the Commission as early as July and wanted to know from him if same had a real possibility of occurring. Foreman Gagnon who was sitting in the audience replied yes. Chairman Fox expressed that he would like the Foreman to produce something in writing to the Board stating same to allow plans for a replacement to be put into place. Mr. Gagnon explained that it was still his intention to retire in September but that it was becoming harder and harder to handle the day to day stresses of the position and if he felt that same were too great he would inform the Board of his plans to leave earlier. Chairman Fox asked if there were any other questions. All Commissioners replied no.

CLAIMS

a. None

NEWS ARTICLES –

a. None

EXECUTIVE SESSION –

Public vote on Matters from Executive Session

Motion to end training of replacement Foreman immediately passed unanimously. (EdF/GH)

Motion to seal the minutes of Executive Session according to RIGL 42-46-7 (c) passed unanimously. (GH/EdF)

Motion to adjourn passed unanimously. (JL/GH)

There being no further business before the board the meeting adjourned at 7:27p.m.