



**TOWN OF BLANDFORD
WATER DEPARTMENT**

1 Russell Stage Rd
Blandford, MA 01008
413.848.4279 x 304

Water Commissioners

Michael Keier
Brad Curry
Peter Thayer

Water Superintendent

Gordon Avery

**BLANDFORD WATER COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
Thursday, APRIL 11, 2024
4:30 p.m.**

1. OPEN SESSION

Meeting Opened at 4:30 P.M.

In Attendance: Brad Curry, Commissioner, Pete Thayer, Commissioner, Mike Keier, Commission Chairman, Mario Godbout, Gordon Avery, Water Superintendent, Tom Bean, Chester Water Commissioner.

Meeting is being recorded.

2. EXAMINATION OF RECORDS OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS:

- a. **Review of the minutes of the March 7, 2024 Water Commission meeting**

MOTION: P. Thayer made a motion to accept the Minutes of March 7, 2024.

M. Keier Seconded.

All in Favor

3. ACTION ITEMS

- a. **MA Clean Water Trust Grant/Loan 29-29**
This Grant has been completed.
- b. **MA Clean Water Trust Grant/Loan 22-30**
This Grant was not initiated and no money was requested or received.
- c. **MA Clean Water Trust Grant/Loan 22-31**
This Grant is in process.
- d. **Eversource Certified Letter – 5 Year Vegetation Management**
It has been stated that nothing needs to be done.

ADDITIONAL ITEMS ADDED

e. Interview Seasonal Water Help – Mario Godbout

G. Avery discussed Mr. Godbout doing a summer internship working as seasonal help. If hired, he would do 20 hours in Blandford and 20 hours in Chester and train in Blandford. Per the grant, his hourly rate would be \$20.00/hour and will be tiered depending on training and licensure. Gordon also discussed with Dave Waldon the possibility of Mr. Godbout working in the Highway Department should scheduling change grant wise in the Water Department and that is a possibility. He could also be borrowed should the need arise. In the Water Department his schedule will be the same as Steve Grondin. After September 15th when he no longer falls under the grant, he will be considered for the Highway Department.

The interview of Mario Godbout commenced accompanied with a description of the scope of the job and a vote was taken. Brad Curry is in favor of his hire as explained relative to the Highway/Water arrangement if the Water Department can't afford to sustain his employment. The Commissioners voted to hire Mr. Godbout.

MOTION: M. Keier made a motion to accept Mario as our intern if approved by Chester.

P. Thayer Seconded.

All in Favor

f. Blandford Country Club Quarter 3 Water Abatement

The Blandford Country Club abatement request was presented.

MOTION: P. Thayer made a motion to approve the Blandford Country Club's request for abatement..

M. Keier Seconded.

All in Favor

g. Water Department Rate Study – Pm-Call Engineering Services Agreement – Engineering Services Request Form W-P Project No. 20618C and T17742

The On-Call Engineering Services Agreement – Engineering Services Request Form was reviewed by the Commission and approved. It will be sent to Wright-Pierce.

MOTION: M. Keier made a motion to accept the contract for the five year rate study (2025-2029).

P. Thayer Seconded.

All in Favor

h. Federal Earmark Requests – FY 25

G. Avery initiated the correspondence necessary to get this off the ground as Federal earmarks have opened up. This covers 5 projects and there are 3 pertinent ones which involve the Russell Stage/Maple Lane line replacement, the second is the electrical service line coming from North Blandford Road up to the plant, and the third is the replacement of the water storage tank and pumphouse at about 6.5 million dollars. Total projected is about 8-12 million dollars. G. Avery was able to get the letters done in conjunction with work done with Wright & Pierce. Wright & Pierce will put the letters in a packet which will match up with their projects. He also initiated letters from the Town Administrator and the Board of Health. K. Shaw will track to be sure the Town receives a copy of the letters that will be sent out by Wright & Pierce directed to Senator Elizabeth Warren, Senator Ed Markey, and Representative Richard Neal.

K. Shaw advised the letter to Sean Cronin was formalized and now ready for the Commissioners' signatures. It is important to get this out relative to the Blandford/Chester Shared Operator Grant.

i. Isaiah – OIT Laborer – Budgeting

The Town of Blandford needs to approve Issiah to work in Blandford and cannot do this until the budget is finalized. M. Szlosek and G. Avery will be meeting Friday to discuss. This will be carried to the next Commission meeting with the possibility of having an interim meeting.

4. UNFINISHED BUSINESS FROM PRIOR MEETINGS:

a. Water Department Trailer Registration

It is recommended the registration information be scanned to MIIA and request them to register this trailer. It would be advantageous to have this trailer to benefit the daily operations of the Water Department.

b. Water Meter Project Update

K. Shaw reported the new accounting company, VADAR, has been working with the Tax Collector's Office and they expect the next billing for excise bills will go out under the new software. The Water Department will be a separate project and the conversion will be starting soon. It is anticipated it may be for next fiscal year. M. Keier inquired relative to the EJP billing and was advised that it is continuing and current. There has been concern expressed about their support.

c. Indirect Costs and Water Billing for Town Owned Property

Indirect Costs for services will be discussed on Friday with the Town Administrator. The Commission would like to keep the billing of the Town departments and pay the indirect costs. It is felt it will be a cleaner way to handle it.

d. Shared Services Grant with Chester Update

K. Shaw asked Tom Bean who to direct the billing of Steve Grondin's expenses and was advised to send to Bob Daley's attention.

5. NEW/OTHER BUSINESS:

a. Water Superintendent Update

G. Avery referenced possible discrepancies in readings at the Water Plant.

b. KP Law PFAS Cost Recovery Program Notice

K. Shaw was unable to look into and will schedule a review.

6. MEETING ADJOURNED

MOTION: M. Keier made a motion to adjourn.

P. Thayer Seconded.

All in Favor.


Meeting adjourned at 6:15 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Karen Shaw, Administrative Assistant
Water Department

WATER COMMISSION


Michael Keier, Chairman


Brad Curry, Clerk