



**TOWN OF BLANDFORD
WATER DEPARTMENT**

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Water Commissioners

Brad Curry
Michael Keier
Peter Thayer

Water Superintendent

Gordon Avery

**BLANDFORD WATER COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
Thursday, JUNE 20, 2024
4:30 p.m.**

1. OPEN SESSION

Meeting Opened at 4:37 P.M.

Town of Blandford Water Plant

In Attendance: Brad Curry, Commissioner, Mike Keier, Commission Chairman, Pete Thayer, Water Commissioner, Gordon Avery, Water Superintendent, Steve Grondin, OIT, Karen Shaw, Administrative Assistant.

Meeting is being recorded.

2. EXAMINATION OF RECORDS OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS:

- a. Review of the minutes of the May 16, 2024 Water Commission meeting**

MOTION: Mike Keier made a motion to accept the Minutes of May 16, 2024.

Brad Curry Seconded.

All in Favor

3. ACTION ITEMS

a. Quarter 4 Water Department Billing Commitment

The Commitment was signed by the Commission. Blandford Country Club bill needs to be redone as it is incorrect due to the migration of information from the old system to the new system. Karen will work with VADAR to get this corrected.

b. Water Abatement – 25 North Street – John Fisher

John Fisher has applied for an abatement within the time frame required. Water was turned off during 04.01.24-06.06.24 and will receive an abatement for usage for that time period. The Commission granted the abatement.

Intern – Chester Grant Funding

Gordon has been receiving emails from Bob Daley regarding an intern they have hired and would like to be paid out of the Grant. Basically all the money relative to payroll has

been apportioned and submitted. Gordon advised Bob Daley the two Water Commissions need to discuss it rather than just talking to Blandford Water Superintendent. It is planned to discuss this at the next combined Water Commission Meeting.

c. Old Chester Road

There is an exposed water main on Chester Road and a repair is required. It is the responsibility of the Highway Department to perform the work and it is recommended that one of the Water Commissioners attend the next Selectboard meeting and request that the Highway Department perform the work. Work performed by the Highway Department is under the direction of the Selectboard and Karen will request this be placed on the Selectboard Agenda. Mike Keier will attend and advise the Selectboard of the need for this repair.

d. On-Call Ozone System Evaluation

The Consent Order is due June 30th and everything will need to be prepared. Wright & Pierce will work with the Town and do the engineering portion of the work. The cost comes in at \$9,950. They will do an evaluation of the system and give a breakdown of what needs to be done and discuss the feasibility. They will write up a report and submit it to the State. Pacific Ozone installed the system and it is anticipated they will work with Wright & Pierce. After this has been resolved it may be good to investigate a new treatment technique for this.

MOTION: Brad Curry made a motion to accept the proposal by Wright & Pierce for evaluation of the ozone system at the cost of \$9,950.

Mike Keier Seconded.
All in Favor

4. UNFINISHED BUSINESS FROM PRIOR MEETINGS:

a. Water Department Trailer Registration

There are still problems with the trailer registration. Karen will reach out to MIIA to ask what the problem is and how best to remedy it. Gordon gave her a contact person familiar with the process for registering a trailer who may be of assistance.

b. Water Meter Project Update

Fourth Quarter bills went out on the new system. A bill that was inadvertently categorized as Municipal C when it should have been Commercial C and will be adjusted. Going forward the bill will be listed and billed as Commercial C. Issue dates and due dates may change a day or two in FY 25 to make certain revenue for the fourth quarter falls in that quarter so all is in the proper fiscal year.

The water rate study is under way and it is anticipated the transition to a three tier billing system will be smooth. Water usage tiers were discussed and for an average perhaps 100-200 cubic gallons per month would fall under tier one, 200 – 350 would fall under tier two and anything over 350 would be tier three. This is in the review stage and not firm.

c. Update on Water Purchase Return

The bill for the water purchased by the Fire Department during the recent water line break will be paid by the Water Department. The water is in 3 and 5 gallon jugs and in order to

use the surplus water in an efficient way, a couple water bubblers will be purchased to use the rather large amount of water purchased. Seeing as the water plant in their offices is in need of convenient drinkable water, one of the bubblers will be placed at that location.

d. One Stop State Grants

Several active grants requested by the Town have been pushed through in Congress. Elizabeth Warren and Ed Markey have reviewed the projects and are pushing them through the Senate as well. If it all goes through there may be money from both the House and the Senate. The one stop grant system enables all of the grants to be in one place.

e. Water Rates – Update

This is covered in 4 b.

f. 24 North Blandford Road – Abandoned Property Update

Commissioner Thayer has observed that work is being done at this house. The owner is deceased and his sister who is handling her brother's estate has contacted the Water Department to turn the water on. Unfortunately, due to line leakage the water was turned off and cannot be turned on until repair to the water line and a new meter is installed. She has been advised of the protocol as to how to accomplish this. There have been three repairs done on this line over the years and in light of this, the line needs to be replaced.

g. Wayne Lawrence – Cross Street

Mike Keier relayed to the family that is interested building a cabin and having a water line installed to the construction that maybe a well will be less expensive then putting in a water line as there is no line up to the area they wish to build. They are still interested in pursuing it. Gordon will speak with Steve Garrity for an estimate of putting a line in and it is speculated the estimate would be approximately \$50.00 a foot. Mike Keier would like the homeowner to be aware the cost would need to be covered by the homeowner. He advised he will let them know an estimate will be done and they will be contacted.

h. Filter Reconditioning (Added Topic)

A re-sanding of one of the water filters is needed at the plant and prices have increased. Last time it was \$16,000 and now it looks like it will be \$20,000 and Gordon is waiting to get an estimate. Labor has increased several thousand dollars. As there is surplus sand at the plant, there is a possibility it can be used and the price may be reduced. Discussion followed as to uses of the removed sand.

5. NEW/OTHER BUSINESS:

a. Water Superintendent Update

The four pads at the water plant need repair. Phoenix has given a quote for all four pads of \$6,200. Gordon would like to get this done on this fiscal year should the Commission want to go forward, The Commission has recommended this be pursued to go forward if it stays within the \$6,200 range.

Gordon discussed the pay scales for the new fiscal year. His status has been changed to salary status. The Commission has looked favorably on this and also reviewed and signed the pay scales for the rest of the Water Department personnel.

Gordon has a contact for the state and there will be an on-line meeting through Teams. He will get a date this will happen.

b. Tractor Purchase (Used) MB Tractor and Equipment

It is recommended that the Water Department not purchase a tractor. Removing hay from the area can possibly be farmed out to a resident farmer who will keep the hay for his fee for haying the field. Gordon will look into prospective individuals who would be interested in doing this.

6. MEETING ADJOURNED

MOTION: Mike Keier made a motion to adjourn.

Brad Curry Seconded.

All in favor

Meeting adjourned at 6:07 p.m.


Respectfully Submitted,

Karen Shaw, Administrative Assistant
Water Department


WATER COMMISSION



Michael Keier, Chairman



Brad Curry, Clerk



Peter Thayer, Member