



**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, SEPTEMBER 12, 2024  
4:30 p.m.**

**1. OPEN SESSION**

Meeting Opened at 4:37 P.M.

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

Meeting is being recorded.

**2. EXAMINATION OF RECORDS OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS:**

- a. Review of the minutes of the August 8, 2024 Water Commission meeting.**

**MOTION: Mike Keier made a motion to accept the Minutes of August 8.**

**Peter Thayer Seconded.  
All in Favor**

**3. ACTION ITEMS**

- a. Old Chester Road – Update**

There is a personnel change in the Highway Department and the temporary Highway Superintendent is getting up to date. This can be tabled.

- b. Water Plant Concrete Work (pads) – Update**

This is on schedule. They had to order more of the paint so it all matches.

- c. 2012 Ford Pickup Truck – Westfield Surplus Equipment – Update**

The Water Department now has the truck. A cab mount is missing but other than that it is running well. The truck passed inspection but the side doors on the cab needs to be replaced prior to the next inspection.

**d. Backflow Testing Procedure**

The first bill has gone out with FY 25 Q 1 water bills on 09.01.24 and the next one will be for Q 3. Thereafter billing will be Q 2 and Q 4 and a system for this billing has been put into place. An agenda item will be listed for the next meeting relative to what the tester should be paid for testing and also if a test fails and it has to be retested, what would be the fee for the retest? Two sites failed the backflow test and Gordon will put a call into Eric Mann for a retest. It is noted that on a fail it is suggested, the same fee amount applies for a retest. Gordon will get back to Karen when he has talked with Eric Mann.

**e. Possible Shared Services with Highway Department**

Gordon discussed this with the Acting Highway Superintendent and it is anticipated this will work. Highway can respond to selected water repairs which require backfill and paving and part of Water Department's breaks and repairs budget could be allotted to this.

**f. Treatment Plant Fire Alarm Failures - Repairs**

The alarms haven't been looked at for a great deal of time and a quote has been given of \$4,600 to repair the system. The Commission would like to go forward with the repairs.

**g. M & M Site Services Fire Hydrant Repair Quote**

The two fire hydrants that require repair will fall under the responsibility of the Highway Department as this Department caused the damage to the hydrants. This quote is accepted but the Highway Department will be responsible for the repairs.

**4. UNFINISHED BUSINESS FROM PRIOR MEETINGS:**

**a. Water Department Tractor Registration**

This has been remedied.

**b. Water Meter Project Update – Proposed Time Line**

A rates study needs to be completed prior to instituting metered water. However, once Sensus and Vadar software has ironed the software aspects, dry runs will commence. When accuracy has been confirmed, the system can go on line for the metering water.

Core & Main will come in once a year to evaluate the system and Sensus will handle ongoing support. It is noted the handheld is out of date but can be used. Should it fail, the new configuration allows that a tablet can be used once the applications have been uploaded. In addition Diamond Maps can be uploaded to a tablet.

Karen presented a tentative timeline for metered water billing. She reviewed when the proposed stuffers will go out and when to advertise and place on the Town website.

**c. Contract Review and Sensus Support**

The Sensus contract was reviewed and accepted. It was noted they were given a verbal approval. The yearly cost for support through Core & Main is \$3,400.00.

**d. One Stop State Grants**

There's been nothing at present and it is expected to hear possibly at the end of October/November. Same with Federal earmark funding.



**e. Water Rates – Update**

Covered under section b. above.

**f. Ozone System Evaluation**

Mike McMahon of Wright & Pierce via telephone call to the Commission met with Xylem which is the manufacturer of the Ozone equipment that is presently at the plant. Pacific Ozone, which was purchased by Xylem. is the company that manufactured the equipment. Xylem visited the plant to come up with a general assessment of the equipment and they provided a letter proposal to rehabilitate the present equipment or replace it with a new system. The present equipment is no longer manufactured and it is difficult to service and find replacement parts. They are oversized for the technology today. New equipment is smaller and uses less electricity. They provided a proposal for two skid mounted generating systems. One at approximately \$90,000 and the other was around \$135,000. A new air compressor is recommended to replace the present air compressor with the new one being smaller. The price would be \$75,000 on top of the skid mounted equipment. The pros and cons of the systems were discussed.

There is an option to purchase a system that is approximately \$5,000 more than the cost of refurbishing the present equipment. It would need to be determined if this system would be able to meet the design flow, not the present flow.

Gordon asked what the life expectancy is for an ozone system and was told about 10 – 17 years.

Should the Town go forward with a new ozone system, it would need to go out for procurement. It is estimated the entire cost will be approximately \$200,000.

Mike will contact the Water Department when he can set up a meeting with Xylem so everyone can discuss this. It has also been determined that the Commission should have a special meeting on September 26 at 3:30 to discuss the Ozone System.

Brad Curry asked what the cost of the prior ozone system was and it is unknown. There is another company, Blue Leaf that works with ozone systems and this may be investigated. Old material could go out to bid as well.

**g. Chester/Blandford Agreement – Discussion**

No activity and Agreement due to reach the end of the contract. Isaiah has been contacting Gordon relative to continuing to work for Blandford for 20 hours per week and was advised by Gordon he would discuss with the Water Commission. It is decided there will be no additional workers added. Funds in the account have been earmarked for Steve Grondin. For summer, it is anticipated summer interns can be recruited from the school which will be helpful.

In the future, it is anticipated staffing will need to be full time when SCADA is in full function.

**5. NEW/OTHER BUSINESS:**

**a. Water Superintendent Update**

Gordon met with Kevin Shea at ITS. They did a power up scenario which gave a partial preview of SCADA. There will be a new format and he reviewed what he learned. The system will be custom built.

Gordon went over the plans for the upcoming sanding project at the plant on September 25<sup>th</sup>. Highway is on board and the Fire Department has been alerted as well.

PFAS is back and is non-detectable so it's good until 2027.

Gordon had a phone conversation and also met with Stephanie Collins from Sampson and Weston regarding the LCRR Report.

Mr. Kana of 71 Chester Road telephoned to speak with the Water Superintendent. This matter is in the hands of the Town Administrator and the insurance company. It is generally agreed that he should attend a Water Commission meeting should he have additional issues or problems.

## **6. MEETING ADJOURNED**

**MOTION: Mike Keir made a motion to adjourn.**

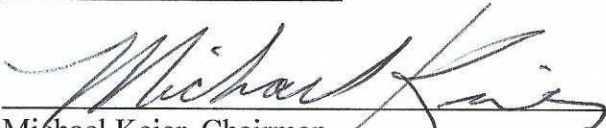
**Brad Curry Seconded.  
All in favor**

Meeting adjourned at 5:48 p.m.

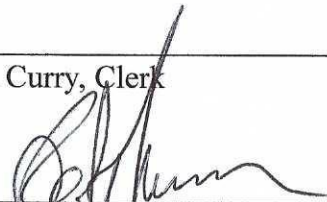
Respectfully Submitted,

Karen Shaw, Administrative Assistant  
Water Department

## **WATER COMMISSION**

  
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Michael Keier, Chairman

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Brad Curry, Clerk

  
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Peter Thayer, Member