



**Town of Berlin – Water Control Commission
Meeting Minutes
November 28, 2023**

CALL TO ORDER:

The Berlin Water Control Commission Meeting was called to order by Chairman Bruce Laroche at 7:00 p.m., November 28, 2023 in the Public Works Department (Room 120), 240 Kensington Road. The meeting was also available via Zoom.

ATTENDANCE:

Chairman Bruce Laroche, Commissioners: Barry Fairwood, Tom Lasker, Liam Mitchell, and Alvaro Garcia, Jr., (zoom). Staff – Ray Jarema, P.E., Berlin Water Control.

AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS: None.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

The minutes of the October 24, 2023 meeting were previously mailed (and e-mailed) to the Commissioners for review.

NEW BUSINESS:

Berlin Turnpike Pump Station Issues

Mr. Jarema reported some major problems at the Berlin Turnpike Pump Station. The electric panel shorted out, and we are operating on the generator power. It has been difficult to find an acceptable electrical panel replacement that Eversource will need to approve. A back-up generator was rented, because the original generator failed due to the 24-hour demand and bad fuel problems. Bigelow Electric [namely Paul Bigelow] has been extremely helpful in keeping the station operational, and is looking for an electric panel that Eversource will approve.

Connecticut Best Tasting Water Award 2023 issued to Berlin Water Control

Mr. Jarema reported that he recently entered a Berlin Water Control Elton Road Wellfield sample (directly from our well) into the Connecticut Best Tasting Water Contest, and won the FIRST PLACE trophy! He may defend the title in California at the National AWWA Conference [June 2024].

Lead & Copper Rule Revision – Inventory

Mr. Jarema voiced his concerns over the impending Lead & Copper Rule Revision inventory requirements due next year [October 16, 2024]. There is so much data to compile and not enough time

for one person to input the information. He is hoping that Connecticut Water Company and the Town Assessor's data will ease the burden. He is looking at streamlining the process. Our most vulnerable area is East Berlin because of the age of the distribution system.

Connecticut Water Company- erroneous rate letter

Mr. Jarema reported that Connecticut Water Company erroneously mailed a rate increase [18%] letter to their customers, but by accident included Berlin Water Control customers. Mr. Jarema has a message posted on the Town website stating it was their error, and the November billing statement will also have a retraction notice and apology from CT Water Company.

Deming Road Meter

Mr. Jarema reported that the Mattabassett District found that the meter at the Deming Road meter was not functioning properly. Berlin must replace a meter transducer so the flows can be captured into the trunk line that flows into the Mattabassett District treatment facility in Cromwell.

White Oak Meter Readings Request

Mr. Jarema reported that the Mattabassett District was looking for meter readings for about 20 homes going back to 2019, but Mr. Simonian wrote back that it wasn't as critical as he thought and would budget without that information because it is relatively "insignificant".

Meeting Dates Approval 2024

Mr. Jarema presented the proposed 2024 meeting dates to the Commissioners. The year for the December meeting was incorrect, but the remaining dates looked correct.

Commissioner Lasker made a motion to accept the 2024 meeting dates, with one correction, seconded by Commissioner Fairwood. The motion was unanimously approved.

OLD BUSINESS:

Rate Changes (assessment, connection, and permit fees)- Public Hearing Date

Mr. Jarema mentioned again that it has been at least ten years, or more, that certain rates have not changed, namely assessment, connection, and permit fees. Mr. Jarema prepared a chart comparing current rates to some suggested increases for the Commissioners to discuss. Mr. Jarema has done some comparisons with surrounding utilities and found that we are well behind others with certain fees. Mr. Jarema requested that the Commissioners move forward with a public hearing.

Commissioner Mitchell made a motion to hold a Public Hearing, January 23, 2024 at 6:45 p.m., the Public Works Department- Room 120, seconded by Commissioner Fairwood. The motion was unanimously approved.

Baxter Avenue Meter - Status

Mr. Jarema reported that the new meter device has been installed at Baxter Avenue, and Wright-Pierce will now re-install a temporary meter for comparison monitoring for a month. It was determined that the data should be collected on a computer rather than flash drives, so they are collecting data for future billing accuracy.

Deming Road Pump Station - Status

Mr. Jarema reported that the project is moving along, but the new generator is on back-order [58 weeks], so things are delayed. Because of the availability of a recent gas line connection, we are considering the use of a gas generator instead of diesel fuel. We expect physical site work to begin in early 2024, weather permitting.

Executive Session - CGS-Sec 1-200 (6) (B): discuss strategy meeting with Corporate Counsel relative to Worthington and Kensington Fire Districts.

Commissioner Mitchell made a motion to enter into Executive Session at 7:38 p.m. regarding a strategy discussion, seconded by Commissioner Fairwood. The motion was unanimously approved. The Commissioners invited Ray Jarema and Lecia Paonessa to attend the session.

Commissioner Lasker made a motion to end the Executive Session at 8:08 p.m., seconded by Commissioner Lasker. The motion was unanimously approved. No actions were taken.

ADJOURNMENT:

Commissioner Lasker made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:09 p.m., seconded by Commissioner Fairwood. The motion was unanimously approved.

Lecia Paonessa
Recording Secretary

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BERLIN TOWN CLERK



11/30/2023, 10:17:03 AM