

Town of Swanzey, New Hampshire
Water Study Committee
Meeting Minutes – April 13, 2016

Note: Minutes are not final until reviewed and approved by the Committee. Review and approval of minutes generally takes place at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Committee.

Call to Order:

The regular meeting of the Water Study Committee was called to order at 4:00 p.m. by Chairman Don Skiba.

Committee Members Present: Chair Skiba, Glenn Page, Scott Self, Steven Bittel, Sly Karasinski

Absent: None

Others Present:

Town Administrator Michael Branley, Planning and Community Development Director Sara Carbonneau

Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes: None

Election of Officers

Page **moved** to nominate Skiba as Chair of the Committee. There was a second by Self and all were in favor, except Skiba, who abstained. **Motion passed.**

Review of Charge from the Board of Selectmen

○ **Review of Professional Engineering Report (PER) from GeoInsight**

Discussion was held regarding items in the report including the need for a water storage tank. There was a discussion about the funds involved being \$1,000,000 without the storage tank or Route 10 loop. Skiba said he spoke to Gary Lynn who is responsible for the MtBE funds at New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NH DES) which paid for the GeoInsight study. Skiba reported that Lynn said the preference of NH DES was for a municipality to get the funds, not the current owners. Lynn said that he would be willing to attend a meeting with the members of the Committee to discuss in detail. Skiba noted that the West Swanzey Water Co. has a loan from the NH DES.

Discussion occurred regarding the possibility of setting up a water precinct like the North Water Precinct Karasinski said that agreement from the Selectmen is needed, approval from the people affected by the precinct, and perhaps State approval. Bittel said if funds were available for a storage tank, then the project would be interesting and without an elevated water tank, it doesn't achieve what the Town wants. Bittel said a precinct also limits the liability for the Town. Karasinski asked if there was a way to figure out the boundaries of a precinct. Karasinski explained the revenue stream for the North Swanzey Water Precinct.

Bittel said that a bigger system would stress the system. Page said that bringing the West Swanzey Water System up to municipal standards would mean serious money, something like \$5,000,000. Skiba said he thought the State has more than \$81,000,000 in their MtBE funds. Bittel agreed with Page that doing it right to include all that was needed was the right way to move ahead, otherwise not worth doing.

Carbonneau noted that NH DES want to get out from doing the water remediation that they have been doing. She also spoke about a Class Action law suit which is going on and it is a thorn in NH DES's side.

There was a brief discussion as to who is named in the lawsuit. Self said that it is Exxon Mobil and Mini-mart.

Page repeated that NH DES has to define exactly what they are willing to do and if they are willing to finance up-front engineering as to what it would take to take over a small system and bring it up to municipal standards. Bittel suggested looking into what would need to be done to create a precinct. Carbonneau and Branley will write up a procedure for creating a precinct. Karasinski said a precinct tax include fire protection. Bittel said the rate payers have to be willing to pay what is needed to maintain the system and build a reserve.

There was a discussion about the court's decision on use of MtBE funds and what actions are considered to be within the definition of "remediation" and whether or not the funds could be used for improving the system and building a storage tank. Karasinski said they might not pay for a storage tank, but they might be willing to pay to hook up to the Keene pipes in North Swanzey.

- It was agreed to schedule a review meeting with GeoInsight and NH DES. A meeting at 3 pm on a Wednesday afternoon was acceptable to the group. Discussion included inviting Rick Skarinka from NH DES Drinking Water Bureau – Carbonneau will be away first week in May.
- Community Development Block Grants – Bittel said that these are competitive and take a long time to achieve. Carbonneau said these grants are limited to \$500,000 each year.

Adjournment:

A **motion** to adjourn was made by Bittel with a second from Karasinski and all were in favor. Adjournment occurred at 4:41 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Beverly Bernard, Recording Secretary