

NVC Utilities Committee
Trustee Meeting
Community Hall and by Zoom link
Friday, February 10, 2023
2:30 p.m.

Trustees Present: David Crofoot, Judy Metcalf, Jeffrey Wilt
Staff: Chuck Applebee
NVC Officials: Janae Novotny

Trustees Absent: Brady Brim-Deforest, Casey Brown

The February meeting of the NVC Utilities Trustees convened at 2:35. Utilities chair, Jeffrey Wilt called the meeting to order.

Approval of January minutes: David Crofoot moved (seconded by Judy Metcalf). The motion was adopted with yes votes from David Crofoot, Judy Metcalf, Jeffrey Wilt

Introductions: Jeffrey Wilt introduced Chuck Applebee from Water Quality Maine to his first Utilities meeting as Superintendent. Chuck reported there were no exceedances during January 2023.

Jeffrey Wilt introduced Brandy Piers and Bob Hartley from Maine DEP. Brandy and Chuck represent the Department of Environmental Engineering Services in the Bureau of Water Quality Management. They were in the Village to visit our wastewater treatment facility and to meet the Utility Trustees.

The Maine DEP can serve as a resource to support NVC in scenario planning as well as guiding us in system resiliency and system sustainability. Their visit was not an enforcement exercise but an effort to partner with NVC as we plan for the future of our systems.

Brandy referenced grant funding to assist with:

- Climate Adaptation Planning – could assist in review assets and stressors related to climate change. Grants are up to \$20,000 to provide a plan resulting in a Maine Engineering Stamp.
- Fiscal Sustainability Planning – could assist in developing an asset management plan to include the useful life cycle of equipment and the cost of replacement. Grants are up to \$50,000 and must be matched. Matching can be a combination of cash and in-kind.

Request for Projects will be issued around March 1. Chuck will help determine our approach to these opportunities.

Brandy and Bob expressed their confidence in Chuck's experience as a system operator. In addition, they suggested the importance of having one spokesperson for NVC Utilities in interactions with the DEP. Jeffrey confirmed that Chuck would fill that role.

Brandy stressed the importance of healthy reserves and encouraged us to rebuild our depleted waste-water reserves. The DEP recommends, at a minimum, a five-percent annual increase to sustain healthy reserves once we stabilize the department's finances.

Quick Books:

To obtain and sustain "clean" audits, NVC Water and Waste-water Departments must maintain separate financial records. This change will be effective January 2023. To manage records, both departments must have QuickBooks accounts at a cost of \$180 per month per department (\$4,320 per year).

Approval of QuickBooks accounts: Judy Metcalf moved (seconded by David Crofoot) approval of funds to acquire accounts for each department at an annual fee of \$2,160 per department. The motion was adopted with yes votes from David Crofoot, Judy Metcalf, Jeffrey Wilt

Budget Adaptation:

To cover the added expense associated with NVC engagement of a full-service management firm to operate our systems and the addition of QuickBooks accounts, the Trustees discussed option to balance expenses within the approved water and waste-water department with no rate increase beyond those approved in the 2023 budgets.

Trustees agreed to modify budgets to move \$44,320 from the following:

- \$29,000 from equipment purchase (Waste-water). This expense will be funded through a loan from the water reserves.
- \$10,000 from casual labor (\$5,000 Waste-water and \$5,000 from water). This will effectively "zero-out" casual labor for calendar year 2023.
- \$5,320 from water reserves.

Misc.:

- The Trustees discussed a letter to all Waste-water users to explain rate increase. Jeffrey will draft.
- Billing for the first trimester of 2023 will be delayed as a result of Amy's planning travels in March and a delay in reading water meters. Invoices should be out by April 1.

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The next meeting of the Trustees is a **March 10, 2023, 2:30 p.m.**, Community Hall and on-line (<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82961508196?pwd=ekpzTlZcml3cnJEZmlHRmlwR3ZSZz09>).

The meeting adjourned at 4:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Jeffrey Wilt, Chairman