

EDGARTOWN WATER DEPARTMENT:

MEETING MINUTES FOR MAY 24, 2012

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

Mr. James Kelleher, Chairman
Mr. Robert Burnham
Mr. John Lovewell

STAFF PRESENT:

Mr. Fred Domont, Superintendent
Mr. Shane Ben David, Chief Operator
Mrs. Sheila Ben David, Assistant

I. NEW BUSINESS

A. Reorganization of the Board of Water Commissioners

- i. Commissioner Lovewell made a motion to nominate James Kelleher as Chairman of the Board of Water Commissioners. Commissioner Burnham seconded the motion and the two commissioners voted in favor of the new Chairman.
- ii. Superintendent Domont commended Assistant Sheila Ben David and Chief Operator Shane Ben David on performing an excellent job with the added workload without the position of an administrative assistant.

II. OLD BUSINESS

A. MUNIS

- i. Domont explained that changing over to the MUNIS billing program was initiated by the town auditors. Domont said the town auditors assert that utility billing and collection should be done in the town collector's office rather than at the water department. According to Domont, "The auditors claim this change would minimize the chance of mistakes or tampering with the billing program - that's hogwash."

- ii. Domont stated that MUNIS is structured for large departments of public works rather than a small water department like Edgartown. Domont feels this will complicate things and create problems with the water department's current billing and collecting process.
- iii. Assistant Sheila BenDavid and Chief Operator Shane BenDavid were then asked by Chairman Kelleher if they had concerns regarding the MUNIS billing program. Mrs. Ben David believes that without collections at the water department, there will be confusion with the water bills being collected with tax bills and wastewater bills. She also feels the water department will lose their personal connection with customers if collection is not done here. "When people come here to pay their water bill they usually have a question to go along with it; we can answer those questions here," she said. Mrs. Ben David explained that some properties have numerous accounts and posting of payments to the specific account could pose a problem if collections are not done directly at the water department.
- iv. Other concerns of Mrs. Ben David are water initiation and termination bills and the collection for those services. She inquires, "When the crew needs to collect a payment on a weekend or after hours to initiate a water service for nonpayment, how do they go about that if the collections are to be done at town hall?"
- v. Mrs. BenDavid had questions about material and jobbing, cost estimates and service application fees and how to keep track of those bills. Domont added that when speaking about MUNIS to associates in Edgartown and other towns, the general consensus is that training for using MUNIS is very poor and is very difficult to learn.
- vi. Commissioner Burnham explained that the water commissioners are listening to both the positive and negative aspects of using the MUNIS billing system. Burnham assured that no change will occur in the water department's billing program unless the majority of the water commissioners are comfortable with MUNIS.

B. Administrative Assistant Position

- i. Commissioner Burnham noted that Chairman Kelleher was interested in being involved with the hiring process of the administrative assistant position. Superintendent Domont stated that former Commissioner William Erickson was present at some interviews in the past for support and would welcome Kelleher. The commissioners agreed with the idea of Kelleher being involved with the interviews for an Administrative Assistant position.

C. SCADA

- i. Commissioner Lovewell had questions about the alarms and screens on the SCADA system and wanted to understand how the employees access the SCADA system from their homes. Superintendent Domont suggested that Lovewell spend some time and review these questions with Chief Operator Ben David, who has the most experience with the SCADA system. Ben David said he would be happy to spend time with Lovewell on the SCADA system.

D. Meeting with the Personnel Board

- i. Commissioner Burnham and Commissioner Lovewell attended the meeting regarding the incident concerning former Administrative Assistant Pia Webster and Superintendent Domont. Webster claimed she felt “threatened for her life” by Domont when he reprimanded her by raising his voice. Lovewell stated that because of Chairman Kelleher’s absence and his hard of hearing, the board was at a disadvantage on this subject. Burnham reported on the board’s discussions regarding possible disciplinary action toward the Superintendent. Burnham also followed-up on the personnel board’s recommendation for a Healthy Workplace Environment Seminar.
- ii. Lovewell declared, “I think we solved the problem by getting rid of Pia.” Burnham remarked he thought Domont’s behavior was “unacceptable and that something should be done to see that a similar situation does not occur again”. Kelleher pointed out that “the situation should have been handled with a different approach”. Domont replied, “I can’t believe the drama and the money that this has cost the town, and I will not tolerate being assumed guilty until proven innocent. I knew this was going to happen, that’s why I asked Shane to witness Pia being reprimanded.”
- iii. Burnham made a motion to put either this section of the minutes or a warning on file for the Personnel Board. Lovewell reserved the right to abstain. Kelleher did not second the motion.
- iv. The commissioners followed up on the progress with the healthy environment seminar. Domont stated they cannot force the department to take part in this and that only two of the employees stated they would attend this type of seminar.

III. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Commissioner Burnham made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Lovewell seconded the motion. The motion was carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Shane BenDavid
Chief Operator

APPROVED:
BOARD OF WATER COMMISSIONERS
TOWN OF EDGARTOWN

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Chairman Kelleher

Commissioner Burnham

Commissioner Lovewell