

North Branch Fire District #1
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THESE MINUTES ARE NOT OFFICIAL UNTIL APPROVED BY THE PRUDENTIAL COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the North Branch Fire District#1, Prudential Committee, January 8, 2025.

This meeting, having been duly warned, was called to order at 10:00a.m., by Chair, Ken Westby.

Members present: Steve Montello, Jon Prial and Ken Westby.

Also present: James Valente via Zoom, Deanna Covio-Clarke, Helen Krzeminski, Bart Howes and Ken Kozikowski.

Public comments: None

SR014/ 11 Stugger Road, Kozikowski/Bedroom count discrepancy: Kozikowski was present to explain his understanding regarding the invoice 2539 for one and a half bedrooms that were not paid for, in the amount of \$2,880.00. Information was provided by Kozikowski and North Branch Staff. Kozikowski stated that the error occurred 10 years ago and passed the statute of limitations. It was decided to discuss the matter with North Branch's attorney, James Valente, in executive session.

November Minutes: Montello made a motion to approve the minutes of November 13, 2024, Prudential Committee meeting. Seconded by Prial. Motion passed.

Review of Monthly Updates: Covio- Clarke and Krzeminski updated the Prudential Committee on customer data, meters and AR/billing. Covio-Clarke reported that we were down to only 12 estimated bills, 99.7% of meters listed in Beacon are in good standing and that during the first "peak week" there was 74.3 % of North Branch properties reporting usage.

Covio-Clarke stated that there were reconciliation discrepancies between Muni Smart and Invoice Cloud, since Invoice Cloud only retains past due balances of two years. Some of our customers go beyond that. Prial suggested contacting Invoice Cloud to see if we can upgrade that to retain all past due bills.

Chief Operator's Report:

Jan 2025

Operations

- Facility generator is up and running. Southworth still needs to come back and fix the faulty e-stop button and lag bolt the unit to the concrete in order for Kohler to sign off on it.
- We had to replace a brass drive bushing that wore out in the east clarifier scum trough. We replaced it already approximately a year ago.
- I signed the contract with Casella as it was the best deal when compared to the other hauler.

Flows

- 24-25 16day Holiday period
 - From 12/21/24 – 1/5/25 we took in 5,156,000 gallons.

For comparison, 12/23/23 – 1/7/24 we took in 4,541,000 gallons

Treasurer's Report: Covieo-Clarke presented a payment summary to the PC from November 13, 2024 to January 2, 2025, in the amount of \$410,665.30. Montello made a motion to approve the payables. Seconded by Prial. Motion passed.

Covieo-Clarke asked the PC to approve June 19 as an additional holiday for employees. Montello made a motion to approve June 19 as an additional holiday, to stay consistent with State and Federal holidays. Seconded by Prial. Motion passed.

It was advised by Valente that North Branch stay consistent with State and Federal holidays by including Bennington Battle Day. Valente was informed it was already a North Branch employee paid holiday.

Old/New Business: Renewal of copier lease contract or downsize and buy one: Krzeminski reported that the lease of the copier/scanner had expired. Krzeminski negotiated a month-to-month lease on the current copier at \$107.41/month until a decision could be made to enter a new five-year contract with W.B Mason. The company gave options of a lease of \$119.55 a month or purchase a comparable one for \$5,499.00. Krzeminski stated that the current copier/scanner is not suitable for the needs of North Branch any longer, as half the customers have gone with paperless billing and North Branch no longer sends postcards as bills. She noted that North Branch has been paying \$1,289 a year for lease, plus additional for copies for the last five years. Krzeminski asked for the PC to approve the purchase of a more moderate copier/scanner and to contract our IT company to set it up to our server. Montello made a motion to approve \$1000.00 for the purchase of a copier/scanner and IT support. Seconded by Prial. Motion passed.

Executive session: Montello made a motion to go into executive session to discuss legal matters. Seconded by Prial. Motion passed.

Out of executive session at 11:15 am.

Decisions: Montello made a motion to have Westby and Valente negotiate a settlement with the owners of BR011 and BR012 for the invoice of years of non-metered service, based on new information supplied by the owners. Seconded by Prial. Motion passed.

Prial made a motion to void the invoice #2539 to SR014 for one and a half bedrooms in the amount of \$2,880.00 and to have the North Branch billing system to remain at three bedrooms for allocation. Seconded by Montello. Motion passed.

Montello made a motion to approve James Valente, of CVG Law Offices to move forward with the initiation of a legal claim for North Branch Fire District #1 to reclaim monies spent on litigation initiated by Tom Ferrazza. Seconded by Prial. Motion passed.

Westby adjourned the meeting at 11:20 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Helen Krzeminski, Assistant Clerk *Helen Krzeminski*

The next meeting of NBFD# will be on February 12, 2025, at 10:00 am

Posted: North Branch Fire District #1 Wastewater Treatment Facility building, Administration building and Dover Free Library.