

# TOWN OF RICHLAND WATER DEPARTMENT

1 BRIDGE STREET PULASKI, NY 13142

## MINUTES OF THE RICHLAND WATER ADVISORY BOARD

**Date:** June 7, 2022

**Kind of Meeting:** Regular monthly water board meeting

**Place:** H. Douglas Barclay Courthouse Jury Room

**Water Board Members Present:** Donna Gilson, Chairwoman

Krista Fox

Doug Schwalm

**Absent:** Rob Goodsell

**Others in Attendance:**

Supervisor Ron Novak, Water Department Supervisor

Mary Yerdon, Water Department Clerk

Jeremy Christian

**CALL TO ORDER:** Tonight's meeting was called to order at 6:00pm with Donna Gilson leading the Pledge of Allegiance.

Krista Fox made a motion to approve the May 3, 2022, water board minutes. It was seconded by Doug Schwalm. All were in favor.

**Jeremy Christian**, a resident on CO RT 48 would like to receive municipal water. He is the third property after Beulah Drive in Richland. He did a survey of his neighbors, and they would also like to receive municipal water. Those names have been given to Barton & Loguidice for consideration. There will be a meeting with the Town of Richland and the engineers to discuss whether to put some of the property owners who have requested water to become an extension to water district 5 or whether to have another water district.

14,800,000 gallons of water was pumped in May 2022. That is 4,417,000 more than last month and 2,437,600 gallons more than May 2021.

562 out of 1072 transmitters have been changed over. Hopefully, they can get them finished within the next year.

The water salesman generates revenue of about \$180-\$250 per week.

- A contract has been given to *Orwell* regarding purchasing water from the Town of Richland. No set price has been discussed yet. As of today, they have not responded to the proposal. DOH has given them until July 1, 2022, to start getting water from our hydrant—we would need a back-flow preventer and meter. It could take 4-5 weeks to get it from our supplier. They could also use the water salesman on County Route 41 to truck water to their tower.

- The *Villages of Sandy Creek and Lacona* are having issues with their water, and they are investigating purchasing water from Richland. Richland is ready willing and able to provide this service. There are 27 wells, and we are only using 5 of them. We can pump 2.5 million gallons per day. Doug Schwalm said when he worked at Schoeller they were pumping 3 million gallons per day. Water could reach the Villages by placing 1700' of pipe North on Route 11 and using Sandy Creek lines or they could go down Orton Road to County Route 48 to pipe the water. The entire situation is still in discussion.
- The Water District 5 water project has been extended until December 31, 2022. That gives them time to complete all the proposed sections. They had to wait until the main project was completed to make sure there was enough money left to do those sections. This had to be approved by New York State before they could move forward. The contractor will be finishing the extra pipe for the sections before starting the restoration. Richland Water Supervisor, Ron Novak, and Deputy Supervisor, Kern Yerdon, attended a project meeting and strongly emphasized to the contractor that some residents have waited 2 years for their property to be restored. More than one customer has threatened to sue the Town of Richland. Novak and Yerdon let the contractor know if the town gets sued, so will the contractor.
- There was another lengthy discussion on *expenses vs. revenues* in the water department. The current water budget is in trouble. The cost to generate water was estimated by the B&L Engineer and the Town Supervisor at a cost of \$3.80 per 1,000 gallons. We currently charge \$2.50 per 1,000 gallons. The water Board recommended to notify Schoeller and Sandy Creek within the next 30-45 days that their rates are increasing the water board all felt Richland water district rates should not be raised until Schoeller and outside users have been raised to cover the cost of providing them water.
- The Town Board has voted to give Water Supervisor, Ron Novak, the ability to charge a *tapping fee* based on the cost of parts and excavating costs on a case-by-case basis.
- Caterpillar Company was called to look at our *generator* at the Richland well site. They could not find the problem. Scriba Electric originally installed it when Schoeller owned the property. They said it was the electronic circuit board. It has been ordered but no one knows for sure when it will be delivered. In the meantime, the generator must be manually started every 4 days to keep the battery charged. The new generator should be here in February 2023.
- It was discovered that *Fulton Companies* has a buried line that is tapped into our water main. No one from the Town had any knowledge of this; a private contractor installed it. The IDA ordered Fulton Companies to put this line in for fire protection. Fulton Companies are having their lawyers find the paperwork and would like to Town to take over the line. There would have to be easements and some other issues to discuss before that could happen. However, it must be addressed, and it is necessary for fire protection at the Fulton Companies on Centerville Rd.
- Another item the water department should have, is a *trench box*, which is required by OSHA . The highway department does not have one either. The trench box is required when digging 5' or greater. All our piping is buried 5'. There could be a fine by NYS if a

trench box is not used. It was suggested it could be a shared service purchase or use ARPA funds to pay for it.

- A *fire hydrant* is missing (possibly stolen) near Co RT 41 and Manwaring Rd. The cost to buy a new one is around \$3800. The town is looking into purchasing *insurance* on these-about \$4150 per year. The one that has come up missing can be blank flagged since there are no residences near it and there are 2 other hydrants within 350 feet. The Town Highway snowplow hit one on Dry Bridge Road this winter and it is also going to be blank flagged as well. These had to be approved by DOH.
- Currently the water operators spend about a day and a half *mowing* grass at the well sites. It's required that vaults, well heads, chemical buildings, etc. are kept mowed. In July, the highway department has hired a BOCES student to work for the summer mowing and he will take care of the mowing for the water department.
- A property owner has requested to have an *EDU charge of 1 rather than 2*. Property was purchased after the map plan & report was designed showing an old mobile home on a property. The next-door neighbor the bought the property, removed the mobile home and combined his lot with the newly purchased lot. When the contractor put the taps in, it was on the engineering diagram, so it was installed. Another property had the same situation, and it was also lowered to just 1 EDU. Water board members agreed it should be 1 EDU based on past practice.
- Another area that needs immediate attention is the *cost of tapping* the water main for new installations. Prices for parts are going up and changing every month. The standard rates are no longer practical. The water board recommends allowing the water supervisor to set the rates on a case-by-case basis. The criteria would be the cost of the tapping parts, cost of excavating, the size of the tap, and whether it's a direction drill or a push under the road. The current set price does not adequately address tap size and problems during excavating. For example, the current price for tapping parts for a ¾" tap is approximately \$530.00; the average excavation cost is approximately \$620.00 and three workers. The water district does not break even-the extra expense should not be passed on to all other water department customers. A good example is the two-2" taps that were just installed at a cost of \$6,100.37. *Rob Goodsell made this motion to give the water supervisor the authority to set and change tapping fees-Donna Gilson seconded it. All agreed.*
- The *water tower* must be *painted* or the inspection in 2024 will fail. That should be worked into the budget.
- It was also noted that our two water operators are eligible for retirement in 4-5 years. Our system is very complex and large. We have 103 miles of pipe, 720 hydrants and 1300 valves that must be maintained. Supervisor Novak said there is a severe need for an extra person. The routine maintenance along with the regular work cannot be adequately performed with the current staff. There also needs to be time to *train another operator* before the current operators retire.

Sandy Creek has been billed for 16,480,844 gallons of water that passed through the master meter.

Doug Schwalm praised Supervisor Novak for all he has done to improve the Water Department.

The July 5, 2022, Water Board has been cancelled. The next meeting will be at 6pm on August 2.

At 8:15 Krista Fox made a motion to close the meeting. Donna Gilson seconded it.

The next water board meeting is scheduled for August 2 at 6pm at the H. Douglas Barclay Courthouse.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mary Yerdon  
Town of Richland Water Department Clerk