

Town of Milton
Water Committee Meeting Part Two
Milton Town Hall, 115 Federal Street
Friday May 4, 2012 at 4:00 p.m.

Transcriptionist: Helene Rodgville
[Minutes are Not Verbatim]

Reconvene

Councilman West: Reconvening our Wednesday, May 2, 2012 meeting of the Water Committee.
It is 4:00 p.m.

New Business

Evaluation of Proposals for Engineering Services Regarding Water Facility Planning Study
Councilman West: Everybody's had a chance to read over these proposals and I am going to stay neutral, being that I'm going to be voting on this Monday night, so I'm going to leave it up to you all to submit your recommendations.

Win Abbott: I'll speak up first. I'm an ex officio member of the committee, so I don't really have a vote. After going through these things, I did have a preference, but I don't have a vote at these proceedings. Allen, our Public Works Director, did review these. He used the point system; gave 100 points to Pennoni Associates and 98 points to George, Miles and Buhr with some other subjective things, saying basically, that he thought that Pennoni would be the preferred outfit. So that's my report from Allen and from myself.

Dennis Hughes: Okay, I had 100 for Pennoni and 65 for George, Miles and Buhr. I didn't like some of the things and I just think that they went through it quickly and said, well, we can get \$10,000; put it down and we'll go.

John Bushey: I voted in favor of... I gave 97 points to Pennoni and I gave 95 points to George, Miles and Buhr and what I didn't like, particularly, in the George, Miles and Buhr report was, we're paying for a report and he's going to give it away to somebody else. I thought that was totally inappropriate.

Bill Woods: You mean to Tidewater?

John Bushey: Yes.

Bill Woods: Didn't both of them say that?

John Bushey: I didn't pick it up out of the first one, no. That was kind of a really swaying thing for me there. I even went a little bit further, I made some phone calls to find out who would perhaps would be the easier person to work with, but I still wasn't impressed after I found that information out, so my vote goes with Pennoni. And truly, he was less expensive.

Mike McNamara: I could go either way. I didn't total mine, but I actually had Pennoni a few points lower, because I couldn't find where they mentioned that they had experience with water facility planning grants. I just didn't see that. They might have, but I just didn't see where they said it. I could go either way. They just got a few less points because of that. But when I looked at the fact that the other people, Pennoni, I thought their proposal was a little better written and not quite as boiler plate as the George, Miles and Buhr; so I could probably bring them up to a tie.

John Bushey: I would like to go back and point out too, was that I was impressed that they have been attending Council Meetings and therefore they were a little bit more aware of what was transpiring in Milton.

Bill Woods: Yes, I got that too.

Mike McNamara: I also go to Pennoni. I made some calls today on the references that they both had and I talked to the towns that I could talk to about it and the favorable one was Pennoni. I see they came in with \$7,415, so I figured where does the \$15 go, but they seem to want it right off the top over George, Miles and Buhr. I think I'm satisfied with my decision of Pennoni.

Councilman West: Okay, now here's what I'd like you to do. Each one of you state your name and who you recommend:

Dennis Hughes	Pennoni
John Bushey	Pennoni
Bill Woods	Pennoni
Mike McNamara	Pennoni
Win Abbott on behalf of Allen Atkins our Public Works Director and a voting member of this Committee. His recommendation	Pennoni

Councilman West: If you are all satisfied with this recommendation to go to Council, say aye.

Dennis Hughes: Just so you know it's not binding.

Councilman West: Yes, right.

Win Abbott: No, Sir, that was the whole point of the meeting. Mr. Bushey came to my office earlier today and recommended that considering the ongoing issues that we have with the Water Committee, that we might consider meeting on a more regular basis in the coming year. I just wanted to share that with you.

John Bushey: That's right and we should Emory with what...

Councilman West: With what's going on, yes, I agree with that. We should at least meet once a month, minimum.

Bill Woods: One of the things that we used to do on the Water Committee, that you guys weren't on then, you were a little bit...

Dennis Hughes: Yeah.

Bill Woods: Maybe before our next meeting, if we do it again and we can finally get some rules written down, when we have discrepancies in bills, we would always be trying to call. Now what did we do with the person that asked us last month?

Mike McNamara: Right.

Bill Woods: We tried to be consistent, but we didn't have anything written down to be consistent about. It's all...

Mike McNamara: I remember that. It was just a matter of, you know, you didn't even have a bill here and a person says that they used too much water for what they thought they did and they didn't want to be charged for it and then they would go around and say what are you going to vote for? Like Bill said, we had no guidelines to go by. I told Ronda that, that that could come back and bite us; that without some kind of a curve on that, we should at least have a standard.

Win Abbott: I've come across that a couple of times since being here and between Allen and I we've settled upon a standard, but what I'll do is create a policy, present it to the committee, have you adopt it; thereafter, it will just be an administrative policy. It's not part of the Code of

whatever, it's just something that we do as a matter of practice. There are a lot of other, more complex and important issues relating to water in this town, that this committee's time would be better spent doing, so once we develop a policy, you guys can all pass your judgment upon it and then that will be the end of that particular issue; we won't be bringing up individual bill appeals at our monthly meetings, but we'll be doing some more heavy lifting here.

John Bushey: I agree with you. People who didn't know they had a water line break and _____ the meter and it was a whole quarter, or whatever, and they seek relief before the committee on the bill or whatever and that should be discarded administratively and there should be... If you did it here, you do it here. Be consistent.

Councilman West: I know the practice in the past, because it's happened to me. I've had leaks. What they do is they go back the whole year and average it by quarters and then re-rate the bill.

Bill Woods: Well, sort of, that's the...

Councilman West: And it was a fair.

Bill Woods: I thought it was fair. It was always done fair.

Councilman West: It was fair.

Bill Wood: It's just, you know, but sometimes you would think it would be a little easier then to go back a whole year or go back two quarters, and stuff like that. Whatever they're going to do.

Win Abbott: What we do is a whole year and the first time Allen presented it to me, I said, Allen your numbers have been skewed by the fact that you included the quarter when the leak was in your averaging. What I want you to do is go four quarters back from the prior quarter and that's what we have done, as a matter of practice. It's only been three times since September since we've had to do it. But I'll present that in the form of a policy at our next meeting. Councilman West can schedule the meeting at the time that you find it convenient and I'll make sure it all happens for us.

Bill Woods: That's right. We don't get anything but appeals now. You can make the decision, can't you?

Win Abbott: That's correct.

Bill Woods: We used to get a lot of them. It got a little tiring actually.

Win Abbott: You won't have to worry about that, after we settle on a written policy and then we'll be moving on to things, like I said, with more heavy lifting.

Councilman West: Now, what I would like you to do is to come up with some suggestions, either call me, pick my card up out front; it's got my cell phone number on it and just give me a call or call Allen or Win if there's something that you would like on the agenda for the next meeting and we'll go from there. How does that sound?

Mike McNamara: Things that you want us to think of?

Councilman West: If you think of something that you would like brought up at the next meeting.

Mike McNamara: Okay.

John Bushey: Can I offer a suggestion?

Councilman West: Yes.

John Bushey: In light of the past Referendum with the Water Committees, I don't know if the rest of the committee has got a copy of the 2008 report that was presented which gave a lot of information about the water system and upgrades being done and the information in reference to the last Referendum we had and what was going to be included in that, the new water tower, new wells and what all that included, get that information out so the committee can have it to review.

Councilman West: Yes, I'll get Allen and Win...

John Bushey: You don't have to make me copies. I've already got copies of all of it. I've had it for about a week or so.

Councilman West: Okay.

John Bushey: And a copy of the Comprehensive Plan; we don't necessarily need the whole Comprehensive Plan, but the section that deals with the water improvements. Okay? That way the whole committee can be up-to-date and up to speed of what's going on, because part of what we just did here, all of that is going to be upgraded.

Councilman West: Right.

John Bushey: And then when that comes in, we get a copy of it to review.

Mike McNamara: What I would like to do is I guess call Allen up and I would like to be taken to where the water system is and just maybe 5 or 10 minutes, explain the whole system in the town; so when I come to a meeting, at least I have some kind of a background on what we actually have and what we need.

John Bushey: In other words, you would like to go to the well houses and see what's there; see the generator there that comes on; the water tower, where the other water tower is; some explanation about the distribution system and all that kind of stuff.

Mike McNamara: Exactly, yes.

Bill Woods: I've never seen any of it either.

Dennis Hughes: No.

Councilman West: It may be that we could set up a time that we could all meet down there, some afternoon.

Mike McNamara: That would be a good idea, yeah.

John Bushey: Have a committee meeting and the committee meeting is going to consist of a tour of the current water system and the distribution system and what's going on and discussion.

Dennis Hughes: Yes, because sometimes the problem is on well number three, or well number two there...

John Bushey: It would help all of us to understand.

Dennis Hughes: Also, they have an 8-1/2X11, if they had like the little maps that you see of the town, it shows where the water towers were, where the wells are.

John Bushey: We do have that in some of our stuff.

Dennis Hughes: You do?

John Bushey: Yes.

Mike McNamara: I would like a map of that too.

Bill Woods: Is one of those in here?

John Bushey: It might be part of the Comprehensive Plan and part of the 2008 water report.

Councilman West: I think CABA Associates showed some of that stuff when they presented at the council meeting.

John Bushey: I think it's in the 2008 water report; there were actual maps and stuff.

Bill Woods: I thought it was actually one of these handouts, black and white, pretty small.

Councilman West: Okay.

John Bushey: Allen's report has a small map.

Councilman West: Is there anything else that you would like to discuss?

John Bushey: At our next meeting?

Councilman West: Yes.

John Bushey: I think if we have that joint meeting with Allen and get out there, then when this report comes back from the update, we'll have a good insight.

Mike McNamara: Well what's a good day and what's a good time of the day for our meeting?

Councilman West: Well, I'll get with Allen.

John Bushey: Well, first off, we have two working people on the committee, you and Bill.

Bill Woods: This time of year, it's really hard to tell with me. You almost have to pick a date and see if I can make it.

Councilman West: Okay. Let me talk to Allen and see what his schedule's like and we'll go from there, because it looks like the next Council Meeting after this Monday night is June 4th and today is the 4th of May, so do you want to have another meeting before the next council meeting or after the council meeting?

John Bushey: I think we should probably meet before the next Council Meeting. Why I say that is they're going to award this contract Monday night and then, two, they're going to start doing their study, but we need to get brought up to speed on what's here and all that stuff, and not be behind the eight ball when these reports start coming back in.

Councilman West: Right and if Council...

John Bushey: Because I think this one company is going to have these reports done in eight weeks. Yes it's eight weeks. One was eight weeks and one was ten weeks.

Councilman West: Okay and what I'm thinking, if we have it like the 29th of May...

John Bushey: How's that going to affect Memorial Day Weekend?

Councilman West: That's a Tuesday.

John Bushey: Win, let's hear it. You want to say something.

Win Abbott: My plan is not to be here then. My son lives 8-1/2 hours away.

John Bushey: You don't necessarily have to be here.

Win Abbott: That's correct.

John Bushey: We're just going to...

Councilman West: What day will you be back? Will you be back the 30th, Win?

Win Abbott: Absolutely, yes. It's just my travel day.

Councilman West: Okay, why don't we try to set this up for the 30th at 4:00 p.m.

Bill Woods: 4:00 will make it a lot easier for me to get here.

Councilman West: Yes, it does me too, because I get off at 3:00 and at 4:00, I can get home and I can change my clothes out of them nasty clothes I'm usually in; so...

Mike McNamara: That will be May?

Win Abbott: May 30th.

Councilman West: Will you run that by Allen?

Win Abbott: Yes, I will.

Councilman West: Okay and...

John Bushey: Win do you have all of our email addresses?

Win Abbott: No, that would be great if...

John Bushey: You have mine.

Win Abbott: I have yours. I don't think I have one from you, Jack.

John Bushey: Yes you do.

Win Abbott: Okay, wonderful. Thank you, Mr. McNamara.

Mike McNamara: So May 30th?

Councilman West: May 30th at 4:00 p.m.

Mike McNamara: At the water – well you'll tell us where we're going to meet.

Councilman West: We'll meet right here.

Mike McNamara: Oh.

Councilman West: Because what they would like to do, Win, is go to the water plant.

Win Abbott: That would be great.

Councilman West: And all and then everybody will get an idea of what's going on. We'll go from there. Like I said, if you've got anything you'd like to put on the agenda, call me or call Win or Allen. That way we can make sure that we have an agenda before the 30th.

John Bushey: I also suggest that they get copies of that 2008 report and all the information that we sent out.

Councilman West: Okay, I've got it all written down here.

John Bushey: You don't have to get it from me, because I already have it; because I got it when I asked for it and also about the Comprehensive Plan and the Referendum information, so that they can get brought up to speed on that and have knowledge and we can go take a tour of this plant. That way when this new report comes in, we'll be up to speed by then.

Win Abbott: Absolutely.

Councilman West: What I'm thinking, Win, if this passes with Pennoni Monday night, get one of those two that submitted this proposal to come to that meeting and he can enlighten us.

Win Abbott: Absolutely.

Councilman West: What do you think of that?

Bill Woods: It would probably be one of the things he would want to do anyway.

John Bushey: I think he said that he would meet with the committees.

Councilman West: He will.

John Bushey: Okay.

Bill Woods: I'm sure they were going to plan to do that anyway, so it might fit right into their schedule.

Councilman West: Right.

Win Abbott: I understand that sometimes as Mr. Bushey said at our meeting a couple of days ago, that we've got a lot of paperwork and sometimes it doesn't amount to a whole lot with all these words and all; however, I found that sometimes just a verbal or conversational response, like when I'm asking Allen about this, that or the other, I don't retain it all or then I don't repeat it exactly the way he said it and something is lost in translation, so personally, I invest a lot in communicating in writing and of course, I don't have a long history here, but this will give you an update that has happened; with the exception of the major reports; like Comprehensive Plan and all; which I'll get to you over the past couple of months. I want to share with you and Jack, you might have already seen these. I know Emory has, but back when we were working our way up to the Referendum and the whole issue of missing water came about and us working on ways that we could resolve some of these issues, I came out with a long memo called A Better Accounting of Water Uses, dated February 24, 2012. I have a copy for you and it was used as the basis, you'll see on the last page here there's a little chart that shows different upgrades that we're going to make to our water system over the course of the next year, which kind of bridges to fiscal years. Then on April 2nd, I provided another report that talks about some of the things that we did; looking for leaks and installing new meters and things like that. Then, as of today, I'm trying to create an additional report. I don't know if I'll have it ready for Monday night, to help just demonstrate the steps that we're taking in order to do that. Now the Addendum to this, the back side of this thing, which is not here yet, comes down to this and next time we meet, you'll have copies of it too, but on the back side of the May 7th report, what you'll probably see is a representation... Each year the State of Delaware gives towns grant funding to maintain streets that are not maintained by the state and to validate that, they have you sign off on exactly how many miles they are, down to the hundredth of a mile, which translates to feet or yards or whatever the case might be and with Allen, what I've done is to try to identify the streets in the old part of town and then based upon their experience with using this leak correlater from the

Rural Water Association, that actually listens through the ground for leaks that are happening, we determined how long it takes to cover say a hundred yards, which is about 30 minutes and we know 100 yards is about 1/18th of a mile. So based upon this inventory of streets and the lengths that are used for Municipal Street Aid Funding, we can come up with a calculation of how much it would cost us to use the leak correlater on every single street in the old section of town. Of course, the new ones, those pipes are only 10 years old, or whatever, and this leak correlater costs \$150 for the first hour and \$100 an hour for every hour thereafter. Roughly speaking we're looking at about \$4,500, \$5,000 tops. But on the back half of that May 7th report that I haven't completed yet, is going to detail the number of miles, the streets, and the estimated number of hours it will take to use the leak correlater to go through every single one of our old streets and listen for leaks through the ground. That's not complete yet. That's where I'm going with this and I'll be documenting all the steps that we're taking to better manage our water system.

Councilman West: Also, if some of you weren't at the last Council Meeting, it was the last Council Meeting that we approved up to \$80,000 to update some of these water meters.

Win Abbott: That was Amendment Number Two, I think it was two months ago and I think it was \$68,000 or whatever.

Councilman West: We authorized up to \$80,000 out of the Water Committee to update some of these water meters and it has helped a lot with our tracking the water.

Win Abbott: We keep working towards doing it better.

Councilman West: And correct me if I'm wrong, Win, if we can't get this state money to do this, we can still take this out of the water budget, right?

Win Abbott: Oh, absolutely.

Councilman West: Okay I just wanted to make sure that I was correct in what I was thinking.

John Bushey: Would you run that by me again, Emory? I went on a little trip and I read something.

Win Abbott: Here's the thing. We were up for this Referendum for water system improvements at the same time as we were dealing with this issue of the missing water.

John Bushey: Okay.

Win Abbott: Now, what I did was I took a look at the finances. The Water Fund is proprietary. It's separate from the General Fund of the town, by which we run through all of our other operating expenses, like police and salaries and trucks and stuff like that. So there's extra money in the proprietary fund, just for the Water Department, that could pay for these meter upgrades and the value of the meter upgrades are in there. At the same time we're having this conversation, I'm in touch with the lady who administers the funding that we were going to Referendum for, the Office of Drinking Water and she tells me that oh, by the way, you can wrap that into your loan. You've done the pre-application. Once you get by the Referendum, then we go to the final application and you can just add that in and it will be covered with this 35% loan forgiveness and the low interest rate over the next 30 years and so on. I said, great. Well, we've got it covered in both directions now, because the Council approved it, as an expenditure and it could be on the Water Department Fund and the State of Delaware said we could cover as part of the loan. Either way, we've got it covered. So we moved forward. We didn't pass the Referendum, but we do have the allowance within the water fund in order to do the meter upgrades. Of course, there's a cost recovery in there, too, because there is water that we're actually pumping, but not billing for because of the fact that we have inaccurate meters out there. I was just trying to help you out here.

Councilman West: That's fine. Is there anything else that we need to bring before us today?

Adjournment

John Bushey: I make a motion we adjourn.

Mike McNamara: Second.

Councilman West: We have a motion moved and seconded that we adjourn at 4:25 p.m. All those in favor say aye. Opposed. Motion carried.