

**Littleton Light and Water Departments  
Board of Commissioners Meeting  
Minutes – Monday, July 29, 2002**

Present for the meeting:

**Commissioners:** Craig Gruskowski, Bruce Trumbull, Joseph Cataldo, Thomas Rauker and Joseph McCumber

**General Manager:** Savas C. Danos

**Staff:** Jennifer Pederson, Kevin Goddard and Kay Johnson

**The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM**

- 1) **Approve Agenda** – GM Danos made several changes to the agenda, Executive Session, Light Union Negotiations, New Business Water #3 Cobb's Well Update, New Business Light, #3 Appliance Rebate Program. Power Supply, #4 Residential Rate Review. Commissioner Gruskowski requested Under Water, New Business Item #4 Customer Service Charge. Commissioner Cataldo requested Executive Session discussion be moved to the end of the regular meeting. **The Vote: Gruskowski - Yes, McCumber - Yes, Trumbull - Yes, Rauker - Yes and Cataldo - Yes**
- 2) **Approve Board Minutes of June 10<sup>th</sup>** – On a motion made by Trumbull and seconded by Gruskowski, and voted unanimously by the Board to accept the minutes of June 10, 2002. **The Vote: Gruskowski - Yes, McCumber - Yes, Trumbull - Yes, Rauker - Yes and Cataldo - Yes**
- 3) **Upcoming Meeting Schedule** – After discussion on future dates for the next Board meeting, it was agreed to schedule the next meeting for Tuesday, August 27<sup>th</sup>.
  - a) **George Beebe dates August 9 or 23.** After a brief discussion on the dates for Mr. Beebe's retirement, the Board decided on August 23 as the date that most of the members would be available. Kay Johnson will confirm the date with the Beebe's and notify the Board.
- 4) **Employee Updates**
  - a. **GM/ AGM Annual Review Subcommittee Report – Tom Rauker-** Commissioner Rauker updated the Board on the status of the sub committee's review process for the General Manager and Assistant Manager. Commissioner Rauker spoke briefly on the criteria used in the process and how they will structure the process in the future to meet the deadline of the contract. Commissioner Rauker stated they had met separately with the AGM Edwards and GM Danos and after one more meeting with them they will have a proposal ready for the next Board meeting.
  - b. **General and Bill Stewart Retirement** – GM Danos stated this is the last week for Bill Stewart and that the staff will be giving Bill a pizza party on Wednesday and that the Social Committee will be planning a retirement party for Bill. GM Danos stated Bill's position is unique because he is one of a kind. You can't replace Bill and the decision to hire someone will depend on the needs of the Department, which will be determined by Operations Manager Finch.
  - c. **Step Raise – Water Dept., Mark Perron** – GM Danos stated, as part of the union contract Mark Perron will advance from Equipment Operator Step II to Step III.
  - d. **Annual Reviews – Water Dept. Non-Union** – Discussion held after the step raises.
  - e. **Environmental Analyst Update** – GM Danos updated the Board on the status of the Environmental Analyst position. GM Danos stated twenty plus applications have been received and the cut off date is July 31, 2002. GM Danos and Chris Allen, Production Engineer will be reviewing the applicants and interviewing candidates. GM Danos

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spoke briefly on what they are looking for in a candidate and how the position will be structured. This position will answer to the Water Production Engineer since half the responsibility of the Environmental Analyst's position is to ensure the quality of the drinking water supply, and the DEP regulations. The other half of the work is the wellhead protection program, which will presently be under the domain of the GM, stated Danos, but with Chris as the supervisor. This position will not be involved in the Clean Lakes program, stated Danos. A brief discussion was held on the salary range for the position.

- f. **Step Raise/Promotion – Light Dept. David Lizotte** – GM Danos presented the Board the step raise for David Lizotte. GM Danos stated David would advance from Lineman First Class Step II into Lead Lineman. A brief discussion was held on David's qualifications to move directly into the Lead Lineman position.
- g. **6-month review, Sue Gilmore** – GM Danos presented a six-month review for Sue Gilmore. GM Danos stated Sue had completed her first six-month in her new position and has done a great job.

**A motion was made by Commissioner Gruskowski and seconded by Commissioner McCumber and unanimously voted by Board to approve the step raises as presented by the General Manager. The Vote: Gruskowski - Yes, McCumber - Yes, Trumbull - Yes, Rauker - Yes and Cataldo - Yes**

- d. **Annual Reviews – Water Dept. Non-Union** – GM Danos presented the annual reviews for two non-union Water Department Employees. Don Callahan, Water Operations Administrator, Danos stated, has progressed rapidly in the position because of his knowledge and background. GM Danos presented his recommendation for Chris Allen, Production Engineer, Chris has been with the Department for two years, and has been doing exceptionally well, stated Danos. Chris is now being asked to take more of a leadership role with oversight of the Water Department employees, stated Danos. GM Danos stated Chris is working towards his engineering degree. The Board discussed Chris's present grade level and how it will correspond to his receiving his degree. GM Danos felt the progression is suitable for the position. A brief discussion was held on the on the job responsibilities within the Department since the retirement of the Operations Supervisor Andy Sauve'. With no further discussion, **a motion was made by Commissioner Rauker and seconded by Commissioner Trumbull and unanimously voted by the Board to approve the recommendations of the General Manager. The Vote: Gruskowski - Yes, McCumber - Yes, Trumbull - Yes, Rauker - Yes and Cataldo – Yes**

Commissioner Cataldo spoke briefly on a dedication in memory of Dick Taylor. Commissioner Gruskowski asked about dedicating the garage in memory of Dick Taylor since he was the Clerk of the Works for the project. GM Danos will inquiry as to this possibility and report back to the Board for an official vote if so warranted.

- 5) **Fiber Optics Update** - GM Danos asked Alan Brown to do a quick update on Fiber Optics. GM Danos informed the Board that Cisco is looking for conductivity for the buildings in Boxborough. GM Danos stated both Verizon and AT& T have approached C2C and the Light Department. If this comes to fruition, this can be a financial gain for all and put our fiber backbone in place, stated Danos. The Board discussed the benefits

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of the conductivity between town departments as it relates to better communications and the need for good security measures to be in place.

**WATER DEPARTMENT  
Action Items/Recommendations**

**New Business**

- 1) **Police Station Issues Update** – GM Danos spoke briefly on his letters to the Board of Health regarding the 21E Study done on the future site of the Police Station. GM Danos hopes to eliminate any large issues regarding possible hazardous material burdens on the property. GM Danos stated, in his letter dated July 24, he wanted to make the new Board of Health members aware of the Wellhead Protection and Management Program undertaken by the Water Department and our interaction with the consulting community.

Commissioner Cataldo inquired as to the Shaker Lane school water quality from last summer. GM Danos stated testing had been done two weeks ago and everything is fine and we will be testing again soon. GM Danos stated the school is presently being used as a summer camp. GM Danos stated we would be starting the same testing program for the new high school in preparation for the opening.

- 2) **Betterment Request and vote to authorize – Scott Road** - GM Danos discussed with the Board the request of some of the residents of Scott Road for a betterment project to bring town water to the area. Some of the residents are interested in town water because of problems with their wells. A brief discussion was held on the possible cost associated with the project if undertaken by the department or a contractor. GM explained what the procedure would be if we were to move forward with the betterment. **A motion was made by Commissioner Rauker and seconded by Commissioner Gruskowski and unanimously voted by the Board to begin the betterment process recommended by the General Manager. The Vote: Gruskowski - Yes, McCumber - Yes, Trumbull - Yes, Rauker - Yes and Cataldo - Yes**
- 3) **Cobb's Well Update**- GM Danos updated the Board on Acton's interest in several options to partner in the cost and development of the well site on the Cobb property. GM Danos stated the biggest obstacle is to get the approval from the DEP because of all the ramifications of withdrawal and crossing of town lines. GM discussed using Ted Morine from DL Maher to move through the DEP process. A brief discussion was held on the fronting costs to see if there is a commitment to move forward with a partnership to develop the site.

GM Danos addressed the water article in the Littleton Independent article as it relates Littleton's aquifer, but stated more importantly is the Phase II Storm water regulations being worked on by Highway Engineer Eric Durling. Danos stated he is supporting Eric and Commissioner Cataldo is the liaison for the Board of Selectmen regarding the implementation of the regulations. This is a cost effective way, with immediate benefits to the town, stated Danos, to recapture the runoff and recharge the water back into the aquifer. Sub divisions already have these regulations in place and Eric is working to bring forward these regulations to the streets and roads in town.

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- 4) **Customer Service Charge** - Commissioner Gruskowski inquired as to the service charge for two services at one location. After a brief discussion, the Board agreed not to change the policy regarding the customer charge.

**Old Business**

- 1) **Bid review – Long Lakes Construction**—GM Danos discussed the recommendations by the contractor for the Long Lake Construction Bid. A brief discussion was held on the qualifications of the three bidders. Considering the bid process and recommendations, it was the opinion of the Board that this is not a negotiated bid and since the lower bidder had a poor performance record then Cali Corporation should be awarded the bid. No further discussion was held.
- 2) **Executive Session** – Guilford/Ayer Intervention

**Financials**

- 1) **Preliminary End-of-fiscal Year Cash Report** - GM Danos reviewed the preliminary cash report with the Board. A brief discussion was held on the cash benefit to the town on money received by the cell towers. Commissioner Gruskowski recommended that a news article be written on the role the Water Department played to bring these revenues to the town.
- 2) **End-of-year sales and Budget Reports** – GM Danos reviewed the sales comparison. Meter sales were up approximately 10% and cubic feet sales 7%. The differential is due to a slight increase in the rates and timing issues. The next meeting, GM Danos will bring to the Board how many customers use more than 5000 cubic feet of water and 2000 kWh hours of electricity a month for reference purposes. GM Danos stated the Water Department has had a good year and is right on budget.

**Updates: Leak Detection Report** - Every three years we do a leak detection program throughout the distribution system, stated GM Danos. As the result of the program, we discovered we had a tight system with very few leaks stated Danos.

**ELECTRIC LIGHT DEPARTMENT**  
**Action Items/Recommendations**

**New Business**

- 1) **Automatic Bill Payment Program** – Jennifer Pederson, Customer/Energy Services Specialist spoke to the Board on automated bill payment program. Jennifer gave an overview to the Board on how the program will be implemented and the associated costs. Jennifer explained the present process for automatic payment via the lock box and the additional work associated with this program. Jennifer stated the Department has had a lot of inquiry as to when we might implement the ACH Service. The Board agreed that this was good policy for the customers and upon request from the General Manager the Board took an official vote. **On a motion made by Commissioner Rauker and seconded by Commissioner Trumbull and it was unanimously voted by the Board to progress with the ACH program for all Light and Water customers. The Vote: Gruskowski - Yes, McCumber - Yes, Trumbull - Yes, Rauker - Yes and Cataldo - Yes**

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- 2) **Stow Update** – GM Danos updated the Board on the Light Department’s proposal offering services to Stow Municipal. Our proposal was the result of Stow’s interest in partnering with Littleton. The response from the Stow Board of Commissioners came as a surprise stated Danos and clearly puts our proposal with Stow on the back burner.
- 3) **Appliance Rebate Program** – Kevin Goddard spoke to the Board about the Appliance Rebate Program. Kevin stated the Light Department already offers home audits and as the other half of the state mandated program we would like to offer a rebate program on three major appliances, refrigerators, clothes dryers and air conditioners. These rebates are being offered by other utilities and the money has been budgeted to offer this program to our customers, stated Goddard. Discussion was held on the three appliances that have been chosen for the rebate and GM Danos stated the rebates would be applied to the customers’ bills. Jennifer stated the program would run from June 1 through November 30. The Board discussed the possibility of involving Hunter Appliance to offer an additional incentive to the customers purchasing the energy saving appliances. Staff will explore this possibility. With no further discussion, **a motion was made by Commissioner Rauker and seconded by Commissioner Gruskowski to accept the rebate program. The Vote: Gruskowski - Yes, McCumber - Yes, Trumbull - No, Rauker - Yes and Cataldo - Yes**

**Financials**

- 1) **Audit Report** –Tabled to the next meeting.
- 2) **Audit letter and response** – Tabled to next meeting.
- 3) **6-month Financial Review Summary – 2002** – GM Danos reviewed the Operating Summary with the Board. GM Danos stated to the Board, that part of his goals and objectives was to keep the annual rate of return for Littleton and Boxborough in the area of 2-4%. Danos stated staff would be looking at the possibility of lowering the pca charge in the next few months.
- 4) **Cash and Sales Reports through June** – GM Danos reviewed the six-month cash and sales reports through June. GM Danos noted the first quarter sales are down which is attributed partially to the cold weather of May and June. Commercial usage is also down stated Danos, particularly the Digital Taylor Street facility, which is in the process of closing. Even with the increase in residential growth this figure is being offset with the lower commercial usage. stated Danos. After a brief discussion on the possibility of commercial growth for Town, the Board approved as presented.
- 5) **Budget Summary** – The Board reviewed the Budget summary and approved as presented.

**Power Supply**

- 1) **New York Power Authority FERC Licensing Litigation** – Manager Danos stated, through MMWEC we are going to take on FERC and the State of New York for allocation of hydro for New York Power Authority. New York wants to keep the Niagara project for them. Danos explained some of the ramifications that could emerge if this takeover is allowed and its effect of all electric customers in the New England area.
- 2) **System Peak** – Tuesday, July 23, 3:00 PM – 39,865 kWh –GM Danos reviewed with the Board last Tuesday’s system peak. Danos stated we hit an all time peak and if it were not for the storm that developed that day the peak would have gone higher.

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- 3) **June Rate 40 Customer Review** – GM Danos reviewed the June kWh sales for the large customers. Danos noted although there was a decrease of 1% in the large commercial customer, this loss is being buffered by the residential and small business usage.

**With no further business, the Board on a roll call vote agreed to enter into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing strategy with respect to litigation and to reconvene into the regular meeting for the purpose of adjourning. The Roll Call Vote: Gruskowski - Yes, McCumber - Yes, Trumbull - Yes, Rauker - Yes and Cataldo - Yes**

Respectfully submitted,

Savas C. Danos  
General Manager

Approved: August 27, 2002