



TOWN OF MILLVILLE BOARD OF SELECTMEN

290 Main Street
Millville MA 01529

JOINT MEETING MINUTES

with BMR School Committee

Monday, May 15, 2023

Location of Meeting: Hartnett Middle School, 35 Federal Street, Blackstone, MA 01504

Name	Title	Attendance
Jennifer Gill	Chairperson	<i>present</i>
Andrew Alward	Vice Chair	<i>present</i>
Richard Bremilst	Member	<i>present</i>
Roland Barrett	Member	<i>present</i>
Matthew Maille	Member	<i>present</i>
Peter Caruso	Town Administrator	<i>present</i>

OPEN MEETING:

At 6:00 PM Selectman Jennifer Gill opened the meeting with roll call.

On a motion made by Jennifer Gill, seconded by Andrew Alward, the Board voted unanimously to enter into executive session per M.G.L. 30A §21(f)(g) in order to enter into Executive Session per M.G.L. c.30A, §. 21(a)(3) to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the Town and the chair so declares (Police Teamsters Union Local 170).

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

The Board entered into executive session.

RETURN TO OPEN MEETING:

On a motion made by Jennifer Gill, seconded by Matthew Maille, the Board voted unanimously to exit executive session and return to open meeting.

PERMIT APPROVAL:

The Board considered permit approval for the Chestnut Hill Community Association Toll Day on 6/3/23 from 9am to noon.

On a motion made by Andrew Alward, seconded by Richard Bremilst the Board voted unanimously to approve the toll day permit for the Chestnut Hill Community Association Toll Day on June 3rd 2023, 9 AM to Noon.

JOINT MEETING WITH BMR SCHOOL COMMITTEE:

Also in attendance:

Superintendent of Schools Jason DeFalco	Michael Soter, State Representative
School Committee Chair Erin P. Vinacco	Mary Jude Pigsley, MassDEP Worcester
Member Charles Dunton	Bob Ferrari, Northeast Water Solutions President
Member Tara Shouboe	Carley Gibbons, District Director for State Senator
Member Matthew Catalano	Ryan Fattman
Member Ted Novio	Rich Gullick, Water Quality Consultant for
Member Keri Gaudette	Millville
Member Daniel Keefe	Scott Hebert
	Christina Shafer
	Denise Carrier
	Jill Pilla-Gallerani
	Bob Bostwick, DEP

Erin Vinacco stated that there had been a conversation about the water issue at the last School Committee meeting and there were multiple emails between some parties about the water issue at Millville Elementary. She stated that the issue needed to be discussed publicly, so the meeting was convened with brief notice so that all parties were aware of and could discuss the issues. School Committee Chair Vinacco asked Bob Ferrari to summarize the recent water quality report.

Bob Ferrari of Northeast Water Solutions stated that Northeast Water Solutions had been performing engineering services since December 2005 and had become the system certified operator on December 1, 2013. He reported that the school's water supply was developed initially in 1990; there is one well on site that has always had high iron and has always been sensitive to weather conditions. Mr. Ferrari continued his report, stating there is almost no soil cover over the bedrock; the well is susceptible to surface water infiltration. Mr. Ferrari states that they have video evidence of the fractures in the well. The well water is not being used for drinking water purposes. A greensand filtration system was designed in 2010 in response to a failure of the well due to iron and manganese contamination. In 2013, it was noted the water contained organic contaminants and the filtration system had not been operational for over a year due to improper operation, according to Mr. Ferrari. He noted that from 2014-2020, the filtration system was working well, despite some issues with chlorination, which were addressed. In 2020, it was noted that a beaver dam in the area resulted in an impoundment that extended in the direction of the well. Mr. Ferrari noted that the Total Organic Carbon content has been progressively rising, that there have been severe problems with getting consistent oxidation of iron and manganese, and there have been elevated disinfection byproducts. Mr. Ferrari noted that Northeast Water Solutions has recommended elimination of the beaver dam, but the Town is not amenable to this. Most recently, Mr. Ferrari reported that the school has been looking into

removing the chlorine treatment of the greensand filtration system and switching to permanganate treatment, but that there were significant advantages and disadvantages in making this decision. In recent studies, there have been no viable sites for a new well. Mr. Ferrari's final recommendations were to attempt to eliminate the beaver pond or to try drilling a new well. He states that the highly variable data would make the permanganate treatment very difficult. Mr. Ferrari passed around a photo of the eight samples taken over a one hour period, showing the variability of the test results.

A member of the School Committee asked for clarification regarding the DEP guidance on muskrat and beaver threats to water supply.

MassDEP representatives, Bob Bostwick and Mary Jude Pigsley, were asked to speak about DEP's role in Millville Elementary School water situation. As this well fits the criteria for a public water supply, MassDEP is involved. She stated that the water quality in Millville is notably poor due to geological "quirks" in the area. Mary Jude Pigsley refuted the statement that the well is susceptible to surface water infiltration. Mary Jude Pigsley also noted that the high Total Organic Carbon levels have not been a problem since 2020, but rather since 2013. Iron and manganese greensand filtration has to be pre-treated with chlorine or potassium permanganate and be recharged periodically.

The depth of the well was discussed. The well is 1000 feet deep and water is being pumped from approximately 450 feet down. There is a fracture zone below 800 ft, and another at 141 feet.

Mary Jude Pigsley discussed the disinfection byproducts from chlorine mixing with Total Organic Carbon (TOC) that are harmful to human health, especially in sensitive subpopulations (i.e. pregnant women and women of childbearing age). She stated that the standards have been exceeded many times in this water system and that for sensitive subpopulations, adverse effects can occur after long term exposure. The DEP has ordered that the violations issued be distributed to persons who drink the water and Ms. Pigsley noted that these need to be signed by the Town, not the School. Mary Jude Pigsley noted that the Town has been out of compliance repeatedly and stated that this is an ongoing, repeating, public health problem.

In October, the DEP issued a Notice of Noncompliance and required the Town supply a corrective action plan. The action plan received after the Notice stated that the Town was going to change to potassium permanganate instead of chlorine to treat the greensand filter system, and stated that the permit application for this treatment change was expected to be submitted in May. The DEP has not yet received an application. The levels of Total Organic Carbon, however, are so high that the manufacturer is unable to guarantee that the permanganate will be effective, and it may turn the water pink.

The presence of PFAS (polyfluoroalkyl substances) and PFOA (perfluorooctanoic acid) in the water was discussed. Mary Jude Pigsley stated that the school was within the normal range for the presence of these chemicals, but that the range may be changed within the year due to new research. Potential grants and loans available, as well as the possibility of an intermunicipal agreement for municipal water from another town, was discussed.

On a motion made by Selectman Gill, seconded by Andrew Alward, the Board of Selectmen voted to set aside \$25,000 in ARPA funds to conduct a preliminary engineering study for water treatment or interconnection.

*Jennifer Gill - aye
Andrew Alward - aye
Richard Bremilst - aye
Roland Barrett - aye
Matthew Maille - abstained*

Enterprise funds in Millville and Blackstone were discussed.

The DEP stated that because water is coming from fractures in the bedrock, not from surface water runoff, that removing the beaver dam would not be an effective solution.

Bob Ferrari corrected statements regarding his report. School Committee Chair Erin Vinacco corrected Bob Ferrari's statements, reporting that he had said in a previous meeting that he would not use permanganate in the greensand filter if the beaver dam was not removed. Bob Ferrari agreed that this was his position.

Selectman Gill proposed that the short term solution would be to switch to permanganate treatment. Dr Jason DeFalco stated that there were still five weeks of school left. Mary Jude Piglsey noted that drinking the water and cooking foods that absorb water (like rice or pasta) would not be advised, but washing hands or washing vegetables would be alright.

On a motion made by Selectman Gill, seconded by Selectman Bremilst, the Board of Selectmen voted to allocate \$15,000 in ARPA funds as a good-will gesture to the school district for bulk water expenses.

*Jennifer Gill - aye
Richard Bremilst - aye
Matthew Maille - abstained
Roland Barrett - aye
Andrew Alward - nay*

Before his vote, Selectman Alward asked Peter Caruso about unallocated funds, and it was determined that there would be little to no remaining unallocated funds after this.

A member of the School Committee asked for clarification about PFAS safety, knowing that the safe limits were going to be lowered in the future. Mary Jude Pigsley noted that the EPA is currently investigating and that there are varying opinions ranging from PFAS being no danger at all to PFAS being extremely dangerous in small quantities.

Filling a tank with pre-treated water was discussed in regards to testing/sampling. Fire suppression was discussed in relation to this proposal.

The next meeting of the Board of Selectmen is scheduled for June 5, 2023.

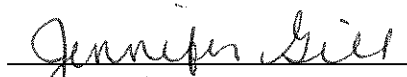
A member of the School Committee expressed concern regarding two water experts hired by Millville that disagree with each other, and expressed concern about the \$15,000 for water after the school had to buy water over February break and was not reimbursed by the Town. A member of the School Committee proposed that the students go to Blackstone until the water issue is solved in Millville.

ADJOURNMENT:


The meeting adjourned contiguous with the adjournment of the BMR School Committee Meeting.

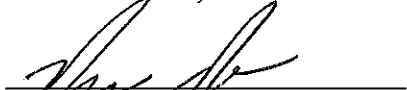
Respectfully Submitted,

Dylan Lindholm
Recording Secretary


Jennifer Gill, Chair


Andrew Alward, Vice Chair


Roland Barrett, Member


Richard Bremilist, Member


Matthew Maille, Member

JAN 17 2023

AM 10:27

TOWN CLERK