

Tri-Town Water District No. 1

Commission Meeting

October 15, 2026

Chairman Darwin Pratt called meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

Commissioners present were: Darwin Pratt, Ernie Audet, Scott Douglas, Drexel Wheeler, Brian Treadway, Lance Wood, Larry Simino, Adam Thomann and Steve Kayhart.

Also present was: Tricia Gordon, Dwayne Roberts, and Jennifer Sullivan from Tri-Town Water.

Amendments to the September 17, 2026 meeting minutes: None

Tap-Ons: None

Auditors – Discuss FY25/26 Audit

- Former Audit Company has split and Sam Hillman has created her own firm, Vantage Point Accounting, PC. She is willing to be our auditor and put together a proposal for the upcoming FY25/26 audit which includes a fee of \$13,400. Ernie made a motion to use Vantage Point Accounting for the upcoming audit, seconded by Drexel. All in favor – motion passes. Jenn will sign and return proposal to Sam.

OCE Project Update:

- Robert Clark from OCE gave an overview on projects noting:
 - EPA grant has officially been awarded and Robert recommends submitting invoices for reimbursement asap. It was noted that Trish and Jenn completed the ASAP (EPA's online reimbursement portal) set-up and that bank information has been entered. ASAP needs to review/approve bank, and it is estimated that we will have access to the funds by October 26th.
 - Project will go out to bid tomorrow (October 16) and be available publicly Monday October 19th. Tri-Town will need to hold a pre-bid meeting to walk through with contractors and that bids will be valid for 60 days. Pre-bid meeting date set for Tuesday, October 27th at 9 AM. Will need to warn for this special meeting. Bid date will be the Tuesday, November 17 at 9 AM.
 - Discussed timing of the project noting that there is about a 12-16 week lead time for all parts. Work will begin in late February / March for both filters.
 - Discussed involvement of OCE for the construction noting that Robert's team can be involved with supervision as much as we would like. He will put together a quote for this work and present next month.
 - Permit has not yet been issued by the State. Once the filter comes online, Tri-Town will look at turbidity and the State will also have to do an inspection.
 - Master meter upgrade has been included in the bid / project work. Bid work also includes a new meter pit, raw water pump, vacuum prime, sludge transfer pumps, 3rd and 4th filter work

and connecting pipes. Bid work does not include SKADA updates – will need to contact Tom Allen for electric, wiring.

- It was suggested by Robert that Tri-Town keep any old parts/pieces for potential reuse/repairs but that there will be no salvage value
- DWSRF update: application submitted. Robert will help Jenn and Trish with required attachments
- Bond Bank \$50k grant: Robert recommends tying this grant to either the plant project or the booster station.
- Robert notes we will have to regroup on East Street work after 3rd/4th filter bids. Archaeological work has to be done for this project. Drexel made a motion, seconded by Ernie that Tri-Town move forward with the archaeological study now as long as expense is less than \$4,000. All in favor, motion passed.

Budget Discussion FY26/27:

- Jenn reviewed a preliminary budget for FY27 and a rate comparison sheet for potential rate increases of all tiers as well as just increasing the base rate. Discussion followed around which approach to take noting that it is hard to raise rates while water quality is low. However, raising base rate would help bring in cash flow, allow us to pay expenses that have also increased for us. Noted that the base rate helps cover our expenses and that the base rate is low when looking at fixed costs. Discussion centered on increasing base rate by \$10 per quarter and potentially leaving Tiers 2 – 4 as is. Board asked for next meeting to show budget with just increasing base rate by \$10 / quarter and then budget showing base rate change of \$10 / quarter and increasing tiers by 2% and 3%.

Rules and Regulations:

- Scott noted that the current by-laws state that the tap-on fee must be paid by or at approval of the tap-on request. It was noted that that is not what has been in practice with Tri-Town allowing payment up to the actual tap-on date. At last board meeting, a motion was made in connection to the length of time for approval of the tap-on completion that the requesting party has to pay the tap-on fee within the first year of approval, and by the tap-on date. This aligns with actual practice. Ernie made a motion, seconded by Steve, to update the Rules and Regulations to state that the tap-on fee is to be paid within one year of the approval date of the tap-on or prior to the tap-on. All in favor, motion passed.

Tricia Gordon reported on the delinquent accounts noting the list is shorter and some accounts are on contracts.

Superintendent's report:

- Dwyane reported on current leak on Cutting Hill Rd believed to be caused by tractor pressure on top of where the line was.
- Also a leak on Norton Town Road not far off 22A. There was a pin hole in the 2 inch pipe and water was coming out in the ditch. One hundred yards down the road is 4 inch pipe. 4 inch pipe down majority of Norton Town Road.
- Town Line had a T leaking on the 4 inch pipe there.

- Repaired hydrant on Smith Street
- Three tap-ons completed (Madison, Ouellette & Smits) along with two road boars.
- Shed is full of parts for the upcoming 3rd and 4th filter project. Delivery has been made and it was about three truck loads.
- More meters have been ordered
- Failed most recent water quality test in both locations. Dwayne doesn't believe it is related to any disturbance from cleaning the tank. We will need to send another letter and will test again in December. Discussion followed on the fact that a lot of flushing has occurred and maybe flushing is not helping. Tri-Town has done more flushing in the past year than ever before. Discussed possibly not flushing before next test.

Other Business:

- Jenn updated the board that Vermont Federal Credit Union will not offer a line of credit backed by the bond vote. Jenn talked to National Bank of Middlebury and they will offer a line of credit collateralized by the bond vote. Lance made a motion, seconded by Larry to have Jenn and Trish work with National Bank of Middlebury to secure a line of credit up to \$2.1 million backed by the bond vote. All in favor – motion passed.
- Trish has created a Tap-on list that will detail out pertinent information for tap-ons outstanding

Personnel: No matters.

Executive Session: Customer Dispute

- Steve made a motion at 7:16, seconded by Adam, to go into executive session and invited Trish, Dwayne and Jenn to stay. All in favor.
- Adam made a motion at 7:36, seconded by Larry to leave executive session. All in favor.
- Ernie made a motion, seconded by Steve to discuss letter with lawyer and have lawyer review information and respond to customer. All in favor – motion passed.

There being no further business, Chairman Darwin Pratt adjourned the meeting at 7:37 pm.

Kindest Regards, *Jennifer Sullivan*-Jennifer Sullivan-Clerk