

# TOWN OF RICHLAND WATER DEPARTMENT

1 BRIDGE STREET PULASKI, NY 13142

## MINUTES OF THE RICHLAND WATER ADVISORY BOARD

**Date:** March 7, 2023

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

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

**Water Board Members Present:** Doug Schwalm, Acting Chairman

Ken Moonan

Krista Fox

Robert Jeffry

Absent: Rob Goodsell

**Others in Attendance:**

Supervisor Ron Novak, Water Department Supervisor

Kern Yerdon, Town Supervisor

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

Krista Fox made a motion to approve the December 7, 2022, water board minutes. It was seconded by Ken Moonan. All were in favor.

Water report see attached. In early 2023 there was nearly 1,000,000 gallons lost to leaks spread over eight residences/businesses. Several had frozen lines when the temperature went down; most of the lost water went through the meters. In 2023 25,000 million gallons more water was pumped than in 2022. -This was because of the new districts in Richland and Sandy Creek. About 30% of our water use is pumped to Sandy Creek causing additional utilization and wear/tear on our pumping system. They now have more active accounts than the Town of Richland does.

Supervisor Kern Yerdon attended tonight's meeting. He informed the board that he will not be seeking re-election and that Robert North will be seeking that position.

Robert Jeffry was introduced as a new board member.

Approximately 18 more transmitters have been installed since last month.

1. Ross Valve: There are five main valves (Maltby Road, NYS RT 3, Salisbury Road, Manwaring Road and the Emergency Interconnect). The valves automatically open and close to fill the water tanks (can also be manually operated if needed). We try to work on them ourselves and we have put a plan together to get them all worked on. Parts are only available from Ross Valve. The Town Board authorized the work, and the contractor has repaired three out of four valves. The 4<sup>th</sup> valve is the Manwaring valve. Ross Valve worked on it for 3 hours and were

unable to resolve the issue. Ross Valve feels it is a back pressure issue. Two valves in the Salisbury vault have a back pressure regulator on it but the Manwaring Valve does not. Ross Valve thinks possibly a back pressure valve is needed on that valve to fix the problem. Ross Valve design engineers have to give the approval on this since they are responsible for a one year warranty. Ross Valve said they will come back and only charge us for parts and labor (\$239.00/hour)-no travel charge.

2. LTE meters: When the town started WD 1 all our meters were badger mechanical read meters. The operators would drive around in the truck to read meters with a handheld reader. Batteries started dying off and the board investigated alternatives. The first one they investigated and decided to install was a 3G cellular(3G is no longer supported by Verizon/AT&T) meter reading system. The town installed about 40 when they figured out the area is not very receptive to cellular reads due to poor signal strength in the area. . The Zenner transmitters we are now installing, are incompatible with digital cellular heads on the meters. We did not know they were not compatible with the transmitters until there were issues with the billing. We must go in and read these manually because our system cannot read them electronically. The only fix is to put in new Zenner meters at \$87.60 each (40 meters at a cost of \$3504.00). It would take about 2 weeks to make the changes. Sandy Creek has had to replace all of theirs (just meters-not the transmitters). Once completed, they can all be read from our computers. Until these are changed, the cost is considerable to pay operators to manually read them. There is also the inconvenience to homeowners who have the cellular system, when the operators must go inside to read the meter. Krista Fox questioned whether down the road we could be in the same position with these new meters and Supervisor Novak said he feels he has asked all the questions and is confident that these new meters will not be a problem once completely installed. Krista Fox questioned whether there was a discount to buy all 40 meters at once-Ron responded "no".
3. Zenner Meter Project: Supervisor Yerdon and Novak explained the Zenner system will spot leaks and show real time monitoring. Krista Fox asked when the meters on Orton Road area will be working. Supervisor Novak explained until they put up additional new antennas , they will need manual readings. The Zenner metering system will be swapped out once there are enough to carry the signal efficiently. Looking back, there should have been a master plan to install meters by checking where there was internet access and A/C power on town property and where antennas were needed to make sure the signal could get back to the main collectors taking into consideration the topography of the town. Zenner did not offer this plan because of the way the town approached the project with Zenner. When Zenner considered the system, it was based on placing the antenna's on our water tanks. The town currently uses a radio SCADA system to remotely acquire data and operate the water system accordingly. Both the SCADA system and the Zenner system use the public domain of the radio frequency system that does not require an operating license. The frequencies at which these two systems operate interfere with each other due to proximity of the antennas and therefore new locations for the antennas had to be determined. Most of our antennas are now mounted on power polls where battery powered antennas are used. We have repeaters in several areas. Six repeaters were taken down today now that we know where they are needed. We move them around to areas as needed to pick up the signal. The more people that are connected, the better the system works because each meter will be a transmitter.

Based on our experience in the field, we have had to figure out where the battery-based antenna locations should be.

4. When the town agreed to enter a contract for \$143,500 the contract specified a list of system components necessary to complete the installation of the fixed base mesh Zenner system. The Town also decided to spread the cost of the contract out over three budget years and obtained the necessary funding/loans to complete the project. The contract failed to address individual component prices. The contract included (among other components) the purchase of 1,000 transmitters. As such, over the past three years we have purchased 100 transmitters, then 200 transmitters and two purchases of 300 transmitters each. The price of the transmitters increased over time with each successive purchase. To date that leaves us 100 transmitters short of the initial amount needed to complete the transition throughout the town. Over the past three years, we have had to use 20 of the transmitters as signal repeaters mounted on national grid power poles. Therefore, currently, we need 120 transmitters at a cost of \$107.70 each, 3 battery operated antennas at a cost of \$978.50 each, and 40 new meters at a cost of \$87.60 each for a grand total of \$18,883.50. Due to rising costs of the components over the three years, there is only \$4,968.80 left in the loan available for withdrawal. As such we need \$13,914.70 to be approved by the town board to complete the Zenner installation. They need to decide whether to do this in the 2023 or 2024 budget year. The board should also be aware that until such time as project is completed, we incur an annual operating cost for the Badger meters that have not been transitioned over to the Zenner system of \$1441.42. We also pay Stealth annually for the Zenner system. If the remaining necessary components are purchased in 2023 Water Supervisor Novak feels the transition to Zenner can be completed by December 1, 2023. It should be noted that some items I am ordering take 30 weeks to deliver. The meters are about 6-8 weeks. ***After a lengthy discussion, Krista Fox made a motion to recommend spending the \$13,914.70 to finish this project. Ken Moonan seconded the motion. All were in favor.***
5. Generator Update: Scriba Electric contacted the manufacturer and the current expected delivery date is April 24, 2023. That date could not be moved up any earlier. We are paying \$600/week for the generator rental.
6. Update on Chloritec Pump: based on recent information expected delivery of the new chlorine injection pump is May 17, 2023. Due to the large increase in cost of hypochlorite from Slack chemical the line item in the 2023 budget for water purification will likely be greatly exceeded.
7. Water Response to fires/motor vehicle accidents: The water department responds to all structure fires and brush fires in the Town of Richland and responds to any motor vehicle accident involving a fire hydrant and/or a power pole. Response to power poles is required because we may have to do an emergency location of water main and distribution components for purposes of power pole replacements per requirements of the Towns' U-DIG license.
8. Update on Valve repair in Fernwood: In order to perform the repair work on the failed 6" Kennedy valve the water department had to shut down the Fernwood well field and back feed from the Fernwood water tank to drain the water main inside the Fernwood water building. Upon removal of the components, we did not have the repair part necessary to repair the valve. Everything was reassembled and put back in service. We subsequently got the required parts to make the repair. That repair will be completed on Thursday, March 16.
9. Water District 5 extension update: B&L has been working on the WD 5 extension with the water department supplying information as necessary to complete that work. Two property

owners have requested to be included in the extension. They will share the costs associated with the extension.

10. Hydrant Hit: On February 26, a drunk driver hit a fire Hydrant on US 11. The hydrant was torn off and moved it about 70' down the road. It was a CLOW hydrant and the replacement cost for the parts is approximately \$4200 not including installation. Supervisor Novak and Operator Hicks responded to the accident and closed the guard valve, placed the hydrant in the truck and it is stored in our water office. Supervisor Novak obtained the necessary documentation to file the insurance claim with the drivers insurance company. It should be noted that the hydrant only two years ago cost \$2200.

*At approximately 8:10 pm a motion was made to close the meeting by Krista Fox and seconded by Ken Moonan. All were in favor.*

The next water board meeting will be held on Tuesday, April 4, 2023, in the Jury room of the H. Douglas Barclay Courthouse.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mary Yerdon  
Town of Richland Water Department Clerk

2022 2023 WATER PUMPED

Month/Yr	Total Pumped	Total Pumped	Total	Month/Yr	Total Pumped	Total Pumped	Total
<b>2022</b>	<u>From Ferrwood</u>	<u>From Richland</u>	<u>Volume</u>	<b>2023</b>	<u>From Ferrwood</u>	<u>From Richland</u>	<u>Volume</u>
January	1,318,000	6,926,800	8,244,800	January	2,107,000	7,315,100	9,422,100
February	1,231,000	7,155,100	8,386,100	February	1,506,000	7,250,900	8,756,900
March	1,314,000	7,205,800	8,519,800	March			0
April	1,492,000	8,091,700	9,583,700	April			0
May	2,140,000	11,860,800	14,000,800	May			0
June	3,509,000	12,738,400	16,247,400	June			0
July	3,391,000	14,704,200	18,095,200	July			0
August	3,563,100	14,802,900	18,366,000	August			0
September	2,995,000	10,691,300	13,686,300	September			0
October	2,710,000	8,850,000	11,560,000	October			0
November	2,097,000	5,821,600	7,918,600	November			0
December	2,322,000	6,333,800	8,655,800	December			0
<b>Ttl Pumped</b>	<b>28,082,100</b>	<b>115,182,400</b>	<b>143,264,500</b>	<b>Ttl Pumped</b>	<b>3,613,000</b>	<b>14,566,000</b>	<b>18,179,000</b>
	20%	80%			20%	80%	