



TOWN OF MILLVILLE BOARD OF SELECTMEN

290 Main Street
Millville MA 01529

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES Monday, August 14, 2023

Location of Meeting: Millville Town Hall, 290 Main Street, Millville MA 01529

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 7:02 PM Chairperson Jennifer Gill opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance and roll call.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Toll Day Permit Application - Blackstone Knights of Columbus

Mr. Andrew Bowling, a representative from the Blackstone-Millville Knights of Columbus, addressed the Board and stated that the Blackstone and Millville councils have merged. They plan to hold a Tootsie Roll Drive on September 16th from 9am to 1pm. Town Administrator Peter Caruso reported that he has approvals from Police Chief Coupe, Fire Chief Liard, and the Highway Surveyor Brian Mullaly.

A resident, Mr. Larry Pearson of 17 Granite Circle, asked whether State permission was required as it involves a State highway. TA Peter Caruso responded that State approval was not required as it is only at the intersection, and no previous issues have been raised by the State with other permits at this location.

On a motion made by Vice Chair Andrew Alward, seconded by Selectman Roland Barrett, the Board voted unanimously to approve the Toll Day Permit for the Knights of Columbus for September 16 from 9am to 1pm.

2. Appointment of Max Indelicato to the Green Communities Committee

Mr. Max Indelicato addressed the Board to describe his interest in the position and his qualifications for the role. Selectman Richard Bremilst asked whether Mr. Indelicato had experience with grant writing, to which Mr. Indelicato responded in the affirmative.

On a motion made by Vice Chair Andrew Alward, seconded by Selectman Matthew Maille, the Board voted unanimously to appoint Max Indelicato to the Green Communities Committee through June 30, 2024.

3. Meeting Minutes

Corrections to the minutes were as follows, and will be corrected by the recording secretary:

- a. June 5, 2023 - Missing a signature line for Roland Barrett
- b. April 10, 2023 - Matthew Maille's name was incorrectly reported as Michael Maille on page 1; missing a signature line for Roland Barrett; wording change from "retracts" to "referred"

On a motion made by Chairperson Jennifer Gill, seconded by Vice Chair Andrew Alward, the Board voted unanimously to approve the minutes from April 10, 2023.

4. MES Water Update - Presentation by Water Operator Dr. Richard Gullick

a. Selectmen Comments, Discussion, and Consideration of Support for Water Connection

Chairperson Jennifer Gill introduced the conversation regarding an indication that there was a desire for fact checking the report(s), and introduced Dr. Richard Gullick, who was partnered with Millville by the Rural Community Assistance Partnership, which was recommended to Millville by Congressman Jim McGovern.

Dr. Richard Gullick, PhD, of Water Compliance Solutions introduced himself and his credentials as a licensed drinking water treatment operator. Dr. Gullick presented a powerpoint presentation, reviewing the MES water quality and water treatment history, and what the plans for the future will be.

Dr. Gullick described the well at MES, stating that is a 1000 ft deep well with the pump set at approximately 450 ft. He stated there is no evidence of connection to surface water near the well, and states that the well is high in iron and manganese, has corrosive qualities that may dissolve lead and copper piping, that there are no chlorinated DBPs in the raw water and that the water has a high total organic carbon (TOC). He stated that the iron and manganese are being removed by the greensand filtration system and the corrosivity is being treated by pH adjustment with soda ash and the addition of phosphate and silica.

Dr. Gullick explained applicable metals chemistry in order to preface his description of the water treatment system at MES. He also showed an image of

cups of the raw well water, the bag filter effluent, greensand filter influent and effluent, and the end result of the water, beside an additional cup of distilled water, which was noted to be only slightly clearer than the end result water from the filtration system.

Dr. Gullick described the regulatory violations that have been issued on different occasions for water parameters, including violations for haloacetic acids, iron and manganese, multiple monitoring and reporting violations, and sanitary survey violations. He stated that the previous operator lowered the chlorine target level in order to keep the haloacetic acid levels down and blamed MassDEP pressure for the low chlorine target, but records from MassDEP show that this was not reported in their Sanitary Survey, which said to maintain no lower than 0.3ppm (mg/L). The operator continued to let the chlorine levels get lower, below the levels necessary for proper greensand function, which caused the greensand to fail and no longer remove all of the dissolved iron and manganese.

Dr. Gullick explained the recommended daily intake of manganese (from foods and vitamins/supplements) and the health advisory levels for manganese in water, based on “typical daily dietary manganese intake levels...[which] does not imply that intakes above these levels will necessarily cause health problems” (MassDEP). He also showed charts that plotted the manganese and chlorine in MES water in the last few years and showed additional pictures of water in cups from February 2023, and explained that the chlorine levels were too low to treat the color issues.

A member of the audience asked whether the chlorine was added mechanically or whether a human is in charge of adding it. Dr. Gullick explained that there is a tank with a pump that automatically adds chlorine based on flow, but that a person needs to fill the tank with chlorine, and that the operator is responsible for filling the tank.

Dr. Gullick continued by explaining disinfection byproducts (DBPs) as a byproduct of the treatment process. He listed the issues that can occur with high doses of the DBPs as noted in lab experiments. Dr. Gullick continued by showing the MassDEP language on the notices that had to be sent out due to past violations, which emphasized that the haloacetic acid violation was not an immediate health risk nor an emergency, that “some people who drink water containing haloacetic acids in excess of the MCL over many years may have an increased risk of getting cancer” which was based on “exposure of 2 liters per day for 70 years.” While pregnant women and women of childbearing age “may be of increased risk,” according to the document, Dr. Gullick explained that this is not a significantly higher risk.

A member of the audience asked a clarifying question regarding the four quarters which needed to be tested for the annual average. Dr. Gullick explained the annual average testing and when testing was done.

Chairperson Jennifer Gill explained that an email to parents in July incorrectly stated that the Town of Millville would not provide bottled water to the school system, which was not true. The Town of Millville Board of Selectmen had pledged to provide, and will be providing, bottled water to the school system. A member of the audience denied that the email sent to parents said that the Town would not be supplying water, that it stated that the Town had not decided. The discussion continued at length.

Selectman Bremilst asked Dr. Gullick how soon the school would be in compliance with DEP. Dr. Gullick stated after the next two quarters they would be in compliance. Selectman Bremilst asked who had control over the water operator and who that was, and Town Administrator Peter Caruso answered that the Town did, and that it was Dr. Gullick.

A member of the audience asked if bottled water has been provided by the Town any other time. The answer from the BOS was that this is the only time this has occurred, where the Town provided the water instead of the school providing it. Dr. Gullick stated that there has been bottled water available at the school continuously for years.

A member of the audience asked if anyone from the school committee was present tonight. No school committee members were present. Chairperson Jennifer Gill stated that she sent an email last week inviting them, and noted that Charles' email bounced, that the chair was possibly joined by Zoom, and the superintendent did not have enough advance notice. Dr. Gullick stated that the school committee declined to come to the meeting tonight.

Dr. Gullick continued his presentation with how much haloacetic acids could be absorbed by pasta in boiling water. Dr. Gullick showed that it would take eating 28 adult portions of spaghetti to consume the equivalent of HAA5 to that found in 2 liters of water with 60 micrograms/liter of HAA5, citing back to the statement that it would take drinking 2 liters of the water every day for 70 years for enough HAA5 to increase the risk of untoward effects on the human body. He also explained that handwashing would not cause any potential harm by manganese or HAAs (haloacetic acids).

Dr. Gullick continued by listing the top issues of HAA5 violations, past failures for iron and manganese removal, poor public perception, and upcoming changes to EPA regulations on PFAS. He stated that the solutions were to improve operational oversight of chlorine levels, install computer control to limit residual chlorine, and, if necessary, switch from chlorine to permanganate, install point-of-use filters, and use filtered pitchers. Regarding PFAS regulations, an engineering study may be conducted for either treatment alternatives or possible interconnection with a neighboring water system.

Dr. Gullick named the MES Water Quality Team (some contracts pending): himself from Water Compliance Solutions, LLC, David Papale from Maintenance Service & Engineering, Inc.; Michael Poitras from MP Water Systems Management, Chris McClure from McClure Engineering, and Robert Facey from the BIS Group. A member of the audience asked why Michael Poitras was fired from his previous job, and another member of the audience asked if the BOS would ask why he was fired from his previous job before hiring him.

Dr. Gullick continued by explaining the situation that caused the school to close, including the timeline of events, and disagreed with previous statements by the previous operator, Bob Ferrari, and the Superintendent of Schools, Dr. DeFalco. A member of the audience googled colloids and asked whether they would protect from bacteria, reading off of his phone. Dr. Gullick disagreed. After more discussion, the same member of the audience accused the BOS and Dr. Gullick of accusations and fearmongering, which the BOS and Dr. Gullick alleged the previous operator and the School Board were doing. Two members of the audience argued about the ability to speak at a public meeting. The first audience member then left the meeting.

Another member of the audience then asked for clarification about the timeline of operators. The presentation continued regarding whether the beavers caused surface water infiltration, and Dr. Gullick showed evidence of no surface water infiltration into the well. He continued with the timeline of reporting for the well.

Bob Marks of the Millville Board of Health asked how confident Dr. Gullick is that the water will be safe after the changes to the system, and how long it will take. Dr. Gullick stated that he believes it is already safe, but he cannot be sure until the computer system is in place. Mr. Marks asked whether the haloacetic acids were a result of error or negligence. Dr. Gullick stated that the chlorine was too high. Mr. Marks asked whether additional changes were necessary at this time. Dr. Gullick stated that the last piece needed was to install the computer system so that it can be monitored remotely and the chlorine can be injected automatically. Mr. Marks asked if they would change to permanganate or stay with chlorine. Dr. Gullick stated that they would continue to use chlorine and potentially add additional filters.

Chairperson Jennifer Gill reported that the Town was looking at the possibility of interconnection with the Town of Blackstone or with the Town of Uxbridge. Dr. Gullick was asked by a member of the audience what he was drinking in his water bottle. Dr. Gullick stated that he was drinking water from Millville Elementary School.

The BOS discussed the movement of the students from MES to Blackstone. Town Administrator Peter Caruso described the provisions in the policy for moving students, and the situation with the boiler which was purchased with

Massachusetts School Building Authority funding, explaining that the school needs to be in use as a school in order to satisfy the agreement made with MSBA.

A member of the audience asked for clarification on the position of the Boards—that the previous operator has a conflicting opinion with Dr. Gullick, and that the School Board has sided with the previous operator and the BOS is siding with Dr. Gullick. The BOS confirmed this position.

Chairperson Jennifer Gill read an email and described her understanding of whether invites to particular meeting(s) were made explicitly or not, and described her opinion on the arguments made by the School Board.

A member of the audience asked if the July test results would be able to be obtained. Dr. Gullick explained that he asked the lab, but the results are the property of the previous operator and the previous operator will not release the results now that they no longer work on the MES water system.

b. Selectmen Comments, Discussion, and Consideration of Support for Water Connection

Town Administrator Peter Caruso read from the Regional Agreement the policy regarding how the decision must be made to move students to another school and when that decision may be undertaken, highlighting that the school must be rendered unusable to provoke a vote on moving the students. Chairperson Jennifer Gill also added that MassDEP states that the students do not need to be moved. Mr. Caruso added that the school was still going to be used for administrative purposes, with employees working there, which means that the school will be used, but not as a school.

A member of the audience approached the Board and urged them to take a vote tonight. Chairperson Jennifer Gill considered whether the BOS could take a vote determining that the School Board was in breach of the policy and that the BOS was going to seek legal counsel. The Board discussed the vote that could be taken at this time.

On a motion made by Chairperson Jennifer Gill, seconded by Vice Chair Andrew Alward, the Board of Selectmen voted unanimously to agree to supply bottled water for drinking and cooking, to the public water source of Millville Elementary School, as required to MassDEP until that request is lifted by MassDEP.

The Board of Selectmen continued to discuss possible breach of contract by the School Board closing the school to students. The BOS noted they did not receive delivery of notice of the school closing to students.

On a motion made by Chairperson Jennifer Gill, seconded by Vice Chair Andrew Alward, the Board of Selectmen voted unanimously to recognize the movement of students out of MES as meritless based on the fact that the BOS did not receive proper notice and that water is not a valid reason to deem the school unusable.

On a motion made by Chairperson Jennifer Gill, seconded by Vice Chair Andrew Alward, the Board of Selectmen voted unanimously to authorize the town attorney draft a notice to be sent to the school district regarding the motion made above, and to allow Town Administrator Peter Caruso to approve the language of said notice.

Town Administrator Peter Caruso suggested a third motion, to treat MES water operating costs as an additional exception to the definition of operating costs in section 6A1 of the Regional Agreement. Chairperson Jennifer Gill also mentioned that in the past, there have been considerations about splitting the cost evenly instead of waiving the costs. A member of the audience stood and urged the Board follow the Regional Agreement as signed. The Board noted their consensus to follow the Regional Agreement terms, which do not exclude MES Water Operations costs from Operating Costs as defined, but did not take a formal vote on the matter.

Town Administrator Peter Caruso noted concerns of residents concerning the potential for mold and asbestos issues at the school complex, though there have been no formal complaints. If a formal complaint is submitted, an investigation would have to take place.

Regarding consideration of a water connection with an abutting town, the BOS discussed the options of Blackstone and Uxbridge. Town Administrator Peter Caruso stated that the conversation was being had with Uxbridge, and further details will be upcoming. Chairperson Jennifer Gill mentioned that she planned to go to a Blackstone Select Board meeting to discuss the option with Blackstone.

OLD BUSINESS:

None.

DEPARTMENTS:

None.

PUBLIC FORUM:

None.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

1. Mike Soter is running a recycling drive - details on Facebook.

CORRESPONDENCE:

None.

MINUTES:

See section NEW BUSINESS, Item 3.

Regarding March 20, 2023 minutes, Vice Chair Andrew Alward noted an error regarding a sentence about Chief Coupe to be corrected as well as a sentence regarding 4 PPM which should say 4 parts per trillion.

On a motion made by Chairperson Jennifer Gill, seconded by Selectman Richard Bremilst, the Board voted 3-0-2 to approve the minutes from March 20, 2023 with noted changes, with Selectmen Maille and Barrett abstaining.

Regarding June 5, 2023 minutes, Vice Chair Andrew Alward noted a spelling error on page two and a motion made regarding a policy and town events discussion that was not voted on. He asked whether the text should remain bolded since there was no vote. Town Administrator Peter Caruso noted a grammatical error from Selectman to Selectmen.

On a motion made by Vice Chair Andrew Alward, seconded by Selectman Matthew Maille, the Board voted unanimously to approve the minutes from June 5, 2023 with amendments noted.

SELECTMEN'S REPORTS:

Selectman Barrett had nothing to report.

Selectman Bremilst had nothing to report.

Vice Chair Alward had nothing to report.

Chairperson Gill noted that she would not be present on the meeting scheduled for September 18, 2023.

Selectman Maille had nothing to report.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR REPORT:

Town Administrator reviewed the Metacommet invoice for FY24, showing \$116,000 with \$116,000 covered/reimbursed. He also reported that Cabot Insurance, which brokers the Town's liability insurance, suffered a data breach which may have included data of individuals in the Town who may have been named in their files. Cabot Insurance will reach out to any affected persons individually.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

On a motion made by Chairperson Jennifer Gill, seconded by Vice Chair Andrew Alward the Board voted unanimously to enter into Executive Session per MGL c.30A S21(a)(3) to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the Town and the chair so declares, regarding Police Teamsters Union Local 170.

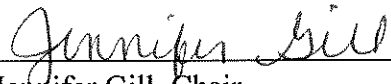
ADJOURNMENT:

On a motion made by Andrew Alward seconded by Richard Bremilst the Board voted unanimously to adjourn at 11:12 pm.


The next special purpose meeting of the Board of Selectmen is scheduled for Monday, August 21, 2023 over Zoom. The next regular meeting will be Tuesday, September 5, 2023.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dylan Lindholm
Recording Secretary


Jennifer Gill, Chair


Andrew Alward, Vice Chair


Roland Barrett, Member


Richard Bremilst, Member


Matthew Maille, Member