

## MOUNTAIN LAKES DISTRICT COMMISSIONERS MEETING

At the District Office with Zoom Access

January 9, 2023

**\*UNAPPROVED\***

**Call to Order:** Chair Bob Long called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

### Roll Call:

- **Board Members:** Bob Long, Mike Roberts and Mark Johanson present
- **Public Present In-Person:** Chris Roberts, Tom Mangels, Vinnie Sorrentino, Robert Roudebush, Linda Johanson, Dottie Long, Patricia Brady and Fred Garofalo.
- **Public Present via Zoom:** Brian Loutrel, Barb Stansfield, Seth Stansfield, Ken Huard, Mike Bonanno and Bill Clark.

### Approval of Minutes:

- **Dec. 12 Regular Meeting:** Mark Johanson moved to approve; Mike Roberts seconded and motion passed.
- **Dec. 21 Special Meeting:** Mike Roberts moved to approve; Mark Johanson seconded and motion passed.
- **Dec. 22 Special Meeting:** Mark Johanson moved to approve; Mike Roberts seconded and motion passed.

### District Business:

- **Manifests:** Mark Johanson moved to approve manifests from Dec. 12, 2022 to Jan. 9, 2023. Mike Roberts seconded and motion passed.
- **Financials & Water Bill Report:** The Commissioners reviewed the water bill collection report showing \$212,554.38 in water payments received since April 1, 2022, and noted monthly financial reports were part of the 2023 proposed Budget Packet.
- **2023 Proposed Budget:** Treasurer Robert Roudebush presented the proposed budget from the MLD Advisory Budget Committee. He noted the Public Budget Hearing will be held on Feb. 15 after the February Commissioners meeting and would be voted on at the MLD Annual Meeting on March 25. He thanked the Committee members for their hard work, thorough discussions, and informed opinions, then shared the comments from Committee member Brian Loutrel noting the District acknowledged the financial strain put on residents due to the COVID-19 pandemic and tightened its belt for the 2021 and 2022 budget, but now inflation has driven MLD costs up dramatically as reflected by the proposed 2023 budget.
- **District Cash Flow:** Bob Long explained that setting the Haverhill tax rate has been delayed, first due to a school meeting procedural issue, and now due to the Department of Revenue Administration (DRA)/Woodsville lawsuit. Without a tax rate, tax bills cannot be sent and MLD will not receive the December 2022 tax revenue check from the Town of Haverhill for an indefinite length of time. Haverhill select board chair Fred Garofalo said their Board will continue to push for the tax rate to be set; they are writing a letter to the DRA and he will send a copy of the letter to the MLD commissioners. After discussion of the limited funds in the MLD checking accounts, Bob Long moved to freeze all MLD spending except for payroll and benefit expenses, utilities and absolute emergencies. Mike Roberts seconded and the motion passed. ***The Commissioners will explore options, including appealing to residents to pay their water bills early and pay their December taxes based on last year's amounts, and drafting a letter to be sent to the DRA requesting the tax rate be set very soon.***
- **Winter Storm Elliott:** Bob Long shared photos and descriptions of the damages caused by the Dec. 23 storm high winds and flooding, including the roads and culverts washed out around the Lodge and pumphouse, the bulletin board by the flagpole blown over, beaches damaged by flooding, and the office building basement flooded when the sump pump system failed during the two day power outage. He said he received an estimate of about \$17,600 for all the dirt work that needs to be done. All of the damages will be submitted to MLD's property insurance carrier, which will probably pay for the office and bulleting board damage, but not the damage to the roads and culverts. He said FEMA disaster declaration is undetermined at this time, but data is being gathered and if declared, a portion of the dirt work expenses could be reimbursed. The Commissioners discussed setting emergency and communication procedures for future power outage events. Bob Long moved to create a new ad hoc committee to research and create emergency and communication procedures for future events; Mike Roberts seconded and the motion passed. ***Kristi Garofalo will put a request for volunteers in the DMAIL.***

**Maintenance Update:** Bob Long shared updates on the following projects:

- **Painting Office and Pool House:** Two quotes received, waiting on one more.
- **Pump House Connection Upgrade:** Working with Spectrum to install new, higher speed, secure connection.
- **Line Locate – Swiftwater:** Worked with Don Drew to find valve on Swiftwater to serve as a start point.

- **Ice Rink:** Liner was ready for water application, but Winter Storm Elliott winds and floods completely compromised it. It is frozen in a heap and cannot be straightened without the chance of damage, but will continue to monitor it.
- **Pool Electrical:** Work has been done and is now up to code!
- **Lead & Copper Testing:** All testing is done, all test results received, and all accepted by the state.
- **AEDs at the Lodge and Office:** Batteries and pads updated, registration with state complete.
- **Tree Removals:** Tree removals at pool to be done once Lake is frozen and funds are available.
- **In Process:** asset management inventory project, office cable upgrade project, water connections mapping, waiting on second quote for Lodge deck repair/upgrade RFP, fall brush hogging and water system valve clean-out in process and working on correcting issues with the WW&L meter at the pump house.

**Key Card Ad Hoc Report:** Mark Johanson shared the Pool Key Card Ad Hoc Committee's report to the Commissioners showing an estimated cost for a system to be around \$8,000 with pool cover, security cameras and lighting to be additional costs. The Committee's recommendations were to: 1) establish a Capital Reserve Fund with an initial deposit of \$10,000 in expectation of pool upgrades while continuing to research cost and equipment options if the decision is made to install a key card system before the pool is replaced and 2) sending a brief survey to the MLD community to determine actual pool usage, desired services, desired access options and what levels of financial commitment are acceptable to residents.

**Water Committee Update:** Committee members Patricia Brady and Mark Johanson reported most of the Water Committee meeting centered around the storm damage and future emergency communication. Patricia Brady said the MLD grant application for project funds is still in process and they were hoping to hear of the results next week. The Committee is working on two proposed water tariff amendments for the 2023 warrant and Water Emergency Repairs Report has figures for 2020, 2021, and 2022 with 2022's repairing totaling over \$18,000. They noted John Mitchell gathered readings at the start of the year from eight MLD house meters to start a database for future readings.

**Planning Board Update:** Mike Roberts said the Board met on Dec. 15 but did not have a quorum and the public hearing on the zoning ordinance amendments was rescheduled for Jan. 12. The Commissioners discussed an email from planning consultant Tara Bamford asking if the Commissioners wanted a contract for her work or wanted to continue without one as was currently being done. After discussion, the Commissioners agreed to continue without a contract as that was working well, and **Mike Roberts will inform Tara Bamford of the Board's decision.** Mike Roberts also shared that Planning Board member Don Dubrule will not continue on the Board after the 2023 Annual Meeting in March.

**Recreation Committee Update:** Linda Johanson reported the Rec Committee will not meet or have events in January, but they have two events in February – Valentine's Day social on Feb. 14 and WinterFest on Feb. 19. She said there will be a children's fishing derby on May 20 and more info to come on all the events for 2023.

#### **Action Items Review:**

Bob Long: Complete – got updated cost for house meters, now about \$300 per meter. In process – the ice rink at the Lodge is not looking good for use this winter but will monitor, working with Town regarding cars parked on roads during snowstorms and to get ATV rules in distribution format; working with John Mitchell to get additional quotes for beach bug treatment, but no other vendors willing to treat beaches found, may need to continue with 2022 vendor.

Mark Johanson: Complete – checked to make sure all tax sale auction signs were removed and okayed fee refund to auction company. In process – will contact cell service providers after zoning ordinance amendment is complete.

Mike Roberts: In process – will inform Planning Board members of Mike Bonanno's suggestion regarding cell towers.

**Old Business: NONE**

#### **New Business:**

- **Commissioner Election:** Mike Roberts said he will not seek re-election at the 2023 Annual Meeting.

Bob Long moved to adjourn; Mark Johanson seconded and motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 7:38pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Kristi Garofalo