

**Danby Town Board
Minutes of Public Hearing
May 8, 2013
Draft**

Present:

Supervisor: Ric Dietrich
Councilpersons: Leslie Connors, Kathy Halton, Dan Klein

Others Present:

Town Clerk Pamela Goddard
Code Officer Matt Cooper
Water District Carl Seamon, Tod Sukontarak, Skip Fairchild, Jack Hobbie
Public 10 residents, including Roos and Elaine Cortright, Polly McClure, Mary Grace O'Connor, Peter Fraissinet, Paul Ruhanan

The Public Hearing was opened at 7:03 pm

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that the Town Board of the Town of Danby, Tompkins County, New York, will meet at the West Danby Fire Hall at 47 Sylvan Lane, in West Danby, New York, on the 8th day of May, 2013, at 7:00 o'clock P.M., Prevailing Time, for the purpose of conducting a public hearing relating to the proposed improvement of the facilities of the West Danby Water District, consisting of the replacement and improvement of system flushing systems and hydrants, new water meters and meter reading systems, and a new 90,000 gallon water tank, together with all necessary improvements appurtenant thereto, including valves, hydrants, piping, and other assemblies, at an initial maximum estimated cost to said District of \$404,800, at which time and place said Town Board will hear all persons interested in the subject thereof concerning the same. The cost for the project is proposed to be paid from a grant award in the amount of \$404,800 as awarded by and through the NYS Community Block Grant Program, such that no financing or other long-term costs or debts are proposed to be incurred in connection with this project. The aforesaid project has been determined to be a Type I Action pursuant to the regulations of the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation promulgated pursuant to the State Environmental Quality Review Act, the implementation of which as proposed, will be subject to an environmental review at the afore-described public meeting.

Information, Questions and Answers

Ric Dietrich opened the meeting by introducing the key persons involved: Matt Cooper, project manager; Tod Sukontarak, West Danby Water District Operator; Carl Seamon, Water District Commissioner.

Cooper explained the need and purpose of the public hearing for the improvement project. A hearing is required by Town Law, as though the project was being funded by a Bond. All costs will be funded through the Grant Agency. There will be no cost to the taxpayers for this project. Therefore, the hearing may be used to address questions from residents within the Water District.

Sukontarak answered a question about water meters. A resident had a concern about the type of meter that might be used and whether electromagnetic meters would "leak radioactive" matter and make people sick. Sukontarak noted that no company or specific product has been chosen yet. Purchase of meters will go out to bid. The Water District hopes to use a type of meter which will facilitate a "remote reader system." There was a brief discussion about types of meters.

The same resident asked whether property owners would have the option to read their own meters? TS answered, would prefer not to do that. A Remote Reader System would save labor and assure some level of accuracy.

There were questions about logistics; what will happen and when? What is the outline for the project? Sukontarak and Cooper responded. The engineering firm, TG Miller, is currently doing survey work related to the new location of the tank. The firm is also researching different types of meters. While the timeline is still “rough”, the plan is for meters to be installed over the course of the summer. Tank replacement may start in October of 2013 and continue through the next spring.

A resident asked whether leak detection would improve. TS provided information about new meters, which will have leak detection and data log capability and will improve leak detection at the customer end of the system. In addition there will be shut off valves at the end of the lines in order to isolate sections for sonic detection of leaks. There will still be a problem with finding leaks over swampy areas.

There was a question about chlorine levels. TS response that the level during the past six months is better than it had been. The current water commissioners are sensitive to this issue and attempt to keep levels as low as possible.

There as a question about ability to flush lines: will this still be part of the process and when will infrastructure improvements for this take place? TS answered that new flushing valves will be installed at the end of the lines. The plan is to flush the system twice annually, ideally in April and August. The next flush will take place in June 2013. Tank replacement should remove a lot of the crud from the system.

There were some questions regarding the length of water access disruption during meter and tank replacement? TS answered that meters can be replaced in matter of hours, maybe even as quickly as 20 minutes. Seamon added that there should be a minimal outage of water during tank replacement.

A resident asked questions about fees and fee restructuring. TS said that the Water Commissioners would like to instate a fee structure to encourage water conservation. This won't be possible until there are working meters in every house. Sukontarak did not know what level of increase there might be. Water users may see an increase in the cost per gallon used, but this might be balanced by a reduction in water taxes. Customers in the West Danby Water District are still paying 1970s rates. One resident thought that rates should go up.

There was a question regarding whether there would be any change in water pressure, “at the faucet.” TS responded that the commissioners don't want to change pressure, as it is already high in some places. Some locations have reducing valves. In any case, this is a gravity feed system and there is no way to adjust pressure from the gravity feed.

A resident comment that pleased to see this project go forward and expressed gratitude to the Town for making this happen.

Adjournment

The Hearing was adjourned at 7:25 pm.

Pamela Goddard, Town Clerk