

**MERRIMACK VILLAGE DISTRICT
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
OCTOBER 20, 2025
MEETING MINUTES
(approved November 17, 2025)**

A regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners was conducted on Monday, October 20, 2025, at 5:03 p.m. at 2 Greens Pond Road, Merrimack, NH.

Donald Provencher, Chairman, presided:

Members of the Commission present: Erin Clement, Vice Chairman
Scott Sabens, Personnel Liaison
Dan Allen
Wolfram von Schoen

Members of the Commission Absent:

Also in Attendance: Ron Miner, Superintendent
Jill Lavoie, Business Manager
Kristen Maher, HR/Finance Director

FINANCE/HUMAN RESOURCES REVIEW

A. Analysis of Revenue and Expenditures

As of September 30, 2025, and three (3) months into the fiscal year, shown is revenue in the amount of \$2,444,600 (37.39% of budgeted amount) and expenses of \$1,310,863 (20.05%). Net Ordinary Income is \$1,133,736.

Accounts to call attention to include:

Revenue

40409 – Service Charge (Hydrant Hookup); temporary hydrant hookup has seen a significant increase mostly due to use of the Merrimack Outlets parking area for fairs, festivals, etc.

Expenses

60500 – Motor Vehicle Maintenance; All of our trucks have gone through their annual inspection. Wheel alignments have been added to the annual review/maintenance to increase the life expectancy of tires.

70010.2 – 120Water Software; although shown as a budget line item, grant funding is being sought as a potential means of covering some of the expense.

B. Capital Reserve Balance

Kristen Maher, HR/Finance Director, noted the accounts listed for the two new projects; Area 3 main line extension and Area 4&5 main line extension.

In terms of adding those in, the second project for Area 4&5 has been submitted. Although some operating funds will be utilized to address the next few invoices, most of the funds will come from that account. There is an ongoing reconciliation so what is expended will then be reimbursed to the operating account.

The Unassigned Fund Balance is at \$22,350,745. Actual cash is \$3,964,760 (16.4 % of fund balance). Total percentage considered fund balance is 62.0%.

Chair Provencher asked for clarification of the title “4&5” in the second column of the fund balance sheet, and was told that is water treatment 4&5; it represents funds remaining from the settlement (balance of five years of Operating & Maintenance (O&M) from Saint-Gobain).

Chair Provencher stated he had believed those funds were exhausted and that the last payment towards that settlement was received last year. Director Maher responded that the last payment was received last year. This is everything they have paid less any funds that have been pulled into the operating budget to address costs associated with activities occurring at 4&5.

Chair Provencher asked for clarification the \$488,845 identified remains and can be utilized. Director Maher stated those funds can be used for anything related to 4&5.

Asked about the media changeouts, Director Maher stated that is what she has budgeted for. It shows as a revenue coming in and expense going out (is a wash).

Commissioner von Schoen stated surprise with the amount remaining. He noted additional funds were expended for the initial project on top of the construction settlement. He is aware there were costs over what was originally planned for the five years. We projected the funds would only last 2 years.

Asked if a reconciliation would be helpful, Commissioner von Schoen stated we are five years into running it, had said the five years that were negotiated were not going to last five years, and we paid additional funds for the original construction beyond what they contributed. Where is the balance coming from?

Director Maher stated the \$106,900 included labor and all of that. Unfortunately, there was no way for us to transfer much of that back into operating. It is literally large items, e.g., media, if a pump went or a well needs to be redeveloped, that is coming out of there. The amount was made up of all of those types of items, and we never transferred funds over for labor, etc. or even the day to day.

Chair Provencher remarked that was \$106,900 per year for five years. The total would be \$534,500. Shown as a balance is \$488,845. Director Maher reiterated the only transfers that have occurred are for the costs of major items; have not transferred out all of O&M.

Commissioner von Schoen remarked we have not paid all operating and maintenance out of this fund. That would explain the balance.

Asked, Director Maher stated the escrow account is closed out.

Commissioner von Schoen stated the offer to reconcile this would be welcome. We have been saying to the public, for a long time, that these funds did not last anywhere near the five years, and here we are year 5. It probably didn't because we contributed from other accounts. It would be good to have those facts in black and white and readily available.

Director Maher stated she can reconcile the amount that came in and what the expenses are, but in terms of O&M for operating, there wasn't really a way for her to do that.

Jill Lavoie, Business Manager, commented you are speaking of electricity and those types of costs Director Maher added, including labor. She remarked we have been paying costs associated with O&M (out of the general operating budget), however, transfers from the account have only been made for big ticket items.

Commissioner von Schoen stated surprise that we would not be able to allocate the costs to treat for filtration. He remembers years ago the Board asked that we set this up so that it can be traceable understanding that the lawsuit was pending. He is assuming we have treatment staff and they are running on their own cost center, but we are not distinguishing which treatment plant they are allocated to.

Ron Miner, Superintendent, remarked we have estimated hours. Commissioner von Schoen remarked at a minimum we have 3 treatment plants so we can say 30% of our costs for staff in the treatment team is for that plant.

Director Maher stated if we go back and account for everything associated with 4&5, this amount would probably be depleted.

Commissioner von Schoen cautioned, were he a lawyer for the other side he would question where the numbers are for wells 4 and 5. He asked if we could produce those (expenses for treatment); labor when backflushing (people manning valves, etc.). When we work on the filtration part of the plant we should be able to trace that cost at all times. That was a request from 8 years ago because we knew that question would be coming.

Superintendent Miner spoke of data collected on work orders, water loss, etc. The information should be able to be gathered.

Commissioner von Schoen added he was not suggesting this information needs to be available tomorrow, but he would suggest having that number ready at least once a year. Sooner or later, someone will ask for that; for all 3 different filtration plants because they might be subject to different rulings.

Chair Provencher remarked it sounds like you have the media changeouts broken down per treatment plant but not necessarily the labor to implement. Superintendent Miner responded we

don't for labor but any time there is water, e.g., if we are backwashing, we do have the data for that because we give the water loss numbers.

Business Manager Lavoie added in a spreadsheet we have a color(?) for 4&5 vessel 1, media changeout, those are all leads out of the water loss report. Asked if the labor time per person is called out, she stated it is not.

Chair Provencher asked that the administration get back to the Board with a number. Commissioner von Schoen reiterated how you get to that number he does not think is important. It has to be a number that can be substantiated. If someone asks where the number comes from, we can identify it is 1/3 of our treatment operating costs, etc.

Commissioner von Schoen asked about the note associated with account #70100 – R&M Communication Equipment, where it says, “Sold radios in return for future work done”, and requested the administration report back, at the next meeting, on whether the situation up on the water tank was ever resolved; police, and town radio assistance?

Trust Activities

Director Maher stated she has been adding September activity for interest and fees. No other activity has been added.

C. Billing and Financial Software Update

Director Maher stated she has reconciled all beginning balances, all open purchase orders and is now looking at adding information on employees. There are two other things she needs to double check to be able to sign off that we are at a matching point between June 30 in QuickBooks and June 30 in the new software. From there, she will enter in the next month's activity. At the end of each month's activity, she will ensure we are balanced. It is hoped that come November she can start with the new software.

Asked if she is confident that everything is matching up with both systems, she stated our starting numbers are correct and now we can move forward. There are a few remaining items she will double check before officially signing off on the new software.

Asked if that would eliminate the other server need, Director Maher stated there will continue to be a need for QuickBooks because only this year's activity is being brought into the new system.

D. Audit Update

The final report has not yet been received. Final balances have been received. The auditors did submit our 535 (earliest every received). This being a new auditing firm, they did have a finding; GASB 87, which is a relatively new item that deals with leases. She misunderstood that it was leases of things where we were purchasing the lease but it is actually both ways and takes into account our cell tower leases. An adjustment was done that will re-account for the ending of last year. It is all behind the scenes audit adjustments.

There were a few inventory items; recalculations, but overall, the ins and outs are the same. There was one other finding that also happens to be a GASB item. Last year's amount was incorrect from the auditors and was adjusted back to last year as well.

The hope is that the final audit will be available by the end of this month. Director Maher spoke of being impressed with the work of the auditors.

Chair Provencher mentioned the discussion that occurred last month regarding billing cycles and the potential for change. Director Maher responded, given the time required to focus on the financials, she has not yet had the opportunity to look into that.

Chair Provencher remarked a while ago we had talked about the new billing software being able to send out different messages on customers' bills. He asked if a reminder could be sent out about salt use, etc. Director Maher stated the utility billing piece probably won't be up and running until February/March. When the switch is made, we will also be updating the website and users will need to update the portal. Asked if users would have to re-register, Director Maher stated they will have to re-register, but we will send information out.

Chair Provencher asked about the incentive to going with the dot gov address. Director Maher spoke of the increased difficulty in mimicking a dot gov address.

REGULAR SESSION

1. Superintendent's Report

Maintenance:

Treatment Facilities

- Wells 2&9 media changeout has been scheduled for removal on Tuesday, November 25th with Wells 4&5 to follow when the media is regenerated from 2&9.
- We will be out doing PFAS sampling on Thursday. Both distribution and media are due.
- Last month we had the interior of the Turkey Hill Tank cleaned (done about every 5 years). The sediment was minimal. Would expect to see even less at the next cleaning (we were still using well 3 for a time after the last cleaning).

An inspection report is generated with the service inside and out. The tank is in good shape. The exterior protective coating is in very good condition and the interior is in good overall condition as well. One thing we do need to address is the hatch seal; has a tear in it.

Chair Provencher asked if the Turkey Hill tank was drained to be cleaned, and was told it was cleaned by an individual entering the inside of the tank. Asked how we would go about draining that tank, Superintendent Miner stated there would have to be a temporary tank.

Commissioner von Schoen remarked he never realized there was no redundancy of it to do maintenance on it. He asked if that is not common practice. Superintendent Miner stated we are

fortunate that in our high service we actually have two tanks and can swap them when doing maintenance.

Distribution

- The annual flushing of high service is complete.

Leak repair Mainline/Entrance:

- American Leak Detection was the contractor that performed our leak detection survey. The area they surveyed was south of Amherst Road on fifty miles of pipe.
- Seven (7) leaks were found, and have all been repaired.
- We have a couple of demonstrations this week with vendors for continuous leak detection equipment, to replace our existing correlators.

Asked if the leaks were found on mains or service lines as well, Business Manager Lavoie stated it to be hydrant service, main line service; mostly leaks on curb stops.

Superintendent Miner explained with our current correlators, they have to be deployed at the valve and then retrieved to collect the data. If it hears something then you have to enter in the data. You have to know what is out in the distribution system besides at the main. It will pinpoint. Another step is going out and ground mic-ing it. We kind of identify where it is. The process is time consuming.

The new correlators will do the work. You can spread these correlators around and are not required to be out ground mic-ing. You still have to clean the valves as well. This will be something you can set out there and leave. It will just listen.

Asked, he stated the cost of those would be estimated for the budget process for next year.

Administrative:

PFAS Watermain Extensions (MVD)

- Wilson Hill, Mullikin, Palmeri and Gerard water main, hydrants, services to the property line along with temporary paving are all complete.
- Final trench patch, cleanup, and restoration for winter shutdown will happen this month. Originally construction manual said 4-6 days, but with weather conditions, etc. it will take a little longer.
- Farmer and Mason Road; both tap and sleeves are done and the crew is off Amherst Road and working on Farmer Road. They have had some ledge that was expected, but still decent progress.

- NHDES has an income driven program for hookups. The couple who voiced concern about not having personal funds to pay for the service connection work before being reimbursed at a previous meeting has been given information.
- Acme-undercoating using mineral oil, which is environmentally safe. Five trucks have been done at this time.

Asked about the cost of that undercoating, Business Manager Lavoie stated \$260-\$285/truck. Given that our trucks arrive with a good deal of sand in them; they are washed then undercoated and washed again. Because of that the cost was \$285/truck. Asked, she stated the recommendation to be every year, but it is dependent on weather conditions. Trucks would be reviewed to identify need.

- Salt reduction letters have been reviewed and are going out to all in the Wellhead Protection Area as an insert with bills and also attached to paperless email invoices.
- Spoke with Public Works Deputy Director, Leo Laviolette, about Sodium and Chloride sampling of surface waters or any results from sampling under their MS4 permit, and they do not have any. It is not required under their permit.
- The Energy Efficiency Evaluation is complete, and suggestions are being reviewed.

Business Manager Lavoie noted there was no charge for that.

- Mitchell Woods' report has been received and is being reviewed. It will be an agenda item in November.

Chair Provencher asked how the meeting with the residents for the connections over at Farmer and Mason Road went, and was told it turned out very well. Superintendent Miner commented that he felt the presenter did a good job.

Asked if the idea of adding sediment filters, an expansion tank, and pressure reducing valve was discussed, he indicated he had not seen the request until after the meeting. Asked if there is an opportunity to share that information with the abutters, Superintendent Miner stated he would discuss it with the inspector. Commissioner von Schoen commented on the small expense by homeowners to add the sediment filter, pressure meter and expansion tank. Speaking to anyone who might be listening, he remarked if you are part of that project you're well advised to add those three features.

Superintendent Miner added they are looking at ledge. To date, we have come in under budget on both projects. We're looking into what we can do to help out a homeowner if encountering ledge on the service side. Any funds remaining would otherwise be returned as they cannot be carried over into another project, etc. They are looking to determine if NH DES will be agreeable to that. The projects were walked last Friday. The inspector had called from Farmer Road. They were hammering out ledge at one of the services. If we leave the ledge, we will leave a wall for the next person. Vice Chair Clement commented it probably actually protects the water main too.

Superintendent Miner commented they had to hammer for the water main and services going over to the property line so they just hammered it out to this point and left it basically a wall. We’re going to ask the questions and see if we can’t do more and maybe carry it under the project. If it is going to be costly, the homeowner is not going to connect.

2. Board of Commissioners to review the minutes from the September 15, 2025, regular meeting and Non-Public session

Board of Commissioners Meeting September 15, 2025

The following amendment was offered:

Page 5, Line 6; insert “directional” before “drillers”

Board of Commissioners Meeting – **Non-Public**. September 15, 2025

**MOTION BY COMMISSIONER VON SCHOEN TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 15, 2025, AS AMENDED, AND THE NON-PUBLIC MINUTES, AS PRESENTED
MOTION SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER CLEMENT
MOTION CARRIED
5-0-0**

3. Board of Commissioners to review Action Items from previous meetings and those to be added from this meeting.

Item #2 - summary of outstanding Engineering Service Requests from Underwood and Emery & Garrett.

The information was included in the agenda packet. Chair Provencher spoke of the first line under Emery & Garrett’s summary; Mitchell Woods Large Groundwater Withdrawal where it shows a balance of \$9,100. He questioned if the decision, at the last workshop, was not to pursue that. Business Manager Lavoie stated the discussion was that we were waiting on the report. That will be reviewed in November.

On the same report, the 3rd item has a note: “District Wide Groundwater Monitoring” and the 5th item “District Wide Groundwater Level Monitoring”. He asked if one is water quality and the other water level, and was told that is the case. He suggested “Water Quality” be listed on the 3rd item.

The last item’s note is “Watershed Assistance”. Asked, Business Manager Lavoie stated that to be a watershed planning grant.

Item #87 – Salt reduction letter. Asked about the status of the School Board action, Business Manager Lavoie stated she followed up with School Board Chair, Lori Peters, but has not heard back as of yet. She sent her an email last week. She is aware legal is drawing up the letter.

Chair Provencher spoke of information he brought forward at the last meeting concerning having been contacted by an individual at NH DES asking if Merrimack has surface water sample results from Naticook Lake or Naticook Brook aquifer. It was stated that if sodium chlorides are elevated in surface waters it could be related to surface water quality violations implying that there may be more opportunity to forcefully address that through NH DES. The point that the individual at NH DES was making was that if they are exceeding surface water standards there could be more enforceability.

Chair Provencher stated James Emery, CEO/GZA/Emery & Garrett Groundwater Investigations, has indicated he does have surface water samples for sodium chloride. He will get that information together to share with him. Chair Provencher stated his belief was that the Board would want that information to be gathered and sent to NH DES.

Superintendent Miner questioned if that would change the Town’s MS4 permit.

Chair Provencher commented it sounds as though, if there are violations, NH DES can try to take some kind of action to address surface water sodium and chloride contamination. Mr. Emery did say he has dataloggers in Naticook Brook, Greens Pond, and Naticook Lake. Their conductivity you correlate to sodium and chloride. They are not direct measurements, but he has stated that they are accurately correlated and that is what he used in the sodium and chloride models.

Vice Chair Clement spoke of the 93 corridor and commented that if they feel that a waterbody is impaired it affects everyone who discharges to it if they have any type of permitting.

4. Old Business - None

5. New Business – None

6. Questions from the Public/Press – None

NON-PUBLIC

MOTION BY COMMISSIONER VON SCHOEN THAT THE BOARD, BY ROLL CALL, GO INTO NON-PUBLIC SESSION PURSUANT TO RSA 91-A:3 II (i) CONSIDERATION OF MATTERS RELATING TO THE PREPARATION FOR AND THE CARRYING OUT OF EMERGENCY FUNCTIONS

MOTION SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER ALLEN

A Viva Voce Roll Call Vote was taken, which resulted as follows:

Yea: Erin Clement, Scott Sabens, Dan Allen, Wolfram von Schoen, Don Provencher

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Nay:

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MOTION CARRIED

The Board entered non-public session at 6:00 p.m.

The Board reconvened at 6:38 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

**MOTION BY COMMISSIONER CLEMENT TO ADJOURN
MOTION SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER VON SCHOEN
MOTION CARRIED
5-0-0**

The October 20, 2025, meeting of the Board of Commissioners was adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

Submitted by Dawn MacMillan, Recording Secretary