

**QUEENSTOWN COMMISSIONERS
PRE-BUDGET WORK SESSION
March 16, 2017**

PRESENT: President Thomas B. Willis, Jr., Commissioner George L. Plumbo, Jr., and Commissioner Hogie Schuster. Also present, Acting Town Manager Mike Bowell, Town Engineer Robert Rauch, and Lane Cole, Public Works.

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER AT 11:20 A.M.

Purpose of this work session was to consider alternatives for operation of our water and wastewater facilities following the expiration of our current operations contract with Miller Environmental at the end of December 2017.

Mr. Rauch advised that there had been conversations and investigations for alternatives for contract services and town staffed operations. He had solicited prices on operations when the new plant was built and was to be put online. There had been a few prices submitted, and doesn't feel any additional solicitation is needed. Our contract with Miller automatically renewed as we missed the 90 day notice requirement that we would not renew our contract, and are thereby obligated to its terms until December 31, 2017.

White Marsh Environmental Systems, Inc., a subsidiary of Tidewater Utilities, is very experienced. They have excellent experience with membranes. They also submitted a price much less than Miller.

Mr. Rauch's recommendation is that the town is not ready for a town staffed facility. It is costly and there is not enough support. He strongly recommends going with Marsh at the end of our existing contract with Miller.

Mr. Bowell stated that Miller Environmental missed a Nitrate test in 2016, which caused the Town to have a violation with MDE. He is not sure at this time whether the town will be fined for this violation. Mr. Rauch doesn't think we will.

Mr. Rauch informed that he hopes to have the report from GMB on the polymer issue at the plant soon. He stated it looks like the problem will come back on Ovivo. Ovivo has indicated they will replace membrane if it is found to be their fault.

The Commissioners would like to meet with Marsh representatives in a closed session on March 22nd at 6:00 p.m. to discuss contract issues.

Mr. Rauch reported that he is meeting with USDA next week regarding funding for new tower, well, treatment facility, and replacement of some water lines. He is also looking into the MDE State Revolving Fund to see if any grants are available for that project. The project would take approximately one year from design to completion.

There being no further business to discuss, President Willis motioned to adjourn the meeting at 12:02 p.m. Motion seconded by Commissioner Plumbo. Vote: 3-aye, 0-nay.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Amy W. Moore".

Amy W. Moore
Town Clerk