

Gunstock Acres Village Water District
47 Cherry Valley Road, Gilford NH
Work Session Meeting September 2, 2026
Time: 5:30 pm
Location: Gilford Public Library

Attendees:

Commissioners: Lou Combe, Howard Epstein, Rich Haidul, Joe Geraci Absent: Brian McCall

Moderator: Bob Binda **Treasurer:** Todd Maddock **Resident Support:** Mara Maddock

Call to Order: 5:35 pm

Electrical/SCADA Services

- Introduction of Kyle Bernier (I/O Electrical, Concord NH): ~26 years in water industry with expertise in PLCs, VFDs, SCADA, and 24/7 service

Pricing and service

- Hourly rate is a firm \$175. Kyle agreed to lock in the \$175 hourly rate through the end of 2027 if an agreement were signed soon.
- For specific projects like a mixer installation, a fixed-price quote would be provided.

Motion to hire and agreement process

- A **motion** was made by Lou Combe to approve the hiring of I/O Electric. The approval is contingent upon the receipt and review of their proposed service agreement. Howard Epstein seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.
- Rich Haidul will reconcile I/O Electrical service contract with a draft contract Rich had previously prepared.
- The relationship was clarified as a preferred vendor agreement rather than a retainer, meaning there is no cost if his services are not used.

Water Operator (LRW) contract review and approval

- Approval of new hourly labor rates
 - The group reviewed proposed changes to the hourly labor rates.
 - A **motion** was made by Lou Combe to accept a rate of \$175 per hour for senior labor and \$145 per hour for junior labor. Howard seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
- Discussion of services included in the monthly service fee. The contract references defined contracted services, but these services are not clearly listed within the main

body of the document. Appendix B intended to outline services covered by the monthly fee requires updates to be more thorough and accurate.

- Agreement that the list of services needs to be collaboratively updated in Appendix B to ensure clarity for both parties before the contract is finalized, including tasks like cleaning the pump house station and grounds maintenance.
- Approval of monthly service fee with a proposed increase from the current \$6,750 to \$8,000
 - A **motion** was made to approve a monthly maintenance payment of \$8,000. The approval was contingent on the finalization of service costs to be detailed in Appendix B, with input required from Rich Haidul and Tom Mason, and others. An amendment was added to the motion, requiring that the defined contract services be finalized within 30 days, or by the next meeting if it is sooner. The motion was seconded by Lou Combe. Motion passed with 3 yes and 1 no (Howard Epstein)

Water Operator (LRW) update on various ongoing issues

- Water pressure issues on Foxglove
 - To address complaints about low water pressure, a valve was dug up and fixed, and another valve was shut off. All houses on Foxglove, including three specific houses and the one that had complained, have been moved to the high-pressure side.
 - Residents are reportedly happy with the increased water pressure, as they already had pressure adjustment valves in their homes.
- Planned and completed repairs
 - Pump Station 6: Parts have been acquired to replace a failed gate valve near pump station six
 - 28 Briarcliff: A plan was confirmed to address a curb stop issue. A new valve will be installed in a grassy area of the resident's U-shaped driveway, about three or four feet from the road, to clearly define the point of ownership. The resident agreed to the plan.
 - 14 Greenleaf: A new service connection is ready for a modular home on Greenleaf, and the resident has paid for it.
- Water main extension for new development on Briarcliff
 - Concern is how to extend the water main from the cul-de-sac to the new homes. It is unclear how two existing older homes beyond the cul-de-sac currently receive water. Tom Mason will investigate and report back to the Commissioners.

Approval of overdue invoices

- The board reviewed and approved several outstanding bills. To proceed with payments, it was noted that W-9 forms are required from the vendors.
 - A **motion** was made by Joe Geraci to pay Andre for Seal Coating \$4,900 for emergency paving. Lou Combe seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
 - A **motion** was made by Joe Geraci to pay Ralph Scribner \$190 for sanding and salting pump stations. Lou Combe seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Discussion of Future Billing Models, Precinct Tax, and Rate Structure

- The board explored four potential models for future billing, discussing the pros and cons of each. The goal is to establish a fairer and more sustainable system.
 - Four billing possibilities presented:
 - Current process: a flat rate combined with a precinct tax based on house value, considered unfair as billing is not tied to usage.
 - Flat rate with non-standard usage: a base flat rate with additional charges for high-usage items like sprinklers, pools, or ADUs, requiring billing codes and rates for each non-standard item.
 - Meter-based usage: bills based directly on water consumption, seen as fairest and promoting conservation has potentially high implementation cost.
 - Simple flat rate: the total budgeted costs divided equally among all houses is easier to administrate but doesn't promote conservation.
 - Financial analysis of billing scenarios was presented by Mara Maddock using data from the 2026 town billing manifest to provide concrete figures for the discussion.
 - Current connection breakdown is: Residential home connections: 620, Duplex connections: 2, Commercial connections: 2, Estimated land-only connections: 117 (based on \$25,740 in revenue divided by a \$220 fee).

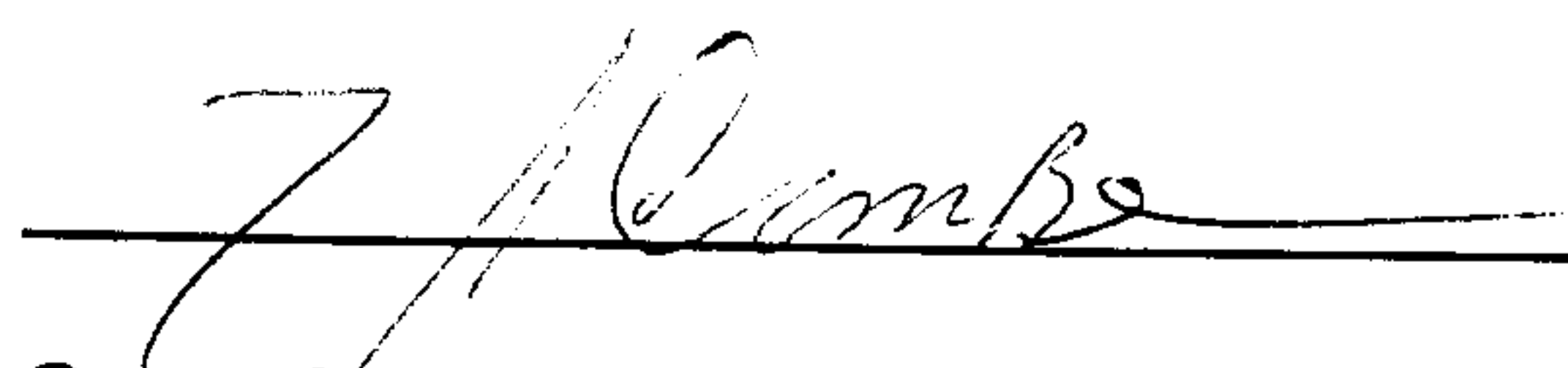
Summary of discussion points:

- **Precinct Tax:** There was a strong consensus to "get rid of the precinct tax" for water services. Rich Haidul argued that water is a utility and taxing it based on property value is inequitable and potentially inappropriate, especially as rising property values magnify the tax burden.
- **Land-Only Parcels:** The group debated the fairness of charging land-only parcels an annual fee. An emerging consensus favored eliminating the annual

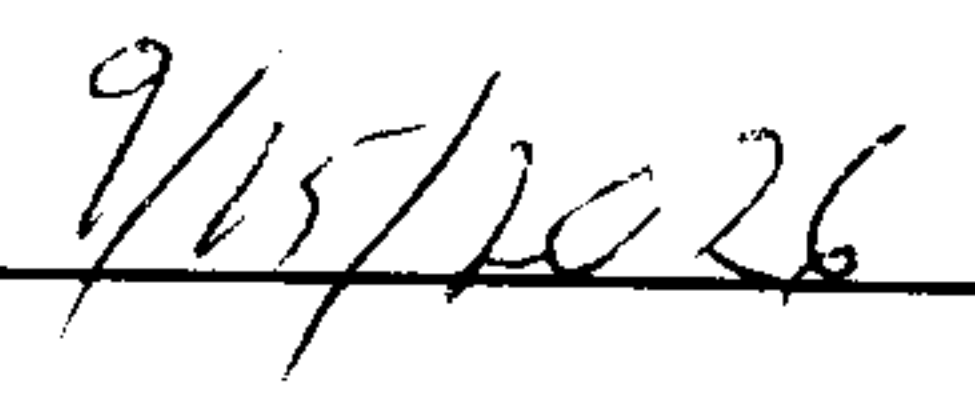
fee and replacing it with a one-time "membership/capital improvement" fee (ideas ranged from \$3,500 to \$7,000) to be paid upon connection.

- **Flat Rate vs. Metering:** The discussion leaned towards transitioning to a uniform flat-rate system after eliminating the precinct tax. Metering was acknowledged as likely inevitable within 3-5 years with conservation concerns but not an immediate priority, citing significant upcoming capital expenses required for new lines and pump station improvements. Meter implementation cost unknown; a formal, updated study is needed to quantify the expense.
- **Billing Frequency:** To address cash flow deficits (expenses in the first half of the year, revenue in the second), the group will explore moving to twice-yearly billing with timing to be discussed.
- **Budget and capital funding:** The need for increased revenue to fund capital expenditures not adequately covered by the current budget was discussed. Major upcoming projects, such as the work on Pump Station 7 will likely require borrowing or bonding.
- **Financial/Legal Implications:** Bob Binda raised concerns that removing taxing authority could affect bond ratings and interest rates.
- **Decisions made:**
 - No formal votes were taken, but there was general agreement to pursue the elimination of the precinct tax and the annual land-only fee, moving towards a flat-rate model with a future connection fee for new builds.
 - Any new billing model must account for projected increases in revenue requirements to address significant capital needs.
 - The group decided to seek legal and financial guidance before implementing any changes and to continue discussions.

Meeting adjourned 7:50 pm



Commissioner



Date