

# DORSET FIRE DISTRICT No. 1

---



SPECIAL MEETING  
OCTOBER 16, 2017

# Tonight's Meeting

---

1. Status of water system improvements
2. Importance of water system improvements
3. Purpose and explanation of district bylaws amendments
4. Open discussion
5. Vote on bylaw amendments

# Water System Improvements

---

## Current projects

- metering station
- supplemental water supply

## Future projects

- system-wide replacement of service lines
- water usage meters

# System Monitoring Station

---

**Daily chlorine readings now required by state of Vermont**

**Monitoring station to reside near start of distribution system**

- base of reservoir access road (Dorset West Rd. and Church St.)

**Water consumption data will be used to estimate leakage rate**

- readings in middle of night can be extrapolated into leakage rate

**Project status**

- design is 80% complete
- researching the necessity for a property easement is in progress
- construction expected to begin this fall

# Supplemental Water Supply

---

**Water shortages have occurred 2 out of last 3 years**

**State of VT is requiring additional supply to lift their moratorium**

## **Project status**

- well site determined – Cheney Rd.
- lease agreements signed with 1 of 2 property owners (2<sup>nd</sup> signing pending)
- source permit application process will begin immediately thereafter
- test well to be drilled after permit, comment period & potential public hearing
- estimated completion date: fall 2018

# New Service Lines

---

**Service lines are the responsibility of property owners**

**Due to poor condition of service lines, project should be taken on by water district**

**Construction could be coordinated with meter installation**

**A limited number of service lines have already been updated**

# Water Meters

---

**Meters are our only way to achieve:**

- fees based on water consumption
- financial motivation to conserve water

**Meter data will provide accurate leak vs. consumption ratio**

**Meter installation will likely be coordinated with new service lines**

# Financing System Improvements

---

## Planning loan program provides 5-year, 0% interest loan

- source exploration and design of construction projects
- covers permitting, drilling and testing of well
- can be rolled into a construction loan
- loan application has been submitted and approved

## Construction loan program provides 20-year, 3% interest loan

- funded by EPA (susceptible to federal budget cuts)
- will cover connecting Cheney Rd. well to system, new service lines and meters
- currently in a priority queue for a construction loan
- VT Municipal Bond Bank is another source of funding if EPA funding process too slow



# System Improvement Costs

---

## Preliminary estimates for system improvements

- metering station: \$60,000
- supplemental water: \$400,000
- water meters: \$150,000
- new service lines: \$600,000
- TOTAL \$1,210,000

## Funding estimates

- assuming 20 year loan, 3% interest, 187 customers
- average annual user cost of improvements: \$427

# Comparative Water Costs

---

## Average fees of similar small water systems

- Dorset (179 users): \$696
- East Dorset (82 users): \$731
- Arlington (406 users): \$622

## Vermont statewide annual average

- \$850 to \$1,500

# Importance of Improvements

---

**System improvements have been deferred for many years**

**State of Vermont has placed a moratorium on...**

- new users on the water system
- additional water usage by existing users

**Results of this moratorium:**

- home additions including a bedroom will not receive a waste water permit
- business expansion that includes water usage will not receive a permit

**Aging system and moratorium have negative effect on property values**

# Purpose of Bylaws Changes

---

## Provide incentive for users to remain on the water system

- ~~179~~ 178 users currently on water system
- estimated 35 properties have parcels large enough to drill a private well
- ~~2~~ 3 customers have been lost over the past 12 months
- users who leave the system increase the burden on all others

**The prudential board unanimously recommends voters approve these bylaw changes**

# Summary of Amendments

---

**Properties connected to the water system shall not be permitted to voluntarily disconnect**

- permission must be obtained from Prudential Board

**Users converting to a private water source shall continue to pay an infrastructure availability fee**

- fee is equal to the then-current total annual water fee for property

# Discussion

---

Questions/comments/concerns

# Vote On Bylaw Amendments

---

## Qualifications to vote:

- registered voter with the Town of Dorset
- resident of Dorset Fire District #1

## Floor vote