

MONKTON SELECTBOARD SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, June 13th, 2025

Final

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Jessica Demeritt at 6:02pm.

ATTENDANCE

Members in attendance: Jessica Demeritt (Chair), Joe Szarejko, Sam Peisch, John Dunham

Members absent: Walter Crandall (Vice-Chair)

Others in attendance: Stan Wilbur (Town Administrator), Jaime Schulte (Acting Recording Secretary), Nathan Palmer, Jane Palmer.

PUBLIC COMMENT

The Palmers offered to provide their knowledge of the VT Gas pipeline as it may be helpful to the Select Board.

NEW BUSINESS

VERMONT GAS CASE POINT PERSON

Discussing what our point person, John Dunham, should focus on. Monkton may want to join with New Haven and Cindy Hill's efforts on these topics. There were two topics in particular that would seem straightforward to join.

- 1) Failure to compact fill over the pipeline, especially over road crossings and in town rights of way. Monkton's roads are crossed by the pipeline in nine locations, so that could be significant. It crosses Old Stage Rd. three times, but some of it is outside of the town ROW. J. Szarejko and S. Peisch expressed support for J. Dunham as point person and support for pursuing this with New Haven.
- 2) The other point brought up was the trench breakers, which are to prevent water from following the line of the pipe. Need to make sure these are installed correctly where they could protect roads/ROWs. J. Palmer added that it isn't possible to compact the disturbed soil in the pipeline trench to the degree it was compacted originally, so the trench breakers stack up like a sandbag wall to keep water from finding that softer soil and flowing down the trench. It may not solve the problem of erosion, but does slow water down. These may not have been installed appropriately in needed locations.

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DRAFT

Other items discussed:

- a) It was brought up at the last meeting that operating the pipeline at lower pressure (current pressure) might be one way to move forward with the potentially defective nature of the installation. The Board felt that this was a reasonable angle to pursue, if New Haven's attorney wanted to take up that concept. We will shadow New Haven's approach.
- b) It would be helpful to map the actual depth of the pipeline in Monkton. N. Palmer mentioned that in past testimony it was stated that the pipe has come up by 10" in places, which is something to be aware of when plowing your fields. The pipe does move.
- c) Faulty sleeves and anodes were also mentioned. J. Dunham thought what is most important is to know where (or if) faulty sleeves are located in Monkton.
- d) S. Peisch mentioned that a licensed engineer would need to be present for any repairs.
- e) J. Schulte mentioned Ivor Hughes' comment from the last Select Board meeting that there is a development happening on Pond Rd. which will need to do drilling underneath the pipeline for a septic line. I. Hughes recommended that a representative from VT Gas be present for that work. That development just received Act 250 approval and appears to be moving forward.
- f) The majority of the VELCO power line is co-located with the VT Gas pipeline, so any future incident could damage the power line as well.

The Board discussed what J. Dunham's role/scope would be as the point person for this topic and what the Town might need to do to remain an active intervenor.

ADJOURNMENT

J. Dunham moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:35pm. S. Peisch seconded. The vote passed, 4-0-0.

Respectfully submitted,
Jaime Schulte