

LANESBOROUGH VILLAGE FIRE AND WATER DISTRICT
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BOARD OF COMMISSIONER'S MEETING
20 Bridge Street, 6:00 p.m.

March 05, 2026

The Lanesborough Village Fire and Water District held its regular meeting at 20 Bridge Street, Lanesborough, Massachusetts on March 05, 2026 at 6:00 p.m.

Roll call: Present: William Prendergast, Chair; Mary Reilly, Board Member; Aaron Williams, Board Member; Mark Siegars, District Counsel; Kevin Swail, Superintendent; Katie Lemanski, Treasurer; Cindy Roughley, Clerk.

Also present: Linda Pruyne, Mark Bashara, James Rathbun, Tom Voisin, Gerry Robichaud, Karen Bartow, Paula Messana, Scott Graves, Norma Barnes, Jason Breault, John Allen

William Prendergast opened the meeting at 6:00 p.m. Mr. Prendergast stated that the Board is trying to have one evening meeting per quarter to accommodate residents and that the meetings held in the daytime are so that the Board can meet with the vendors.

1. The warrant and payroll warrant for February were reviewed and signed.
2. The minutes from the regular meeting of February 06, 2026 were reviewed. There was a typo on the time, which will be fixed for the record. Mary Reilly made a motion to accept the minutes with the fixed time. Aaron Williams seconded the motion. All in favor, motion carried.
3. Mr. James Rathbun expressed concern about the Water District and the Town's budget becoming unsustainable. He stated there are 896 seniors in town and the costs are becoming a tipping point for them. He suggested taking a step back. James Rathbun stated that he looked at the asset management plan that showed a \$1,544.11 water rate. Mary Reilly stated that the asset management plan is a projection only and a recommendation from the engineers, not set in stone for the rates.

James Rathbun suggested that things need to be readjusted for seniors as those residents are in a tough place with increases in taxes and water rates.

Mary Reilly stated that the Water District is independent from the Town.

Linda Pruyne mentioned that there is a tax exemption in place and that it was increased for seniors. The water rate was not raised as much as Tighe and Bond recommended.

James Rathbun mentioned that the elderly are proud people and are embarrassed to have to give all of their financial information to get the exemption.

Linda Pruyne stated that seniors have to prove income for all other discounts.

Tom Voisin suggested that the Water District should use the town census information and to bill by the number of people in the house from the census.

Aaron Williams stated that the infrastructure costs are the same no matter how many customers are in the district.

Mark Bushara asked how does the district monitor for leaks and waste. Kevin Swail confirmed that the power is still connected for the well at the Water District for monitoring purposes. Kevin Swail stated that leaks are monitored. Mr. Bushara suggested that meters would help track leaks or waste and meters could be read remotely. Mr. Prendergast stated that the current meters have to have someone go and read them. Paula Messana suggested there are meters that can transmit the data.

Mary Reilly stated that the billing is based on buying the ability to get the water and not based on usage. William Prendergast stated that the water loss that has been monitored is acceptable and meets the State's requirements.

Mark Bushara asked how much would the meters cost and what would be the cost for the owner. William Prendergast stated the this would be found out by the annual meeting. RCAP is doing the rate study and should be finished by then.

Mark Siegars stated that the District is always looking for grants to help with expenses. Mark Bushara suggested that the District work with State Reps and Senators also.

James Rathbun expressed that he wants to go line by line with the Board to review the budget. Mark Siegars suggested that the Board and Mr. Rathbun have a meeting to discuss the budget.

Linda Pruyne mentioned that administrative costs increase every year and those should also be taken into consideration.

Aaron Williams mentioned that the budget accounts for proper maintenance of the Water District and deferred maintenance issues. The State paid for the asset management plan.

William Prendergast stated a date for a meeting with Mr. Rathbun to discuss the budget items will be determined.

4. There were no disputes.
5. Abatements: A request for an abatement for 149 Old State Road has been tabled for the next meeting.
6. Zoning map update: Mark Seigars stated that the property owned by the Water District has been added to the map.
7. Miner Road project update: there are no updates. This item to be removed from the agenda for now.
8. Website update: Cindy Roughley reported that there were 230 visitors to the website in the last month. The request for keeping fire hydrants clear has been added to the home page.
9. Financial policies: Katie Lemanski presented three financial policies for review and approval: Accounts payable and disbursements, reimbursement, and audit policies. Aaron Williams made a motion to approve the policies. Mary Reilly seconded the motion. All in favor, motion carried.
10. Treasurer's Report: Katie Lemanski reported that there was \$ 65,696.73 in outstanding revenues. The auditor will be coming soon. Still working on policies for review and approval. Free cash was certified for \$ 180,033 for the year. The Fiscal year 2026 departmental transfers were approved and signed.

11. Budget items: the budget was discussed. Kevin Swail suggested that the Assistant Superintendent position be kept in the budget. He would suggest hiring for a Water District Operator to fill the open position for now.
12. The annual meeting to be added to the next meeting agenda for discussion.
13. Federal grants and loans: Mark Siegars reported Tighe and Bond has been moving along with the WEP application.
14. Legal issues/Mall billing: Mark Siegars reported that the litigation with the mall owners continues. Kevin Swail reported that he is waiting for better weather in order to shut off the water at the mall.
15. MA Rural Water Association recovery for PFAS class action lawsuit update: Mark Siegars stated that the district is waiting for more checks.
16. Superintendent's report: Kevin Swail reported that he has been dealing with frozen pipes. Most recently a pipe on Algonquin Street. The main did not freeze.
17. The date for the next meeting is Friday, April 03, 2026 at 10:00 a.m.
18. The date for a meeting with James Rathbun was discussed. Mary Reilly to reach out to Mr. Rathbun about either March 20, 2026 or March 27, 2026 at 10:00 a.m. and to confirm one of those dates.
19. William Prendergast adjourned the meeting at 8:30 p.m.