

Joint Meeting of the Northfield Electric and Water & Wastewater Commissions Minutes of June 1, 2026

Roll Call. Utility Commissioners Tim Davis, Dennis Donahue, Steve Fitzhugh, Michael Kelley, and John Stevens (absent). Also present were Town Manager Mary Smith, Utility Superintendent James Russo, Michael Miller, and Gerard LaVarnway.

The meeting started at 6:30 p.m.

Approval of Minutes from Previous Meeting. Motion by Mr. Donahue, seconded by Mr. Davis, to approve the minutes of May 4. One correction: Mr. Kelley was not present at this meeting. **Motion passed 4-0-0.**

Meeting of the Electric Commission

Northfield Electric Department (NED) Project Status

Grid Resiliency Grant. Mr. Fitzhugh was able to revise the project budget and has prepared the documentation for Manager Smith's signature. We probably won't be seeing the grant funds until sometime next year.

The Veterans Place Tier 3 Project. Mr. Fitzhugh said the contract for energy efficiency work at The Veterans Place's Vine Street location has been finalized and also is ready for Manager Smith's signature

King Street Battery Storage Project. Mr. Fitzhugh said the project is moving forward and Lightshift will be moving in the trailers for battery storage this August. NED will need to have its interconnections done before then. The current plan is to have the site operational by mid-September and this will help with NED future transmissions costs.

King Street Substation Reclosers. Mr. Fitzhugh said Green Mountain Power (GMP) will be issuing a report soon on the recent substation repairs.

Utility Pole Realignment Project. Mr. Fitzhugh reported that a new temporary pole was installed when the railroad was out of service due to blasting. We are still waiting for the Certificate of Public Good in order to put in permanent poles to replaced the ones that are threatened by river erosion. The Act 248 process is still moving slow but sure.

Main Street Bridge Replacement Project. Mr. Fitzhugh said that the makeready work prior to next year's bridge replacement is close to being completed. The overhead lines should be taken down soon as the underground lines are all set. Mr. Russo said GMP would be doing the switchover on East Street early tomorrow morning.

Integrated Resource Plan (IRP). Mr. Fitzhugh said the MOU is nearly completed and should be ready for submission by the June 22, 2026 deadline.

Smart Meters. Mr. Fitzhugh said a lot of the groundwork has been done and we should be ready to start testing the new water meters soon.

Darn Tough Efficiency Upgrade. Mr. Fitzhugh said Darn Tough received a \$650,000 revolving loan grant through the efforts of Senator Bernie Sanders' office in order to make their facilities more energy efficient. After some delay, the paperwork should be ready for municipal approval soon.

Norwich University (NU) Cyber Fusion Center. Mr. Fitzhugh said NU has submitted an application for an Act 248 Certificate of Public Good related to the installation of solar panels on the roof of its new building. He felt this application should be approved without too much trouble.

Turkey Hill Net Metering Customer. Mr. Fitzhugh said the State of Vermont said that NED was not collecting information properly regarding one of its Turkey Hill customers who is generating solar power. Mr. Fitzhugh contacted GMP regarding the state-approved method they use and we will put the same process in place. This will only affect one NED customer for now but there might be additional ones in future.

Other Business. It was noted that a tree scheduled for removal later this week fell down this past weekend and took down some power lines. This was really bad timing. Mr. Fitzhugh said NED does the best it can with its tree trimming/removal program but some property owners really don't want some trees taken down.

Meeting of the Water & Wastewater Commission

Northfield Water & Sewer Department Project Status

Cheney Field Water Tank Replacement Project. Mr. Russo said he and Manager Smith would be doing the final walkthrough with the project contractor this Wednesday afternoon. All the work on the project has been completed, including painting the new water tank, restoring the worksite to its former condition, etc.

Main Street Waterline Installation Project. Mr. Russo said the work on this project is nearly complete with affected lawns restored, the testing of new mains before they are put into service, etc. The final walkthrough for this project will be scheduled once all the remaining work has been completed.

Cross Brothers Dam Removal. Manager Smith noted that after some delays the dam removal really will happen this year. Bids for this project were due May 21, 2026 and the Select Board will award the project at their next meeting (06/09/26). The recommended contractor has significant experience with similar dam removal projects and this should prevent serious disruptions of normal downtown operations. Mr. Fitzhugh felt restoring the Dog River's normal flow should facilitate the nearby bridge replacement project.

New Water Main Installation. Mr. Russo reported that the installation of new water mains on Pearl Street and School Street should start this month and the work should be completed by this September.

Other Business. Mr. Russo noted that the utility departments now have a couple of new pre-owned vehicles: an excavator and a bucket truck.

Adjournment. Motion by Mr. Fitzhugh, seconded by Mr. Davis, to adjourn. **Motion passed 4-0-0.**

The Board adjourned at 7:06 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kenneth L. McCann

Kenneth L. McCann, Acting Clerk