

# Water Supply District of Acton

693 MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE  
P.O. BOX 953  
ACTON, MASSACHUSETTS 01720

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Board of Water Commissioners  
Meeting Minutes  
693 Massachusetts Avenue, Acton MA  
Monday, February 26, 2018

## A. Comments from Citizens

## B. Approve Minutes of February 12th Meeting

## C. OLD BUSINESS:

1. Discussion of Automated Meter Reading (AMR) Technology
2. Update on Status of Micro-Grid Feasibility Study Grant

## D. NEW BUSINESS:

1. Discussion of the DRAFT Master Plan Update

### Present at Tonight's Meeting:

Commissioners: Ronald Parenti, Leonard Phillips (Chairman), Stephen Stuntz

District Manager: Chris Allen

District Treasurer: Mary Jo Bates

District Counsel: Mary Bassett

Commissioners Secretary: Lynn Protasowicki

Finance Committee: David Butler (via phone)

WLMAC: Barry Rosen, John Cipar

### Citizens:

Paul Elliot, 367 Arlington Street

Danny Factor, Attorney, 11 Davis Road A5

Carolyn Kiely, 11 Parkland Lane

Erika Amir-Lin, 534 Old Stone Brook

Terra Friedrichs, 627 Mass Ave

The Board of Water Commissioners meeting was called to order at 7:30 PM on Monday, February 26, 2018 at the Acton Water District office by Mr. Phillips.

## A. Comments from Citizens.

No comments tonight.

## B. Approve Minutes of February 12th Meeting.

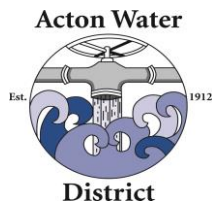
Mr. Phillips made a motion to approve the modified minutes of February 12, 2018. It was seconded by Mr. Stuntz and unanimously approved.

## C. OLD BUSINESS:

### *1. Discussion of Automated Meter Reading Technology.*

Mr. Phillips stated that Mr. Parenti distributed a draft of his scientific research on SMART meters and is with Mr. Allen to review. Once finalized, Mr. Phillips would like to have these findings posted on the District website. Mr. Parenti stated that this paper will help educate the residents of Acton about SMART meters.

All documents referred to in meeting minutes are available for inspection at the office of Acton Water District, 693 Massachusetts Avenue, Acton, MA 01720 (978) 263-9107.



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Mr. Elliot stated that there are hundreds of municipalities in US that have opt-out programs including in WI, VT, CA, and AZ. He stated that Dr. David Carpenter, a public health physician who serves as director of the Institute for Health and the Environment, a Collaborating Center of the World Health Organization, as well as a professor of environmental health sciences at University at Albany's School of Public Health, is a well-respected authority who wrote a research paper on electromagnetic pull and Mr. Elliot believes what he has written. He notes that while this topic is controversial it is more reason to give customers a choice. He also mentioned that the State of California put out an official document talking about the health concerns from the exposure of smart phones. He firmly believes that the District should give the residents a choice to opt out.

Ms. Friedrichs stated that progressive minded towns offer an opt-out program. Ms. Friedrichs stated that this is about choice and not about health impacts. She is happy to pay a monthly fee. Ms. Friedrichs then presented to the Commissioners her proposed SMART meter program for Acton and also handed over the opt-out program from Madison Water Utility. She appreciates the District's willingness to work with these concerns.

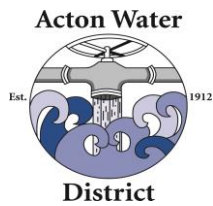
Mr. Stuntz asked Ms. Friedrichs, if the District offered an opt-out program, would she want an outside meter installed. Ms. Friedrichs is not sure; she may try an outside one but would prefer it inside so she could easily monitor it. Mr. Elliot would choose any of them as long as there is the choice for an opt-out program.

Mr. Factor stated that he lives in Acton but was retained as an Attorney by Ms. Friedrichs to discuss legal issues raised by these SMART meters. He stated that it's not about proving that SMART meters will cause irreparable harm but he can't say that they don't cause health concerns. It's our hope that the District will provide an opt-out program and be responsive as they can to their customers, to people who see the benefits and respecting the rights of people to have an opt-out program. The concerns that have been made about SMART meters and fire hazards; health concerns; concerns about information collected, used and shared and concerns of the accuracy of the information. All these facts should give the Commissioners pause to think about offering their customers the choice to take part in a SMART meter program and a choice to opt-out of a SMART meter program.

Mr. Phillips stated that the strategic mission of the District is to provide water to all residents who are connected to us. The District goes to extraordinary lengths to have good clean water, meet all state and federal regulations and in terms of the meters, there have been advances in technology that have given us the option of do this more efficiently and effectively and keep costs down and to give the customer better service and more frequent meter readings. The facts are that we are only 10 households away from completely installing these new meters at every customer's property. The situation we are in is very tactical. We want to address the water takers concerns but we are faced with the fiscal reality of minimizing costs and maximizing security.

Mr. Parenti stated that if the District offers an opt-out program and allows customers the opportunity to change out the new meters that the District has already installed, this will cause a large financial problem to the District. Mr. Allen stated that the District has already invested over \$1 million into this program and are at the tail end of upgrading all customers to new meters. There are only 10 customers left who have not made the switch. Counselor Bassett also reiterated that over 6,500 meters have been replaced and to go back now and reconfigure the whole program is not cost effective.

Mr. Stuntz asked Mr. Parenti and Mr. Phillips if they are for or against an opt-out program. Mr. Parenti stated that based upon his scientific knowledge and research that there is no justification for an opt-out program. Mr. Phillips understands that there are concerns regarding these SMART meters and believes that there should be an opt-out program. Mr. Phillips stated that the Commissioners need to address the possibility of an opt-out



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program; we need to agree on what the program will be; we need to give options and cost each of them out; and also determine what the program will cost to customers.

Mr. Allen stated that he would like to review each request on a case by case basis instead of adopting a new opt-out program. Mr. Allen mentioned that he just needs to figure out the options; he is thinking there will be two — the customer installs a pit meter buried exterior to the home or the transmitter/transponder mounted on the outside of the house. These are still RF meter options. Ms. Friedrichs still would like a no-RF meter. Mr. Allen will research available options with the meter supplier, and report back at the next open meeting on March 12<sup>th</sup>.

## *2. Update on the Micro-Grid Feasibility Study Grant.*

Mr. Allen informed the Commissioners that the District was awarded a grant for the micro-grid feasibility study. He notified Margaret Campbell, who was the consultant on this project but who is now an employee of Gro Solar, that the District received the grant. Gro Solar is working it out internally as to how Ms. Campbell can be the Project Manager on this project, since she was the primary contact on the application to the state of MA.

## **D. NEW BUSINESS:**

### *1. Discussion of the DRAFT Master Plan Update.*

Mr. Allen informed the Commissioners that a draft of the Master Plan update is ready to be reviewed by them for their comments and edits. He had Bob Murch, IT Manager, email an invitation on Dropbox for the document. He will put it on a thumb drive for each of them to review at their convenience. He mentioned that District personnel have begun to edit the document.

*Mr. Phillips moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:15 PM and it was unanimously approved.*