

Board of Water Commissioners  
Meeting Minutes  
Acton Memorial Library, Meeting Room A,  
486 Main Street, Acton, MA  
Monday, September 9, 2019

- A. Comments from Citizens
- B. Approve Minutes of August 19th Meeting
- C. Preparatory Discussion for Joint Meeting with the Acton Selectboard
  - Topics will consist of those prioritized by the Selectboard and Commissioners that are pertinent to both entities in preparation for the joint meeting at 8PM.

8:00 PM - Meet with The Town of Acton Selectboard in Room 204, Acton Town Hall

Present at Tonight's Meeting:

Commissioners: Stephen Stuntz (Chair), Erika Amir-Lin, Barry Rosen

District Manager: Chris Allen

District Treasurer: Mary Jo Bates

District Counsel: Mary Bassett

Environmental Manager: Matthew Mostoller

Commissioner's Secretary: Lynn Protasowicki

Citizens:

Michael Geis, 8 Tuttle Drive

Kim Kastens, Green Acton

Chris Williams, 198 Arlington Street

The Board of Water Commissioner's meeting was called to order at 7:30 PM on Monday, September 9, 2019 at the Acton Memorial Library, Meeting Room A by Mr. Stephen Stuntz.

**A. Comments from Citizens:**

Ms. Kastens of Green Acton spoke. She understands that there is to be a modeling meeting with Mass DEP, NMI regarding the WR Grace site. Green Acton is interested in learning more about this modeling meeting and the outcome. Mr. Mostoller told her that the meeting will take place on September 12th at GeoSyntec in Acton and he will be sure to let Ms. Kastens know the outcome.

Mr. Geis spoke. He is interested in knowing if the District is concerned about septic systems in W. Acton compromising water sources. Mr. Allen stated that it's not an imminent concern. They need to trust that the citizens are doing the right thing (i.e. pumping septic systems regularly). Mr. Geis inquired as to if putting a water treatment facility in W. Acton, does it concern the District that the Town wants to also put in sewers. Mr. Mostoller stated that the potential well field on Mass Ave in W. Acton has a history of elevated nitrate which we assume is coming from septic systems in the area. This is a consideration for keeping it a viable concern.

Michael, these systems will be pressurized vs. gravity. Life of the low-pressure system is typically 5-10 years; classic of low-pressure sewer. Matt: Failure rate? Typically, when you have a pumped sewers system it has 2 days capacity in order to accommodate failure of power outage or equipment failure.

Ms. Williams asked the Board if there was any concern about the sewer system going through Rt 111/W. Acton where there would be large volumes of waste going by home properties. Mr. Allen stated that our system pressure is, on average, 90 Pounds per Square Inch (PSI), so not likely that waste would cross-

contaminate the water distribution system. If it were to impact a source, we would have to shut down source. There would have to be testing done to determine extent and impact of contamination, and then corrective actions would be taken. Fortunately, the District has so much source redundancy, the ability to supply water to meet demand would be of reduced impact.

Mr. Allen mentioned that the District has requested the sewers be extended to our main campus/office at 693 Massachusetts Ave/Rt 111. Currently, there are three tight tanks at the site that require pumping with relative frequency at a rising cost.

Mr. Mostoller provided a brief history of the well field on Mass Ave; it was identified in the mid to late 80s as a viable well source and easements were put into place; and part of the property was gifted to the District.

Mr. Mostoller stated that issues regarding wastewater management and water supply are a complex issue and simple answers are not always possible.

### **B. Approve Minutes of August 19th Meeting:**

Mr. Stuntz motioned to approve the minutes of August 19, 2019. Ms. Amir-Lin seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

### **C. Preparatory Discussion for Joint Meeting with the Acton Selectboard.**

Mr. Allen stated that based upon information from the Acton Town Manager tonight's main topic of discussion between the Commissioners and the Acton Selectboard will be to discuss the scope of the proposed water resources study and the financial obligations, therein.

Mr. Stuntz mentioned that in his discussions with Mr. Allen that our usage and demand has not risen in the last decade because of conservation and efficiency efforts, while still taking on additional units.

Ms. Kastens stated that when the 2005 WR Grace study was done there were three parcels identified for development.

Ms. Amir-Lin stated that the District could use the water resource study as a tool to refocus town attention on water as a priority.

Mr. Mostoller mentioned that as member of WRAC, we've lost some valuable time due to the delay. Originally the months of July-November were to be the time to amass the information, listen to questions and concerns from town boards and staff, and to be able to put a more coherent list of topics to touch on. The goal was to get some buy-in to begin to do some work and refine what it will look like moving forward. Also, who was going to help pay for the study.

Mr. Allen gave a quick financial update to the Commissioners for context:

- the District has spent \$50,000 for the 2017 master plan update, a very comprehensive document that guides our planning, and includes population projections and capacity needs and projections
- We've applied for an Asset Management grant from the Commonwealth that will require some match funding from the District-- \$20k in appropriated funds, and \$20k in "In kind services"
- We are getting ready to build \$9.2-million water treatment plant for the Conant I & II sources
- We will spend \$1.5-million for infrastructure improvements at Kelly's Corner due to water being "Non-qualifying" work

- The District is about \$400,000 down in yet-to-be-certified surplus revenue for the forthcoming Fiscal Year
- To meet land mitigation for Article 97 for the Lawsbrook Road solar array, we may need to purchase land of equivalent value.

An additional point to keep in mind, the Town draws revenue from all parcels in town, while the District only draws revenue from metered sales from those parcels that are water takers. The District serves about 95% of the town.

Ms. Amir-Lin asked the Board, “what are our questions for Board of Selectmen?” Mr. Rosen stated that a good question we can ask tonight is, “What does the Acton Selectboard expect of the District for cooperation?”

*Mr. Stuntz moved to adjourn the open meeting at 7:48 to go into Joint Session with the Acton Selectboard. Mr. Stuntz moved to adjourn the Joint meeting at 8:45 PM. Ms. Amir-Lin seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.*