

Board of Water Commissioners
Meeting Minutes
Acton Water District
693 Massachusetts Avenue, Acton, MA
Monday, January 24, 2022

AGENDA

- A. Comments from the Public
- B. Approve minutes from the meeting of 1/10/22
- C. Appoint one Commissioner to approve warrants while conducting meetings virtually
- D. Introduction of new employee – Alexandra Wahlstrom, Environmental Analyst

E. OLD BUSINESS:

- 1. Per- and Poly-Fluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS)
 - Current sample data, if available
- 2. Review of Approval of Fiscal Year 2023 (FY '23) Budget
- 3. Review of 2022 Annual Meeting Warrant Articles
- 4. Follow-up Discussion of Scheduling the Annual District Meeting
- 5. Commissioners Annual Report for 2021

F. NEW BUSINESS:

Any agenda item(s) which did not come to the attention of the Board of Water Commissioners 48 hours prior to this meeting and were not reasonably anticipated.

Due to the Covid-19 stay-at-home order by Governor Charles Baker, the Board of Water Commissioners meeting was not held at the Acton Water District Office, instead the meeting was held via Zoom Webinar. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM on Monday, January 24, 2022 by Mr. Barry Rosen.

Present at Tonight's Meeting:

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

District Manager: Chris Allen

District Treasurer: Mary Jo Bates

District Counsel: Mary Bassett

Environmental Manager: Matthew Mostoller

Commissioners Secretary: Lynn Protasowicki

Finance Committee: Chuck Bradley, Ron Parenti

Public Attendees:

Kim Kastens

A. Comments from the Public

No comments this evening.

B. Approve Minutes from the Meeting of 1/10/22

Mr. Rosen motioned to approve the minutes of January 10, 2022. Mr. Stuntz seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved by a roll call vote: Mr. Stuntz, Ms. Amir-Lin, and Mr. Rosen.

C. Appoint One Commissioner to Approve Warrants While Conducting Meetings Virtually

Mr. Rosen motioned to appoint Ms. Amir-Lin as the Commissioner to approve warrants while conducting meetings virtually until the next meeting of the Commissioners. Mr. Stuntz seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved by a roll call vote: Ms. Amir-Lin, Mr. Stuntz, and Mr. Rosen.

D. Introduction of New Employee – Alexandra Wahlstrom, Environmental Analyst

Mr. Allen introduced new employee, Alexandra Wahlstrom, who is the new Environmental Analyst working under Matthew Mostoller, Environmental Manager. She comes from Town of Concord's Water and Sewer Department and started with the District on Monday, January 10, 2022.

E. OLD BUSINESS:

1. Per- and Poly-Fluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS)

➤ Current sample data, if available

Mr. Allen stated that there isn't much to report tonight. There were no sample results from January samples. The North Acton Water Treatment Plant and the South Acton Water Treatment Plant are currently the only sources serving water to public. Clapp Whitcomb media has been changed and the station is running to waste to precondition the media and should be ready to be turned onto system soon. There are 56 approved applications for water rebates, and we have 18 in process.

Mr. Mostoller informed the Commissioners that the public notice has been sent to all customers. We received feedback from about 30 customers, who appear to have only just heard about this for the first time.

2. Review of Approval of Fiscal Year 2023 (FY '23) Budget

Mr. Allen stated that there were some changes made to the short term and long term debt line items. Treasurer, Mary Jo Bates, explained that due to the added warrant article for borrowing a million dollars for the temporary PFAS treatment at the North Acton Water Treatment Plant, she added \$110K to short term debt line item because we would have to pay some portion of that back. The hope is to borrow from the trust at 0% interest, but in case that doesn't happen she added \$10K for an interest cost. Also she made an adjustment to long term line item for an additional \$69,705 that is the full cost share of the interest cost for Central Acton Treatment Plant. That impact on the bottom line is \$179,000 which she had adjusted appropriately so that the Commissioners could see a balanced budget.

Mr. Allen stated that they met with the Finance Committee, and they did vote to recommend approval of the proposed budget for FY '23.

Mr. Stuntz motioned to approve the FY 2023 Budget. Mr. Rosen seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved by a roll call vote: Ms. Amir-Lin, Mr. Stuntz, and Mr. Rosen

3. Review of 2022 Annual Meeting Warrant Articles

Warrant Articles have been assigned as follows:

Barry Rosen - Articles 1, 4, 7, 10, 13

Stephen Stuntz – Articles 2, 5, 8, 11, 14, 15

Erica Amir-Lin – Articles 3, 6, 9, 12, 16, 17

Article 12: Master Plan Update - Barry Rosen proposes to increase from \$65,000 to \$70,000 for any contingencies for additional scope if needed. The Commissioners agree with that proposal.

Kim Kastens: regarding Article 2 – encourages the District to make those reports available on website and provide links. Barry Rosen stated that these reports will be published in the Annual Report and will be posted on District website and will be downloadable.

Kim Kastens: regarding the WR Grace comments at last year's Annual Meeting. She was trying to make the point at last year's Annual Meeting that the WR Grace money seemed to be appropriate to save for serious problems (i.e. PFAS) and she was encouraging the Commissioners to preserve this for PFAS and other major issues and not just dribble it away on maintenance. She understands that it is allowed to spend it on maintenance but maintenance goes on forever and to build your budget on the assumption that you will be able to pay maintenance out of this unique fund is not a regular recurring income that can be balanced seems to be not as prudent as saving fund for unexpected emerging deep expensive problems like PFAS. Barry Rosen, Article 16 is for PFAS. He understands her concerns.

Chuck Bradley: would like to comment on Kim Kastens comment regarding the WR Grace fund. This fund has more money in it than originally received. We have currently spent over \$5M from the fund over its lifetime. There are some legitimate concerns that the fund will get too large and will distort the budget picture.

Chuck Bradley: regarding Warrant Articles, when the Finance Committee met today, we voted to recommend the approval of warrant articles with a strong recommendation to the Commissioners that those new debts and any future debt service should be tied to the volume of water taken. Mr. Stuntz stated that he has had this discussion before. He has spoken to Ron Parenti about this. The real issue is making it happen. We are waiting on a proposal from the Finance Committee.

Ron Parenti: comment regarding how the WR Grace Fund is used. He was involved in the original negotiations. The WR Grace Fund was set up to replace the carbon in the Assabet filtration tanks until they were no longer needed. The original purpose of this fund was for maintenance of the treatment facilities for the Assabet wells.

Mr. Rosen motioned to approve the amended 2022 Warrant Articles and Ms. Amir-Lin seconded and it was unanimously approved by a roll call vote: Ms. Amir-Lin, Mr. Stuntz, and Mr. Rosen

4. Follow-up Discussion of Scheduling the Annual District Meeting

Annual District meeting is scheduled for March 16th. Mr. Allen wasn't sure if they wanted to discuss rescheduling the meeting or leave it as is.

Stephen Stuntz: he wants to keep for March 16th.

Erika Amir-Lin: not comfortable having an indoor meeting in March due to Covid concerns. She would like to push it to the end of March or beginning of April for more favorable weather.

Barry Rosen: he would like to keep the March 16th date but none of the buildings in town have good ventilation systems. He would like to postpone the meeting until the first or second week of April.

Ms. Amir-Lin motioned to move the Annual District Meeting from March 16th to April 13th at 6:00 PM at the Water District main office at 693 Massachusetts Avenue. Mr. Stuntz seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by a roll call vote: Ms. Amir-Lin, Mr. Stuntz, and Mr. Rosen

5. Commissioners Annual Report for 2021

Mr. Stuntz motioned to approve the Commissioners Annual Report for 2021. Ms. Amir-Lin seconded and it was unanimously approved by a roll call vote: Ms. Amir-Lin, Mr. Stuntz, and Mr. Rosen

Other Old Business:

Mr. Allen updated the Commissioners on the Central Acton Water Treatment Plant project and stated that the MassDEP will be onsite for certification of the facility this Thursday, January 27th.

Mr. Rosen motioned to adjourn the open meeting at 8:15 PM. Mr. Stuntz seconded the motion, and it was approved unanimously by a roll call vote: Ms. Amir-Lin, Mr. Stuntz, and Mr. Rosen.