

Board of Water Commissioners
Meeting Minutes
Acton Water District
693 Massachusetts Avenue, Acton, MA
Monday, March 28, 2022

AGENDA

- A. Comments from the Public
- B. Approve minutes from the meeting of 3/14/22
- C. Appoint one Commissioner to approve warrants while conducting meetings virtually

D. OLD BUSINESS:

- 1. Land Lease with Baldco on District Property at 104 Powdermill Road-Rear
- 2. Update on Kelley's Corner Water Main Improvement Project
- 3. Per- and Poly-Fluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS)
 - Current sample data, if available
 - Update from the PFAS Working Group

E. NEW BUSINESS:

- 1. Outdoor Water Use Restrictions
- 2. Resignation of Lynn Protasowicki, Board Secretary
- 3. Spring Water Main Flushing to Begin on Monday, 4/4, in West Acton

F. EXECUTIVE SESSION: To consider the purchase, exchange, lease of real property at 549 Main Street as an open meeting may be detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the District.

Due to the Covid-19 stay-at-home order by Governor Charles Baker, the Board of Water Commissioners meeting was held via Zoom Webinar and was recorded. The meeting was called to order at 7:02 PM on Monday, March 28, 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: Ron Parenti

Public Attendees:

Kim Kastens

A. Comments from the Public

No comments this evening.

B. Approve Minutes from the Meeting of 3/14/22

Mr. Stuntz motioned to approve the meeting minutes of March 14, 2022. Ms. Amir-Lin seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved by a roll call vote: Ms. Amir-Lin, Mr. Stuntz, and Mr. Rosen.

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

Mr. Rosen motioned to appoint Erika 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. OLD BUSINESS:

1. Land Lease with Baldco on District Property at 104 Powdermill Road-Rear

Mr. Allen provided an update. He stated that he had set-up a site meeting with Counselor Levine and Baldco representatives but it was postponed and has been rescheduled for Wednesday however the lease does expire on March 31st. He spoke with District Counsel today for best strategy. He recommends extending the lease for another month until after the site meeting on Wednesday, March 30th. As long as everything is agreed upon and understood there may be a further extension forthcoming. We can't do a 20-year lease at this time because it is not on the Annual Meeting Warrant. It would be a maximum of one year extension.

Mr. Rosen moved to extend the land lease to April 30, 2022. Mr. Stuntz seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by a roll call vote: Ms. Amir-Lin, Mr. Stuntz, and Mr. Rosen

2. Update on Kelley's Corner Water Main Improvement Project

Mr. Allen provided an update. He stated that enclosed in tonight's packet is an email from the MA DOT's engineer, GPI, with the estimate of water main improvement projects will cost which is approximately \$1.6 million

There was a discussion related to the fire hydrants. Mr. Allen mentioned that, as part of the project scope, DOT will move the hydrants as appropriate for widening the road. There are about 8 hydrants, and the District will provide those, and DOT will install them. It makes more sense to renew the hydrants as part of the project. Sounds like everything is on track for a May bid.

Barry Rosen: When will we pay into project? Mr. Allen: We currently have \$625K in appropriated funds that is ear-marked for Kelley's Corner. We are appropriating another \$500K at this year's annual meeting for about \$1.2 million in appropriated funds. This should get the project moving. We do have an article to borrow an additional \$1 million dollars. Having appropriated funds gives us some flexibility for timing on the borrowing. If there are any change orders and any bid overage would be absorbed by the borrowing.

Stephen Stuntz: The work that is not in the contract, does that have to go out for a separate bid? Mr. Allen: DOT will bid it all as a package, including the water improvements.

Erika Amir-Lin: for the May bid, is that for when the request for bids goes out? Chris Allen: that would be for when the Invitation for Bid (IFB) would be advertised. Mr. Allen is not sure what DOT uses as a timeline for bid opening.

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

- Current sample data, if available
- Update from the PFAS Working Group

Mr. Allen provided an update. North Acton is currently serving water to customers. All 3 treatment plants are serving water to customers.

We have sample results. Matt Mostoller: South Acton was at 14Parts Per Trillion (PPT); Central Acton is at 8.2 PPT; sampling North Acton on Wednesday (3/30) for the monthly sample.

Mr. Allen mentioned that he did receive a call from the General Contractor, N. Granese & Sons, that is doing Assabet 3. The well subcontractor, Sullivan Associates, did mobilize to the site to take measurements on the well bore. We did execute an access agreement with WR Grace to allow traversing the property with equipment and materials.

➤ **PFAS Working Group:**

Mr. Allen mentioned that the group met on March 17th. Currently discussing scheduling for piloting at Central Acton and South Acton. The piloting will be done consecutively with South Acton done first in the June/July time frame and Central Acton done in August/September time frame. What will happen with the concentrations at Central Acton is unknown. Looking at North Acton for the temporary PFAS treatment in a concurrent timeframe.

Ron Parenti: comment on the webinar that was run by the Globe last week. He had submitted a question that was not answered which was to ask the panelists to quantify the improvement in the public health by the using the 20PPT as opposed to the guidelines set by the EPA at 70 PPT. And noted that the number that is used for the Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) really drives the cost of treatment. He heard numbers that he did not like. One of the panelists said that some of the PFAS compounds are dangerous not at the part per quadrillion level an only zero is an acceptable number and that when the regulations come under review next year they are hoping to lower it below 5 PPT. John Bugbee from Wayland said that if that happens that their town won't be able to afford treatment and they may have to connect to MWRA and notes that it would be extremely expensive for their town. This is beginning to bother him considerably as a resident and a member of the District's Finance Committee how much PFAS treatment is driving what the District has to do at this time. He honestly doubts that the numbers that are being kicked around make any sense because when he reads technical literature about PFAS there is a lot of variability in the results. And, basically the researchers are saying that since more research is needed we ought to make the MCL levels very low because there is a lot we don't know. He doesn't think that is a good reason to force towns to spend millions of dollars because they don't know what the right number is. He is hoping that organizations like the Massachusetts Water Works Association (MWWA) oppose this change in the regulations.

Chris Allen: The PFAS the pilots will be testing both Granular Activated Carbon (GAC) and Ion Exchange (IX) technologies as we did in the North Acton pilot.

E. NEW BUSINESS:

1. Outdoor Water Use Restrictions

Mr. Allen stated that we are currently still in a one day per week lawn irrigation schedule which carried over from 2021. Matt Mostoller graphed to comply with our water management act permit.

Matt Mostoller: going into 2022 we will retain the same program as last year which allowed for one day a week for lawn watering and observe odd/even for any other outdoor uses. Although we have made some improvements in the system and we have in Acton Center (Conant I & II) back and available, we are still trying to manage the PFAS levels throughout the system so it's prudent to start the season in that same one day a week program for lawn irrigation. Advertised to customers in winter newsletter that went out last week.

For our pending Water Management Act (WMA) permit update we are required to go to a 2 day a week limitation, so we discussed going to a level or tiered system. There are 5 levels:

- Level 1: take existing odd/even program which has run from May to October and would now have it run October to April
- Level 2: DEP wants people to have in place for the summer months.

- Level 3: is what our permit requires if we hit certain drought triggers or stream flow triggers at Nashoba Brook.
- Level 4: would go to essential outdoor water uses (cuts out lawn watering but allows for agricultural uses)
- Level 5: for a true water supply emergency

We went with levels because we can advertise it easier. Currently going to use the quadrant system which you can go to the District website and look up your address online and see where you are located and based their watering system on the quadrant that they are in. It fits within our Bylaw so no change needed there but will need to be added to our Rules & Regulations once Mass DEP signs off on it. Mr. Allen stated that once it has been approved by Mass DEP it will come before the Commissioners for their approval.

Kim Kastens: intrigued by the idea of using stream flow triggers on Nashoba Brook. How do you decide the appropriate stream flow trigger to use and what trigger you have in mind? Matt: DEP has assigned us with a trigger. Our existing permit is at 6.4 cubic feet per second, and it will go to 10 cubic feet per second and 3 cubic feet per second as alternate triggers. He just isn't sure of the months for those triggers. There will be a drought trigger of .57 cubic feet per second for seven days.

2. Resignation of Lynn Protasowicki, Board Secretary

Mr. Allen informed the Commissioners that after being the Board Secretary for 13 years, Lynn Protasowicki has given her resignation. Last meeting she will attend will be June 27th.

Erika Amir-Lin: What's the procedure for finding replacement? Mr. Allen stated that last time it was word of mouth; we can advertise; some discussions with Mary Jo that we may use staff. We do have some time, but we will get a new Secretary in place.

3. Spring Water Main Flushing to Begin on Monday, 4/4, in West Acton

Mr. Allen informed the Commissioners that seasonal water main flushing will begin on April 4th in West Acton quadrant. The town is set up in quadrants, and the entire system is flushed every two years. Flushing was last done in West Acton in April 2020, but then we were not able to complete due to the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. Flushing will take place M-Th 8AM to 8PM. The Town of Acton will carry a message on their web site with a link to our flushing webpage. We ran an ad in Beacon newspaper for two consecutive weeks prior to commencement. We are aware that the Beacon is no longer going to have a printed version. This creates an issue with publishing Legal ads in newsprint. Matt Mostoller: we can go to another regional newspaper including the Lowell Sun or the Concord Journal.

Mr. Allen stated that flushing typically takes entire month and generates a fair amount of overtime for operators. It is a burden on payroll so if we can complete the program by flushing during normal working hours, then we will do that.

Mr. Stuntz motioned to adjourn the open meeting at 7:45 PM. Mr. Rosen seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously by a roll call vote: Ms. Amir-Lin, Mr. Stuntz, and Mr. Rosen. Mr. Rosen moved to enter into Executive Session at 7:46 PM to discuss the purchase, exchange, lease of real property as an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the District.

Next meeting: April 11, 2022