

Board of Water Commissioners
Meeting Minutes
Acton Water District
693 Massachusetts Avenue, Acton, MA
Monday, May 10, 2021

AGENDA

- A. Comments from Citizens
- B. Approve minutes from meeting of 4/26/2021
- C. Appoint one Commissioner to approve warrants while conducting meetings virtually

D. OLD BUSINESS:

1. Follow-up and Recap of the Annual District Meeting held on Wednesday, May 5, 2021.
2. Update on Per- and Poly-Fluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) and Discussion of Organizational Strategy and Planning for Contending with PFAS in the District's Sources of Supply.
3. Update on the Central Acton Water Treatment Plant (CAWTP) Construction Project.

E. 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.

Present at Tonight's Meeting:

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

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

Acton Selectboard Liaison: Jim Snyder-Grant

Acton Selectboard: David Martin

Citizen:

Kim Kastens

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, May 10, 2021 by Mr. Barry Rosen.

A. Comments from Citizens

Kim Kastens: The Acton Board of Health has been working on modifications to their Article 11 and Article 16 which deal with small changes requirement to ground water protection zones. She noticed that there have been no AWD comments. There will be a public hearing in June. Date hasn't been set yet. It would seem like topics that the District would care about and is suggesting that they attend.

Article 11 is minimum requirement for the disposal of sanitary sewage in unsewered areas.

Article 16 is minimal requirements for activities in within the ground protection zones.

She stated that a representative from Green Acton has attended these meetings but way beyond their knowledge to respond.

Matt Mostoller: we have reached out to the health department for additional information about these changes and have received no call back. We are weighing whether or not we have ability to respond to the changes and whether we need retain a consultant to assist in that. We have had no explanation or backup on what the changes are.

Barry Rosen: are you looking for more explanation from the Health Dept? Matt Mostoller: yes. He would like to understand the rationale about the changes they want to make. Barry Rosen: he will speak with Jim Snyder-Grant to see if they both can get a Health Dept. person to call Matt back.

B. Approve Minutes from Meeting of 4/26

Ms. Amir-Lin motioned to approve the minutes of April 26, 2021. Mr. Rosen seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved by a roll call vote: 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. Ms. Amir-Lin seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved by a roll call vote: Mr. Rosen and Ms. Amir-Lin.

E. OLD BUSINESS:

1. Follow-up and Recap of the Annual District Meeting held on Wednesday, May 5, 2021.

Ms. Amir-Lin expressed her gratitude to staff for the meeting going off very well. She stated that the venue was good, and procedures were good. Thank you to all that came out to engage in the democratic process. Mr. Rosen would also like to thank staff. He thought the meeting set-up was well done, it was safely done, and there was a smooth process for checking-in. He did note that there were some concerns raised by various citizens about understanding the funding process and where surplus revenue was coming from.

Mr. Allen expressed his gratitude for staff and specifically recognized, Mary Jo Bates for coordination and delegation. Bill Mullin also stated that everyone did a good job.

Mary Bassett was impressed with Bill Mullin's preparation prior to meeting. Kudos to staff.

2. Update on Per- and Poly-Fluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) and Discussion of Organizational Strategy and Planning for Contending with PFAS in the District's Sources of Supply.

Mr. Mostoller stated that at the last meeting he provided an update through month of March. We mentioned that we would be tripping the new Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) based on the quarterly average calculation. That did in fact happen. MassDEP reached out to us on April 28th with a draft public notice that was shared with the Board. We have received our final language that was approved as of last Friday and will be working with the printer to get the public notice sent out within the week.

The monthly sample for April – We have the results for North Acton, Conant I, and South Acton. The Clapp-Whitcomb facility was offline for maintenance and was only returned into service the last days of April, so we were able to collect samples on April 30th.

All the results in April were above 20 parts per trillion (ppt) or nanograms/Liter (ng/L), the current state MCL.

- Conant I: 21.1 ppt

- North Acton: 30.23 ppt
- South Acton: 22.49 ppt

All that data has been submitted to MassDEP so they are doing their data review and we anticipate Clapp Whitcomb will be non-detect as that facility has Granular Activated Carbon (GAC) filtration which removes PFAS.

We will be starting our May sampling this week. We shut down North Acton temporarily. We are going to look at getting a lower result for May with some changes to pumping scheme. That won't happen until around the week of May 17th.

Mr. Allen stated that he sent the Board a link to the draft pilot study for PFAS removal technologies at the North Acton Water Treatment Plant (NAWTP) for them to review. He also sent an email to the Board related to PFAS focus working group. The feedback from Counsel is that such a committee with only one member of the board of commissioners and one member of the finance committee it would not be subject to open meeting law. His desire is to have one Commissioner, one Finance Committee member, Mr. Mostoller, Ms. Bates and himself participate in that group and he reached out to Town Manager to recommend that someone from Town of Acton in either Health Department or the Land Use Department, possibly the new Sustainability Director, who could be part of the focus group. This contaminant affects the entire town, so he wants to get them involved, and keep them involved. Mr. Allen believes that the selection could be done off-line, outside of an open meeting.

Mr. Allen mentioned that David Butler officially resigned via an email. Want to thank him for his service all these years on the District's Finance Committee. Thus, the committee is down to two members, Mr. Guthlein and Mr. Bradley.

He would like to get the working group started soon and would like to start planning with some actionable items to bring to open meeting for the Commissioners to deliberate.

Counselor Bassett stated that the Commissioners appoint one of its own or ask for a board member to volunteer in an open meeting.

Mr. Rosen stated that he sent an email to Chris asking him to put this on the May 24th agenda so that the Commissioners can discuss this in an open meeting and Chris can direct us on how he would like to proceed.

Kim Kastens: stated that many months ago she brought forth to the Commissioners asking them to share documents at the open meetings. Sometimes it works and sometimes the documents aren't there. She just wants to reiterate that there is this pilot study you are talking about and new focus group and would like to see some documents on the website (i.e. meeting packet).

Kim Kastens: Strategies on how to cope with PFAS problems in Town. She appreciates how forthcoming and transparent the District has been about PFAS. Ask that in the course of the next round of conversations that there be some discussion about what next on a larger scale for PFAS. Assabet 3 has already been tapped into. The bedrock well has already been tapped into. What happens next? Is there some possibility to getting the town to limit growth? Somehow get that conversation going between Water District and Town; Nagog as shared resource discussions; MWRA need to be approached. She wants to encourage the longer-term perspective which would require closer collaboration with the Town.

Mr. Rosen: responded stating that the group we are talking about is a suggestion to put together a PFAS working group whose task would be to look at longer term solution for how the District and Town would

address the PFAS issue. The District does want to collaborate with the Town more. Jim Snyder-Grant from the Town Selectboard is the liaison to the District, and I am the liaison for the District to the Town Selectboard.

Mr. Allen mentioned that the pilot study is currently in draft form and is not suitable for publishing. And once it is submitted and approved by state regulators it can be made available to the public.

Kim Kastens stated that she is excited for PFAS working group.

3. Update on the Central Acton Water Treatment Plant (CAWTP) Construction Project.

Mr. Allen stated that Waterline Industries, the General Contractor, is indicating that they will be ready to filter water in early July. They are significantly ahead of schedule, several months. They have one piece of equipment (electrical switch gear) that is holding up the schedule. Mr. Allen showed progress photos of the plant.

Contract 2 project: Main Street final paving was done last week. The contractor was going to pave Post Office Square, but the rain put that on hold on it. It should start up this week. All of the service has been transferred to the new 12" pipe. The existing pipe has been repurposed and connected to the relined pipe which will now be the raw water transmission pipe from Conant I. That connection will be the last thing in Contract 2 and will happen sometime after the plant is started up. Plant startup will be accomplished using the Conant II source.

Regarding the construction of the new Wells D & E connecting to the CAWTP: plant our contractor, Waterline Industries, is slightly outpacing the new Bedrock well permitting process. So, Mr. Allen is not sure about timing and how it will tie into plant contract. He had planned on connecting the Bedrock source as a change order to that contract. Contractual Final Completion is not until the end of this year, and thus Waterline will remain under contract until then.

Mr. Rosen: how much testing is required before MassDEP approves the plant?

Mr. Allen stated that everything has to be functional; backup power supply has to be online; water quality has to be compliant with regulation; they would do a rigorous exam before approval. MassDEP currently is not doing in person visits, however. They are doing video chats. So not sure how that will all take place, and what the circumstances related to the Pandemic will be at that time.

Other Business:

Mr. Mostoller stated that the State has removed the drought declaration for the Northeast and Southeast regions. This will not alter our outdoor watering program at this time. Conditions have improved so far for Acton.

Jim Snyder-Grant: he mentioned that the Water Resources Advisory Committee (WRAC) has started meeting again after a year away and started sorting through their "asks and charters" which includes a long-term study of supply and demand. In the past the group has talked about the District giving the Water & Land Management Advisory Committee (WLMAC) a charge to help the WRAC with this. They haven't gotten to that point in the discussion, but it is on its way.

Mr. Rosen motioned to adjourn the open meeting at 7:45 PM. Ms. Amir-Lin seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by a roll call vote: Ms. Amir-Lin and Mr. Rosen.