

Board of Water Commissioners
Meeting Minutes
Acton Water District
693 Massachusetts Avenue, Acton, MA
Monday, May 23, 2022

AGENDA

- A. Comments from the Public
- B. Approve minutes from the meeting of 5/9/22
- 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. Per- and Poly-Fluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS)
 - Current sample data, if available
- 3. Update on the Annual Town Meeting Article #53
- 4. Discussion of the 2022 Master Plan Update

E. NEW BUSINESS:

- 1. District's Representation on the Water Resources Advisory Committee (WRAC)
- 2. School District billing

EXECUTIVE SESSION: To consider the purchase, exchange, lease of real property at 549 Main Street as an open meeting may have a 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 not held at the Acton Water District Office; instead the meeting was held via Zoom Webinar and was recorded. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM on Monday, May 23, 2022 by Mr. Stephen Stuntz.

Present at Tonight's Meeting:

Commissioners: Erika Amir-Lin, Barry Rosen, Stephen Stuntz (Chair)
District Manager: Chris Allen
District Treasurer: Mary Jo Bates
District Counsel: Mary Bassett
Environmental Manager: Matthew Mostoller
Finance Committee: Bill Guthlein
Commissioners Secretary: Lynn Protasowicki

Public Present:

A. Comments from the Public

No comments tonight.

B. Approve Minutes from the Meeting of 5/9/22

Mr. Rosen motioned to approve the meeting minutes of May 9, 2022. Mr. Stuntz seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved by a roll call vote: Mr. Rosen and Mr. Stuntz.

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

Ms. Amir-Lin motioned to appoint Barry Rosen 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: Mr. Rosen, Ms. Amir-Lin, and Mr. Stuntz.

D. OLD BUSINESS:

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

Mr. Allen provided an update. He stated that the plan development is still ongoing. It's too soon to have a complete plan presented at this meeting. He recommends extending the lease through June 30, 2022

Barry Rosen: sent comments to Chris and Matt in an email. He is still uncomfortable without additional core testing in the berm. Steve Stuntz: it's not just the material on the surface of the berm that is the issue, it's also the material that is deep within the berm that is the concern.

Mr. Stuntz moved to extend the lease until June 30, 2022 with an increase in rent to \$200 for the month of June. Ms. Amir-Lin seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved by a roll call vote: Mr. Rosen, Ms. Amir-Lin, and Mr. Stuntz.

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

- Current sample data, if available

Mr. Allen stated that all three treatment plants are all serving water. Although the Clapp Whitcomb well has not been serving water this calendar year since the media was changed in January.

Matt Mostoller: preliminary samples numbers as of May 3rd

- South Acton: 10.8 PPT (with Assabet 1A offline)
- Central Acton: 11 PPT

3. Update on the Annual Town Meeting Article #53

Mr. Stuntz stated that we made our position and received a nice thank you from Terra Friedrich. There seems to be a lot of frustration with Town Staff about ignoring directives from Town.

Chris Allen: reiterate our frustration to elevate the level of consideration for drinking water, potable water, water resources, protection of the environment – he commends the Board and Matt for crafting a statement that summarized that very well and captured the spirit of what we are trying to get across.

This resolution (Article #53) did not pass at the Town meeting.

4. Discussion of the 2022 Master Plan Update

Mr. Stuntz stated that part of this discussion is the commentary on the attendees regarding the public participation and renaming of the Master Plan to Asset Management Plan. Do we want to rename it for public purposes and whether we want to have public participation?

Erika Amir-Lin: wonders if we should re-evaluate what the goal of the master plan is. Is the Master Plan going to get us what we need? And, if not what would that instrument look like instead?

Steve Stuntz: we are part way through the process with the engineers. What has been done already on the plan?

Chris Allen: prior to the annual meeting the scope was circulated to the Board, the budget and fee was laid out and proposed, the scope has been laid out, and the contract has been signed with the engineer.

Erika Amir-Lin: thinks it is a prudent move to stop work for us to figure out the proper scope is. What do we need out of this?

Barry Rosen: he often wondered what is the real mission of the Master Plan? It's a good idea to do one but what should be the table of contents of what it should include.

Steve Stuntz: historically the Master Plan was the tactical plan for the District.

Barry Rosen: should we consider a tactical plan and a strategic plan (two separate plans). Steve: yes we should and what we have had in the past is a tactical plan. Barry: tactical is the everyday over the next 2-5 years.

Erika Amir-Lin: when the Master Plan is done, after getting results from pilot studies the Master Plan could be out of date. What as an organization do we want to see our Master Plan to be? What is our mission?

Steve Stuntz: Master Plan was tactical plan. Now it's new treatment plants, pilot studies. Likes Barry's idea of what is the mission. What are the techniques of accomplishing the mission? What we have had in the past is a tactical plan. Barry Rosen stated that the strategic plan can look further out. When Town has asked us for our Master Plan they are asking for the strategy rather than the tactical. And that's been their confusion as they expected something to come out of it. Chris Allen stated that we can have Wright Pierce stop working on the Master Plan until the Board comes to a consensus of what needs to happen. Steve Stuntz: stated that we should have Wright-Pierce scale back the Master Plan to tactical level and the Board will work on the strategic plan.

Barry Rosen suggests that for the tactical plan there should be no public comment. Public comments can be made when we work on the strategic plan.

Counselor Bassett: this is not the new and improved master plan but an update to what we already have in place. It's only a 5 year plan. It's important to have asset management plan. Important to have the system running in accordance with the regulations so this needs to be in the plan. It was in front of the Board in the past and approved to move forward. If you want to change maybe it should be a separate plan or at the next round of the Master Plan being updated you can decide what the new plan will be. But for this one the Board did approve it to do the update.

Erika Amir-Lin stated that she sees Mary's point but she is not ready to make a decision on this right now. She has this concern that there is so much going on that it won't be relevant by the time it's finalized.

Steve Stuntz stated that each of the Board members needs to sit down and figure out the strategic versus the tactical and what each goes into them and how we want to address them; we should send our ideas to Chris who can then pull them together and provide to the Commissioners to review at the next open meeting to discuss.

Kim Kastens: happy that our elected representatives (i.e. the Board of Commissioners) are engaging in this Master Plan process.

Other Old Business:

Steve Stuntz stated that during his discussions with Mary Joe Bates the discounts we give is only to the senior discounts but not giving to all the various discounts that the town gives. Should we provide other discounts? Barry Rosen stated that we should discuss at our next meeting.

Steve Stuntz stated that at the town meeting he discovered that 30% of units are rentals in Town and that some of the water bills are surcharged by the landlords. There is a substantial degradation of impact of changing water rates through to the people paying. When we look at water rates we need to keep this in mind.

E. NEW BUSINESS:

1. District's Representation on the Water Resources Advisory Committee (WRAC)

Chris Allen stated that Matt Mostoller is the representative on the WRAC appointed by the Commissioners. He is due for reappointment. Chris Allen is recommending him again to serve on the WRAC.

Barry Rosen: when Chris goes on leave will Matt be able to attend the meetings? Erika Amir-Lin stated that she is not sure what the WRAC by-laws are to changing appointments. Matt: the Selectboard would have to approve the change. Barry Rosen: we can address this at the end of the summer.

Mr. Stuntz motioned to appoint Matt Mostoller to the WRAC. Mr. Rosen seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by a roll call vote: Mr. Rosen, Ms. Amir-Lin and Mr. Stuntz

Ron Parenti stated that there are openings for associate members you might want to consider appointing Alexandra Wahlstrom, Environmental Analyst, as an associate member to the WRAC.

2. School District Billing

Mary Jo Bates stated that the meter at the Acton-Boxborough High School was replaced in 2018. At that time the test circle was not updated so the meter was incorrect by a factor of 10. The bottom line is that we owe the Acton School District some money. The board needs to approve an abatement in the amount of \$9,557.60. There has also been an overpayment of \$40,000 which we will give them a refund.

Mr. Stuntz motions to approve the abatement of \$9,557.60. Ms. Amir-Lin seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by a roll call vote: Mr. Rosen, Ms. Amir-Lin, and Mr. Stuntz.

Kim Kastens: curious how it was discovered that the meter was off by a factor of 10. Chris the meter was showing extremely high usage. We actively started to work with the Facilities Manager and the Plumber for the school district to do some searching of the sources to see where the water was going. When Bob Murch, the District IT Manager, went into the facility and started looking at components and cross referencing that to our billing database we found out we had the wrong multiplication factor dating back to 2018.

Other New Business:

Mr. Allen would like to extend his congratulations to the District specifically to Julie, Beth and Matt on receiving the 2021 Conservation Award from MassDEP.

Mr. Stuntz motioned to adjourn the open meeting at 8:08 PM. Mr. Rosen seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously by a roll call vote: Mr. Rosen, Ms. Amir-Lin and Mr. Stuntz. Mr. Rosen moved to enter into Executive Session at 8:08 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. Roll call vote: Mr. Rosen- aye, Ms. Amir-Lin-aye, and Mr. Stuntz-aye

Next meeting: June 6, 2022