

Board of Water Commissioners  
Meeting Minutes  
693 Massachusetts Avenue, Acton MA  
Monday, June 3, 2019

**AGENDA**

**A. Comments from Citizens**

**B. Approve Minutes of May 20, 2019 Meeting**

**C. OLD BUSINESS:**

1. Peter Bay of EDF Renewables for Progress Update on the Proposed Solar Installations.
  - In January of 2018, the District selected EDF Renewables (Formerly Gro Solar) to design, build and operate two solar arrays on District land off Lawsbrook Road & Knox Trail
2. Land Lease with Baldco, Inc.
  - Discussion will consist of update of conditions related to trespass on the tenant's property at 104 Powdermill Road-Rear (Not District land)
3. Follow-up Discussion of Alternative Water Rate Models.
  - Item was introduced by the District's Finance Committee at the meeting of 5/20
4. Follow-up on Request from the Town of Acton's Finance Committee.
  - The committee has requested the Commissioners' attendance at a future meeting

**D. NEW BUSINESS:**

1. Water Lane Management Advisory Committee (WLMAC)
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**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: Matt Mostoller  
Commissioner's Secretary: Lynn Protasowicki  
Finance Committee: Dave Butler (via phone), Bill Guthlein  
WLMAC: John Cipar  
Green Acton: Kim Kastens

The Board of Water Commissioners meeting was called to order at 7:30 PM on Monday, June 3, 2019 at the Acton Water District office by Mr. Stephen Stuntz.

**A. Comments from Citizens:**

Kim Kastens spoke. She mentioned that there are three new articles about water on the Green Acton website. These articles include:

- Lack of Progress on Remediation of 1,4-Dioxane at WR Grace Superfund Site
- Progress on Remediation of VOCs at WR Grace Superfund Site
- Green Acton Provides Stakeholder Input for WR Grace Superfund Site Five-year Review

And she mentioned that on Friday, May 31<sup>st</sup>, Matt Mostoller had hosted a meeting to pool knowledge of WR Grace and the opening the Record of Decision (ROD) and possible inclusion of a 1,4 Dioxane remediation plan.

## **B. Approve Minutes from May 20, 2019**

Mr. Stuntz motioned to approve the minutes of April 22, 2019 as amended. Ms. Amir-Lin seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

## **C. OLD BUSINESS:**

### *1. Peter Bay of EDF Renewables for Progress Update on the Proposed Solar Installations.*

- In January of 2018, the District selected EDF Renewables (Formerly Gro Solar) to design, build and operate two solar arrays on District land off Lawsbrook Road & Knox Trail

Peter Bay presented the Commissioners with a hand-out of a slide presentation that provides an update of where the proposed solar installations stand. The presentation is available as part of the open meeting packet.

MicroGrid Feasibility Study – Mr. Allen provided an update. He stated that in his last conversation with Margaret Campbell, the consultant, things were progressing slowly. Three out of four phases completed. She spoke with de maximis who is interested in taking part, should there be a micro-grid established. Mr. Allen stated that as of today there are no firm update on where the study stands.

### *2. Land Lease with Baldco, Inc.*

- Discussion will consist of update of conditions related to trespass on the tenant's property at 104 Powdermill Road-Rear (Not District land)

Mr. Allen provided an update of conditions related to trespass on the Baldco property at 104 Powdermill Road-Rear which is not District land. Per the discussion at the last District meeting on May 6<sup>th</sup> regarding sending a letter to DH Loam and Baldco outlining action items to clean-up the property, Counselor Bassett mentioned that this letter is in its final form and ready to be reviewed. Mr. Allen shared aerial images of the property taken from a Drone. We'll continue periodic surveillance using the Drone to monitor activity. From the photos it's showing that DH Loam is still encroaching on the Baldco property in the ground water protection zone. The District will continue these weekly drone flyovers. Mr. Allen mentioned that it's been about two years since the District asked Baldco, Inc. to remove DH encroachments and stop DH Loam's use of the Baldco property related to the lease renewal.

### *3. Follow-up Discussion of Alternative Water Rate Models.*

- Item was introduced by the District's Finance Committee at the meeting of 5/20

Mr. Stuntz asked the other Commissioners if they have any thoughts on what was discussed at the last meeting. Mr. Rosen stated that regarding the stabilization fund, we should tell our advisor to begin preparations for a shift in investment strategy related to the change in designation of the Grace account.

Mr. Rosen is not ready to decide to change the model on rates. Mr. Allen asked if there was anything else the Commissioners would like to add to the record. Mr. Stuntz suggested that it may be time to increase the capital budget from \$500k to \$1m, related to annual infrastructure improvements, for next budget cycle? Mr. Allen mentioned that the next planned project would be Kelly's Corner (predicted at \$1.25 million). Mr. Stuntz stated that if capital improvements are a regular thing the line item should be increased. The District's Master Plan recommends a 1% per year replacement of the piping system. At the current level of funding, the rate is approximately .5% per year.

Mr. Stuntz stated that the other part of the discussion on May 20<sup>th</sup> was are the water rates fair. Should fairness be judged on water levels? The District has had three people apply for abatements based on financial hardships. Mr. Rosen believes that the District should find a way to take care of hardships (exceptional cases). Ms. Amir-Lin would like to understand better the low end and high end – Ms. Bates stated that the low end 61 commercial, 53 municipal and 262 residential units (86 consistently use below 86 cubic feet). There are about 5 customers who turn their service off for the winter (District removes the

water meter and turn off at street). Mr. Guthlein stated that the District should concentrate on those 1,500 customers (volume per cubic basis) where the burden falls on half the users.

Another area of concern: Summer usage and how much capital we have in summer users need all that capacity so that we can service those 3 months and not charging much during those months. Mr. Rosen asked where the District sits compared to other water departments and water districts with hookup fees. Mr. Allen stated that the District is on the high side.

*4. Follow-up on Request from the Town of Acton's Finance Committee.*

➤ The committee has requested the Commissioners' attendance at a future meeting Enclosed in tonight's packets to the Commissioners is an email thread from Mr. Allen to Roland Bourdon, Town of Acton Finance Committee Chair regarding meeting dates that the Commissioners could attend. A conflict exists with the proposed date, and Mr. Bourdon stated in the email that he will propose some additional dates for Chairman Stuntz to attend an open meeting. Mr. Allen will let the Commissioners know once he hears back.

**D. NEW BUSINESS:**

*1. Water and Land Management Advisory Committee (WLMAC)*

John Cipar spoke. He mentioned that currently the WLMAC has only three active Committee members where it typically should have five members total. The District Commissioners need to appoint two people to WLMAC to restore the membership to appropriate level. WLMAC does not have an immediate function and have not met for about a year. Have not been called upon for any specific advice so have not needed to meet. Mr. Allen suggested that this Committee is a good home for the proposed Commissioner emeritus position. The goal of the Commissioners is to keep the WLMAC active.

Mr. Cipar suggested that a good way to utilize the Committee would be to have the District Commissioners give them some long-terms projects/topics/research that the WLMAC could look at which will help to keep the Committee active.

WLMAC should work with the Water Resources Advisory Committee (WRAC) and see what help they can give. The WRAC still does not have a full committee.

*Mr. Stuntz moved to adjourn the open meeting at 9:00 PM. Ms. Erika Amir-Lin seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.*