

Board of Water Commissioners

Meeting Agenda

Monday, June 16, 2025 @ 7:00 PM

- Comments from the public
- Approve minutes from the meeting of 6/2
- Appoint one Commissioner to sign warrants while conducting meetings virtually

OLD BUSINESS:

- Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS)
 - Current sample data, if available
 - Discussion of Additional PFAS Upgrades
 - NAWTP PFAS System Operation
- MWRA MetroWest Expansion
- Meeting Schedule July-December 2025

NEW BUSINESS:

- Discussion of PFAS MDL Settlement Funds
- Outdoor Water Use Restrictions
- Staffing Update

Present at Tonight's Meeting:

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

District Manager: Matt Mostoller

Treasurer/Collector: Christine McCarthy

Deputy District Manager: Corey Godfrey

Members of the Public: Kim Kastens, John Petersen

START OF MINUTES

After ensuring everyone could hear and be heard, Mr. Stuntz opened the meeting at 7:00 pm.

Comments from the public

None at this time.

Approve minutes from the meeting of 6/2

Mr. Rosen motioned to approve the minutes of 6/2/2025. Ms. Amir Lin seconded, and it was unanimously approved via a roll call vote, Mr. Stuntz, Ms. Amir Lin, Mr. Rosen.

Appoint one Commissioner to sign warrants while conducting meetings virtually

Ms. Amir Lin motioned to appoint Mr. Stuntz to sign warrants until the next regularly scheduled meeting. Mr. Rosen seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved via a roll call vote, Mr. Rosen, Ms. Amir Lin, and Mr. Stuntz.

OLD BUSINESS:

Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS)

Current sample data, if available

Mr. Mostoller informed the board that June samples were collected earlier today; they will likely be available at the July meeting. All three plants are currently in operation.

Discussion of Additional PFAS Upgrades

Mr. Mostoller informed the board that South Acton has begun to install the exterior piping that will connect the PFAS system to the existing plant, and to the existing finished water line for backwashing purposes.

At Center Acton, they are installing the well pumps this week and are expected to finish the following week. The insulation and roofing are being done this week to help enclose the building so interior work can proceed.

NAWTP PFAS System Operation

Mr. Mostoller reminded the board that the system had been shorted on carbon delivery for the media changeout. After confirming the amount of media delivered would meet treatment goals and permit conditions, they ended up reactivating the plant last week to meet rising demand as the temperature increased. Veolia will be onsite tomorrow

delivering the last two thousand pounds of carbon. They hope to get the plant back in the system by the end of the week.

Ms. Amir Lin asked how much demand there was. Mr. Mostoller responded that they are currently at about 1.5 million gallons per day, but the coming days will be in the mid 80's to 90's. Even though it's been a very rainy spring, as soon as the temperature goes up demand may increase by up to 200,000 gallons per day. Mr. Mostoller emphasized that they still have other maintenance in progress as the Assabet 3 well is offline for rehabilitation.

MWRA MetroWest Expansion

Mr. Mostoller updated the board that work with Maynard on this has been delayed, and the request for qualifications won't be put out until the new fiscal year. Mr. Mostoller has continued his dialogue with potential consultants to help inform the District's approach to the MWRA. The most recent conversation was with the consultant who is currently engaged with Ayer on their MWRA evaluation.

Mr. Rosen asked about the prospect of the Town of Lincoln joining the cooperative effort. Mr. Mostoller had no word on that. Ms. Amir Lin asked what the expected timeline is for the District to engage with these consultants. Mr. Mostoller responded that originally, he wanted to finish the cooperative work then engage with the consultant, however delays have made that unlikely. He would prefer to engage with a consultant sooner while the cooperative work is underway to keep their momentum.

Mr. Mostoller then spoke about the CDM Smith study and the implications from that analysis, primarily that a major trunkline could terminate in Acton or Concord, and then a smaller trunkline would feed additional communities, this would roughly be coming north via route 27, then going west via route 119/2A.

Meeting Schedule July-December 2025

Mr. Mostoller reminded the board that they made one change to the proposed schedule, moving the September 8th meeting to September 15th. No additional changes were suggested.

Mr. Rosen motioned to accept the revised meeting schedule for July through December 2025. Ms. Amir Lin seconded, and it was unanimously approved via a roll call vote, Mr. Rosen, Ms. Amir Lin, Mr. Stuntz.

NEW BUSINESS:

Discussion of PFAS MDL Settlement Funds

Mr. Mostoller reported to the board that they received their first check from the 3M PFAS Settlement Agreement. This check is about 20% of the gross payment and came out to about \$611,000. They now have those funds and did receive some guidance from the Department of Revenue on how to account for those funds. They believe they can be put into a special revenue fund.

Mr. Mostoller wanted to engage the board's thoughts on what to do with the settlement money, as additional checks will be arriving in the coming months and years. Ms. McCarthy will attend a meeting this week to get information on the opportunity for an accelerated payment program for the 3M settlement funds. Ms. McCarthy is also looking into what investment limits there are on these funds. Mr. Mostoller noted they may want the input of the finance committee or to create a work group.

Mr. Stuntz commented that this is like the Grace settlement, which was meant to pay for clean up, so he believes it should receive similar treatment to the Grace funds.

Mr. Rosen referred to a memo he was sent that seemed to imply that the funds belong to the District and not the state, which was an earlier question. Mr. Rosen's preferred action is to establish a revolving fund where they can get some return on their investment and use the funding for PFAS-related costs like the carbon changes. Mr. Rosen noted that in the future if they move forward with the MWRA, that could be interpreted as a partial necessity as it avoids existing PFAS in the local water supply. Mr. Rosen favored possibly spending part of the funds, while investing the rest.

Ms. Amir Lin felt similar to Mr. Rosen. She preferred saving the funds for the long or medium term and not spending it all up front. If the funds could be invested, she noted, it would be good to know their options like how much they can access and when. Ms. Amir Lin acknowledged there may be some costs that they would like to use the funds for right away, and asked if Mr. Mostoller, Mr. Godfrey, and Ms. McCarthy could provide that kind of evaluation of what those potential costs may be. Ms. Amir Lin noted that she wouldn't want to spend it all since the future is uncertain for PFAS, water supply, and the regulatory environment.

Mr. Mostoller commented that one item to consider for upfront spending is the lease payments to Veolia for the North Acton filters. This is for a semi-permanent system that was selected to give the District time while they evaluated long term options. Mr. Mostoller noted that they are unlikely to see favorable lending from the state, or principal forgiveness going forward.

Mr. Stuntz asked what the lease terms are. Mr. Mostoller replied that it's an 8-year lease. They are currently about 14 or 15 months into it. Mr. Mostoller is currently unsure about the terms of the buyout clause or if we would want the aging equipment.

Mr. Stuntz asked the other commissioners if they favored creating a working group to look at this. Ms. Amir Lin commented that she saw benefit from the PFAS working group 5 years ago which addressed the meat of the issue, but perhaps this group would not have to be a long lived group. The board then discussed the previous working group make-up, and how that may apply to this situation.

Mr. Rosen added that the most difficult wells to treat are in North Acton, which may require the most carbon changes. Mr. Rosen added that it may be possible to reup the lease for a few years while they look for a different source, or possibly North Acton is phased out. Mr. Rosen noted that the recommendation from their prospective consultants on the issue may inform this but it he was in favor of getting a consortium of staff, commissioner, and the finance committee in the working group.

Mr. Mostoller added that the board should also keep in mind the possibility of better treatment technology in the future. After a brief discussion Ms. Amir Lin agreed to represent the commissioners in the working group.

Mr. Stuntz motioned to create a small working group to look at the PFAS settlement funds, with Ms. Amir Lin representing the Commissioners, and Mr. Mostoller organizing the rest of the group. Mr. Rosen seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved via a roll call vote, Ms. Amir Lin, Mr. Rosen, Mr. Stuntz.

Mr. Rosen asked if the current funds can be put into an account to draw interest. Mr. Mostoller replied that they have not cashed the check yet and would need approval if they wanted to spend the funds.

Outdoor Water Use Restrictions

Mr. Mostoller prefaced this item by reminding the board about the ups and downs with the North Acton carbon change, and that Assabet Well 3 is offline as rehabilitation work took longer than normal. However, the state declared in May that drought conditions in this region have ended. Ground water levels are still not recovering as they would like, but they are not as dire as they were in March. Mr. Mostoller recommended that the board move to a 2 day a week outdoor water use restriction until further notice.

Mr. Stuntz motioned to accept the District Manager's recommendation to move to a 2 day a week Outdoor Water Use Restriction. Mr. Rosen seconded the motion.

Ms. Amir Lin asked to confirm if they would move to a 1 day-a-week outdoor water use restriction if the weather changes. Mr. Mostoller responded that it is unclear what the rest of the summer will look like, and it's possible that stream flow may trigger a 1-day restriction like last September. Mr. Mostoller added that if they still have challenges keeping up with demand they could go to a 1 day a week restriction, or no days when they cut over the South and Center Treatment Plants for PFAS treatment startup.

Mr. Mostoller added that staff are working on a level system that goes from 1-5 as a communication tool for drought conditions. The intention is to have signage and messaging clearly and effectively communicate with the customers. Technically the current status would be level 3 in this system, but changing to a 2-day restriction would move to level 2, and the District's old program would be level 1. Level 4 would cut outdoor use, and level 5 is an indoor and outdoor restriction, and represents a water supply emergency.

Kim Kastens commented that these levels may create confusion as the State's drought levels go from 0-4, which may confuse the public.

The open motion was unanimously approved via roll call vote, Ms. Amir Lin, Mr. Rosen, Mr. Stuntz.

Mr. Stuntz asked why the rehabilitation of the Assabet 3 Well has been slow. Mr. Mostoller responded that it had a late start, experienced weather delays, had issues scheduling the contractor, mechanical difficulties were identified, and finally we had poor recovery from the cleaning of Assabet 1A well.

Staffing Update

Mr. Mostoller shared that they hired a new environmental analyst, and thanked Mr. Godfrey for his work in that process. The candidate will start a week from today and has actually worked for the District on the Bedrock Well project as a consultant. He has a bachelor's in geology from UNH and is looking forward to focusing his work on one community.

Mr. Rosen motioned to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Amir Lin seconded, and it was unanimously approved via a roll call vote, Mr. Rosen, Ms. Amir Lin, Mr. Stuntz.

Meeting Closed at 7:37 p.m.