

Board of Water Commissioners Meeting Minutes
Acton Water District
693 Massachusetts Avenue, Acton MA
Friday, September 17, 2021

AGENDA

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Discuss the District's input to the Town of Acton Selectboard for the utilization of American Rescue Plan (ARPA) Act funds allocated to the Town of Acton.

Present at Today's Meeting:

Commissioners: Erika Amir-Lin, Barry Rosen (Chair), Stephen Stuntz
District Manager: Chris Allen

Town of Acton Selectboard/District Liaison: Himaja Nagireddy

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 Microsoft Teams. The meeting was called to order at 10:00 AM on Friday, September 17, 2021 by Mr. Barry Rosen.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Discuss the District's input to the Town of Acton Selectboard for the utilization of American Rescue Plan (ARPA) Act funds allocated to the Town of Acton.

Barry Rosen: we asked via the town Manager for expense relief for Kelly's Corner (the District is proposed to receive \$100,000) and PFAS mitigation relief at the NAWTP (no money allocated).

We just found out that the Town is going to have a public listening session on Monday, September 20th regarding the ARPA funds - the Selectboard will listen to proposals. Barry would like to put together a discussion and work through our liaison, Himaja, to put a proposal before Selectboard for more money. There is roughly about \$12 million dollars in proposals and they only have \$7 million to distribute. He suggests working with Himaja to put our ideas as to why PFAS mitigation is important and what the District is doing with PFAS mitigation to see if we can get some money for this. He is asking for the support from the other Commissioners to continue working on this.

Steve Stuntz: we should ask for money. He did not realize the level of projects the Town Manager had in front of him.

Himaja: the Town Manager put together a list of projects that he proposed to be funded which included the \$100K for Kelly's Corner. He didn't add PFAS remediation. So, with that \$100K and all the other projects combined the total came up to \$12M. If the District were to propose

PFAS remediation again that would be additional project that we would consider beyond what we have already allocated.

Chris Allen: how does that list get whittled down? Will the Selectboard dictate? Himaja: the Selectboard will make final decision and will be informed by the public comments but ultimately the Selectboard will make the final decision.

Steve Stuntz: there is \$12M in projects. There is \$7M in ARPA money. The Selectboard faces how many actually need to happen. How much money has the District spent in treatment over the years? As the water takers demand cleaner water the question is how to allocate the “free” money. With PFAS we will go and find the best treatment but how to reduce that impact to the same group of citizens that Himaja talks to at the Selectboard meetings. PFAS is one of the things to remediate that the town requires and also the state.

Barry Rosen: on May 28th he had a meeting with Jim Snyder-Grant and at that point the Kelly’s Corner project had not gone out for bid so there could have been opportunity that the District’s request could have been with that but not sure if that is still opportunity. Chris Allen: it won’t go out for bid until May/June of 2022.

Erika Amir-Lin: no objections to redirecting our request for funding for PFAS mitigation. It is something that effects the whole town and is an appropriate ask. There aren’t any funding mechanisms available to us right now and should drive our request. It is a town issue where we are not able to find easy funding to solve the town issue of PFAS. We have to take the chance to get some of the ARPA funding because we won’t get another chance to get money for PFAS mitigation.

Barry Rosen: we are deferring our maintenance because we are taking money out of our pipe replacement funding to help fund Kelly’s Corner.

Commissioners all agree that Barry should continue working with Himaja on the District’s behalf for requesting the ARPA money.

Chris Allen: reason for applying for \$150K of state grants that have yet to be awarded. The objective was to fund the bottled water rebate program. No funding has been received yet.

Barry Rosen will move ahead and continue working with Himaja as the liaison with the Selectboard.

Chris Allen: we are currently on a path to fund the Kelly’s Corner regardless of ARPA funds, so he would prefer to put the money towards PFAS vs Kelly’s Corner. Erika Amir-Lin agrees to that as well.

Himaja: PFAS and water issues are her top priorities, so she is excited to work with the District. We have heard from concerned public about PFAS in the drinking water so there is a lot of worry and framing this as we do want to respond to this issue and allocating these funds because this is a top need. Chris Allen: the public health aspect is definitely a major issue and we are

looking at water shortages which could cause a problem with community development in the future. If we have to start curtailing usage based upon availability of sources there could be a moratorium on new connections. We could be looking at an all-out ban on outdoor water use because of restrictions related to PFAS causing us to be unable to use some of our sources. It's a ripple effect.

Mr. Rosen moved to adjourn the open meeting at 10:30 AM. Mr. Stuntz seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved by a roll call vote: Ms. Amir-Lin, Mr. Stuntz, and Mr. Rosen.