

Board of Water Commissioners  
Meeting Minutes  
Acton Water District  
693 Massachusetts Avenue, Acton, MA  
Monday, November 8, 2021

**AGENDA**

- A. Comments from the Public
- B. Approve minutes from meeting of 10/18
- C. Appoint one Commissioner to approve warrants while conducting meetings virtually

**D. OLD BUSINESS:**

- 1. Update on Solar projects from Peter Bay, Project Manager from EDF Renewables (solar developer)
  - Request for an additional five-year term on the leases for Lawsbrook Rd & Knox Trail PV arrays
- 2. Per- and Poly-Fluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS)
  - Current sample data, if available
  - Any updates or discussion from the PFAS Working Group
- 3. Update on the water conservation rebate program

**E. NEW BUSINESS:**

- 1. Revision of the District's Impact/Demand Fees for new services
- 2. Proposal for revision of the temporary Construction (Hydrant) Meter Program

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:** -- To consider the purchase, exchange, lease of real property as an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the District.

**Present at Tonight's Meeting:**

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

**Public Attendees:**

Kim Kastens  
Mark Bishop

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, November 8, 2021 by Mr. Barry Rosen.

**A. Comments from the Public**

Kim Kastens: saw on the November 1<sup>st</sup> Selectboard meeting an Acton Water District agenda item regarding request related to use in waste water treatment plant as a PFAS mitigation measure. The Board did not have time to go over it so she would like to know what that agenda item was about. Mr. Allen stated that the request was to move more waste volume off site from South Acton Water Treatment Plant in an attempt to reduce the PFAS concentration in the Assabet 1A well by relocating additional volume to the Town's Wastewater Treatment Plant.. The District was asking to discharge more volume to the waste

water treatment plant than we currently are. Ms. Kastens is suggesting that the District provide a document to explain the “ask”. Mr. Allen stated that the Town Manager has known about this for about a year and to the PFAS working group has been discussing it for several months.

Mark Bishop, lives in Indian Village. The last few years the water coming out of the tap is discolored (yellow and brown tint) and it’s been bad these past few months. What is the Water District doing with the clarity and water issues? He said it looks bad, tastes bad and can’t believe that its healthy to drink. Mr. Allen stated that he is referring to West Acton sources such as Clapp Whitcomb sources and those are currently pumping through granulated activated carbon. Those sources are impacted by iron manganese and organic color. Impacted by the decay of trees and leaves and the discoloration caused by the minerals. Currently we are pumping those sources more than we typically would. Due to PFAS we have been relying on those sources heavily. The other sources we would typically use NA and Conant I and II are currently unavailable to us due to the new Central Acton Water Treatment Plant being constructed. NA we have been trying to manage PFAS concentrations by intermittent use by 50% of its capacity. The color of the water is not pleasant, but it is just organic color and there are some minerals in the water causing the color.

Mark Bishop: When is the Central Acton Water Treatment Plant (CAWTP) coming back online? And for what % of all input sources will now be filtered by the water treatment plant once it comes online? Mr. Allen stated that we are hoping to have it online by second week of December. About 85% of the water will be treated by this new treatment plant.

Mark Bishop: What is the plan to have those remaining three wells to have them filtered? Mr. Allen stated that those are in flux. Once the CAWTP comes online and with intermittent use of the North Acton Water Treatment Plant Demand Management should be more efficient. And the West Acton sources would be again used on an as needed basis.

#### **B. Approve Minutes from Meeting of 10/18**

Mr. Stuntz motioned to approve the minutes of October 18, 2021. Mr. Rosen seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved by a roll call vote: Ms. Amir-Lin, Mr. Stuntz, and Mr. Rosen.

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

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

#### **D. OLD BUSINESS:**

##### 1. Update on Solar Projects from Peter Bay, Project Manager from EDF Renewables (solar developer)

- Request for an additional five-year term on the leases for Lawsbrook Rd & Knox Trail PV arrays

Peter Bay provided an update on both Lawsbrook and Knox Trail projects.

##### Lawsbrook Update -

Module installation has started and should take about a month to have those modules up. By the end of this year this project should be close to completion. After modules are up there is still a series of wiring to be done. Energy storage installation will coincide with power source from Eversource. Batteries can’t sit out without their power to keep under warranty. December we should see a project that looks fully complete and look to energize in early 2022 (January or February). Of the racking installation this was one of the first times that this happened where there were zero refusals. Eversource has done a portion of their work. They have installed two poles and still have seven more to install. We are not going to wait until utility is done we are still active getting our work done on the site.

Ms. Amir-Lin: inquired about the Eversource timeline. She would like clarity on their timeline. They need to have finished their work to have battery banks to be installed. How does this coincide with pole installation you spoke about? Peter stated that Eversource can give some temporary power service that would meet requirement to house battery. There is a timeline that they had given us in the interconnection agreement which was six weeks in total. The team will be able to push EverSource along if they aren't within the 6 weeks. The other form of mitigation to offset their delay would be to get a small generator and use that for temporary power to the container units. This is not preferable because we would be running a generator and there could be noise issues for neighbors. Erika inquired as to where they are in their six week agreement period? Peter stated that once they install their two poles he will have to check but believes that they are more than half way through that timeline. Erika stated that this could be the bottle neck with completing the project. Peter stated that the construction team doesn't feel that this will happen based upon his discussions with them.

#### Knox Trail Update –

Fully permitted. Waiting on an EPA comfort letter. Will take about 3 weeks to get that letter. EverSource – made final payment three weeks ago. Submitting final one line diagram to them within the next week.

Barry Rosen: do you anticipate an easier time in negotiating a new pilot agreement? Peter stated that he sent an email to John Mangiaratti on Friday. Try to use the existing template we have for Lawsbrook but it will need to be tweaked. This will add time to this project. He already got the approval to negotiate the new pilot agreement so that will save time.

Chris Allen: for Lawsbrook, we have not seen a final form lease agreement yet. Peter will forward that along to Chris.

Chris Allen: Do you anticipate lease execution for Knox Trail or will that be waiting on the additional five year request? Peter responded that we had been of the understanding that regardless of the five-year term we would have to wait until lease is executed. If we are able to parse the two out and enter the lease with the same term as Lawsbrook had before annual meeting that would be flexible and our team would be able to do some site work. Ultimately we would try and get on the March meeting for the additional terms for Lawsbrook and Knox Trail.

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

- Current sample data, if available
- Any updates or discussion from the PFAS Working Group

Matt Mostoller: data through the month of October. Sent an update of this information to our email list and posted onto our website. All samples in month of October were below the State's 20 Part Per Trillion (PPT) Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL). We have initiated November sampling. The only outstanding samples are for North Acton. We collected raw water from Conant 2. Conant 1 well has been offline for entire month of October.

Mr. Allen: received 48 applications for the water bottle rebates. To-date we are crediting \$2,200 on January water bills as a rebate.

#### **Other projects updated:**

Assabet 3 going to bid – advertised in the state's Central Register on November 17<sup>th</sup>. Opening Filed sub bids on December 6<sup>th</sup> and full General Contractor bids on December 16<sup>th</sup>. Most of this project is

directional drilling. Not sure how it will be disrupted/impacted from supply chain issues. Hoping that this project will go smoothly and into service on-time.

The Engineer, Wright-Pierce, is ready to provide a draft on North Acton feasibility study in relationship to rental system we have been evaluated. By next week we should have a draft report.

Erika Amir-Lin: requested having Engineer attend a meeting for a general update on projects.

### 3. Update on the Water Conservation Rebate Program

Matt Mostoller gave an update. We are having a successful year. The District has already credited \$8,200 since the end of September 2021. We have received applications that we haven't approved yet. Typically we have had a cap at \$10,000. He would like to know if we want to hold that cap at \$10,000 and start rejecting applications or continue to accept rebates above the \$10,000? We had a good rain barrel program this year. We provided \$931 in rain barrel incentives.

Matt: We track this program on a calendar year basis and it expands over two fiscal years. These rebates are offered as abatements on water bills so not a direct outlay of money.

Barry Rosen: what is the average rebate? Matt: toilets are \$100; washing machines are \$150; and other fixtures it's 25% of purchase price up to \$50.

Matt: by extending the cap it would take us through the end of 2021.

Mr. Rosen motioned to increase the cap an additional \$3,000 to extend the value of the water conservation rebate program through December 31, 2021 and increase the cap to \$15,000 for 2022. Mr. Stuntz seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by a roll call vote: Ms. Erika Amir-Lin, Mr. Stuntz, and Mr. Rosen.

## **E. NEW BUSINESS:**

### 1. Revision of the District's Impact/Demand Fees for New Services

Mary Jo Bates – we normally raise demand fees when we put large capital projects in service. The last time we had a raise in demand fees was when we put South Acton Water Treatment Plant online. Since we are getting ready to put Central Acton Water Treatment Plant online she listed all the capital additions since the last increase which amounts to \$17,360,500 divided by number of services of 6,837 with an increase of demands of \$2,539. The current fee for 1" service is \$7,400 and increase by \$2,539 the new fee would be rounded to \$10,000 and the current multi-unit fee is \$3550 and as a percentage of the demand that would go to \$4,800.

The Finance Committee reviewed at their meeting on October 21<sup>st</sup> and they voted to recommend to the Commissioners that these fees be increased effective January 1, 2022.

Mr. Stuntz motioned to approve the District's impact/demand fees for new services effective January 1, 2022. Ms. Erika Amir-Lin seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by a roll call vote: Ms. Amir-Lin, Mr. Stuntz, and Mr. Rosen.

### 2. Proposal for Revision of the Temporary Construction (Hydrant) Meter Program

Chris Allen: this is basically putting a meter on a fire hydrant for temporary water supply. Mr. Rosen would like to change the payment schedule and make the set-up fee deposit of \$2100 payable with the application..

Mr. Allen stated that this program is not a huge revenue generator, but it is necessary because it is a deterrent to water theft as unmetered/illegal connections to hydrants if contractors are not notifying and paying for the water use and hook up fees.

Mr. Rosen motioned to approve the temporary construction hydrant meter program application. Mr. Stuntz seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by a roll call vote: Ms. Amir-Lin, Mr. Stuntz, and Mr. Rosen.

*Other New Business:*

Mr. Allen stated that we made some staffing changes on the Operations side. Stephen Peterson retired. Lucas Peterson subsequently left. Recently rehired an operator who started on November 1<sup>st</sup> and we also hired an entry level laborer who started on November 8<sup>th</sup>.

We are currently looking for a part-time Environmental Analyst to work with Matt. This is a new role and it has been posted on our website and advertised on Massachusetts Water Works and New England Water Works websites.

*Ms. Ami-Lin motioned to adjourn the open meeting at 8:25 PM. Mr. Rosen seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by a roll call vote: Mr. Stuntz, Ms. Amir-Lin, and Mr. Rosen. Mr. Rosen moved to enter into Executive Session at 8:25 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.*