

Water Supply District of Acton

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Board of Water Commissioners Meeting Agenda

Monday, January 27th, 2025 @ 7:00 PM

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- **Comments from the public**
- **Approve minutes from the meeting of 1/13**
- **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
- Review Draft Budget for FY '26 and proposed articles for 2025 Annual District Meeting Warrant
- Discuss Commissioners Annual report
- Discussion of Power Purchase Options

NEW BUSINESS:

- Review Powdermill Place Water Connection Agreement
- Assignment of Lease at 104 Powdermill Road Rear

Any agenda item(s) which did not come to the attention of the Board of Water Commissioners 48 hours prior to this meeting and were not reasonably anticipated.

Board of Water Commissioners

Meeting Agenda

Monday, January 13, 2025 @ 7:00 PM

AGENDA

- Comments from the public
- Approve minutes from the meeting of 12/23
- 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
- Bottled Water Rebate update
- Kelley's Corner Update
- Review Draft Budget for FY '26 and proposed articles for 2025 Annual District Meeting Warrant

NEW BUSINESS:

- Discuss Commissioners Annual report
- Update on the District's water conservation & efficiency programs
- Discussion of Power Purchase Options

Present at Tonight's Meeting:

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

Finance Committee: John Petersen

District Manager: Matt Mostoller

District Treasurer: Christine McCarthy

Environmental Compliance Manager: Katy Orciuch

Public: Bill Guthlein, Ron Parenti

START OF MINUTES

Mr. Rosen opened the meeting at 7:01pm.

Comments from the public

None at this point in time.

Approve minutes from the meeting of 12/23

Mr. Rosen motioned to approve the minutes from the meeting of 12/23/24. Mr. Stuntz seconded, and it was unanimously approved via a roll call vote, Ms. Amir Lin, Mr. Stuntz, Mr. Rosen.

Appoint one Commissioner to sign warrants while conducting meetings virtually

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

OLD BUSINESS:

Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS)

Current sample data, if available

Mr. Mostoller informed the board that raw water samples were collected at the end of December, and January samples had not been collected yet. As discussed in the previous meeting, sample results from South Acton have been increasing but have not yet crossed the state MCL. The raw water at South Acton suggested two specific wells, Christofferson and Scribner, driving that increase in PFAS sample results. Additional sampling will be completed in the coming weeks.

Discussion of Additional PFAS Upgrades

Mr. Mostoller shared several photos of project progress on the screen. In South Acton most of the perimeter wall is in place, and the foundation is built in a way to allow ongoing work. Mr. Mostoller shared photos of the work inside the walls, and the electrical conduit.

On the Center Acton project, he shared photos of the site, the tent the General Contractor used to continue concrete work, and work being done inside the tent. Mr. Mostoller then covered work on the bedrock wells, the meter vault, and the pitless adaptors. Mr. Mostoller estimated that the bedrock wells may be ready in May.

Mr. Mostoller then reported that at the most recent progress meeting for both the Center and South Acton projects, the filtration equipment vendor reported that they will again have to delay delivery of the vessels. The vessels were originally set to be delivered in November, which was then pushed to early January. In December that January date was then pushed to February, and during the January meeting the February date was pushed to the end of March. Mr. Mostoller will meet with both project teams to discuss the delay, how to keep the project moving, and what recourse they may have with the vendor.

Mr. Stuntz asked for the reason for the delay, and Mr. Mostoller reported that a retooling project of a factory in Florida is the cause of the delay. Mr. Mostoller noted this delay is not a big concern for South Acton, but for the Center Acton project no vertical construction can happen until the vessels are in place. They are examining possible solutions, and if the vessels may be partially shipped.

Mr. John Petersen asked if the board would update citizens on these projects in progress at the Annual Meeting. Mr. Rosen responded they have not gotten that far in planning.

Bottled Water Rebate Update

Ms. McCarthy reported that rebates for the past quarter totaled \$7,155. The program had no additional applicants and 7 people left the program because they moved, sold their home, or were no longer eligible. The majority of the rebate appeared as a credit to homeowners.

Kelley's Corner Update

Mr. Mostoller informed the board that the final connection was completed today. The water portion of this project is essentially done with only minor work, such as adjusting gate boxes during paving to remain. Mr. Mostoller thanked Charles Rouleau and Robert Dionne, as the primary District inspectors on this project. Invoicing typically lags behind the work completed, but there was only one minor change order that is currently working its way through the system. Mr. Mostoller expects this project to be in good financial shape. Mr. Mostoller then reviewed how this update fits into the larger construction project, and the benefits of this work in Kelley's Corner.

Review Draft Budget for FY '26 and proposed articles for 2025 Annual District Meeting Warrant

Mr. Mostoller presented the second iteration of the FY 26 Budget and reviewed the changes from the last iteration. The \$100,000 for media is now in the operating budget, \$60,000 is

set for the acquisition of a service truck instead of doing a separate appropriation. The projected revenue for new service connections and demand fees has been increased as Mr. Mostoller and Ms. McCarthy can confidently say they will see that minimum being reached in the coming fiscal year. The last major change reflects a 3% rate increase.

The budget is still carrying \$400,000 for meter replacement. The Finance Committee at their last meeting voted to recommend spreading the cost of meters out over a longer term. Mr. Mostoller and Ms. McCarthy do not yet know what that set up would exactly be and are asking the board for their input before they begin to investigate this recommendation.

The board then began discussion on this topic, Mr. Stuntz said such a set up would likely include borrowing of some kind. Mr. Rosen asked if this recommendation entailed only funding 25% in the first year or using a revolving fund, to which Mr. Mostoller replied with information about the installation process. The commissioners continue to hypothesize what this set up would look like and the challenges with each model.

Ms. Amir Lin asked if the rate increase is being largely driven by the meters, and if that line of thinking is driving this recommendation to spread out the meter expense. Mr. Mostoller responded that this recommendation sees the meters as a capital expense, which are usually paid over multiple years with free cash.

Mr. Petersen responded to explain the Finance Committee's insight into this recommendation, which included the service life of meters, the operating budget and free cash position, and the rate increase.

Mr. Mostoller clarified that the cost of the meter replacement is not driving the rate increase. The 3% increase is tracking for inflation, and is partially affected by the service truck acquisition, the media replacement, and the current free cash position. He added that the meter replacement could be considered a capital expenditure but because it's a routine replacement it might not be an ideal expense for borrowing as opposed to the larger capital projects.

Mr. Stuntz agreed with Ms. Amir Lin that it is likely not ideal to borrow for this kind of project. Mr. Rosen agreed with that as well and noted the consensus of the commissioners on this topic. Mr. Petersen, Mr. Mostoller and Ms. McCarthy then briefly reviewed the costs for the replacement over a 4-year span. Ms. McCarthy noted that because the meter replacement will take several years, they can choose a hybrid option down the road and revisit the borrowing proposal at a later phase if desired.

Mr. Rosen then asked if they knew how many units the yearly meter line item would cover, which Mr. Mostoller reported they are still working through. The board and Mr. Mostoller then continued to discuss how the cost could be broken up over four years, issues that may delay the process like a lag in customer response, and comparing the meter replacement costs with the water main replacement costs.

The board then changed over to review the proposed warrant articles for the upcoming annual meeting. Mr. Rosen reviewed the proposed articles. Mr. Mostoller noted that the media replacement as it's set up will provide preauthorization to borrow money, which would enable them to act more quickly, should we need to access additional money for filtration media. The board had no issues over the warrant articles as currently drafted.

Mr. Rosen commented that last year he received feedback that people wanted more explanation on warrant articles, and he wanted to ask the board for their thoughts on how to approach this feedback. The board began their discussion. Ms. Amir Lin noted that some articles are straightforward enough that they may not need explanation, and Mr. Mostoller noted that the commissioners provide extra information when the article is presented. The board continued to discuss how to approach this, noting that an additional booklet is likely not necessary, but articles about mitigation or revolving funds are confusing and could use some explanation.

Mr. Petersen commented that he would be in favor of more information in multiple formats, text and spoken out loud not unlike what was done for the special meeting this year. The board wrapped up their discussion on this item.

NEW BUSINESS:

Discuss Commissioners Annual Report

Mr. Rosen and Mr. Mostoller were pleased with the current draft of the Commissioners Annual Report. Ms. Amir Lin and Mr. Stuntz did share their feedback on several clarifying points but felt the report was in good shape. Mr. Rosen and Mr. Mostoller will continue to coordinate to finalize this report.

Mr. Rosen returned to Mr. Petersen's earlier question about providing project updates at the annual meeting. The board discussed this idea, covering how the annual report does summarize the year, and project updates are done every two weeks at the regular meetings. Mr. Stuntz suggested displaying the photos Mr. Mostoller shared tonight so people could more easily see the progress. Mr. Petersen agreed with this suggestion and added that a poster with a small article on it could be very impactful at the annual meeting.

Mr. Petersen and the board then discussed the finance committee's draft letter.

Update on the District's Water Conservation & Efficiency Programs

Ms. Orciuch shared that this year's rebate programs totaled \$6,009. An additional \$1,500 was provided in rain barrel incentives. Applications for toilet rebates increased, while applications for washing machines and fixtures both decreased; applications are coming in on a regular basis.

Mr. Rosen asked about the flushometer program, which Mr. Mostoller reported is open but had no applications since its inception. Mr. Mostoller then went into their goals to ramp up programs for commercial and industrial customers. The overall program has not reached the traditional \$10,000 cap.

Mr. Rosen motioned to continue the rebate and incentive program up to a ceiling of \$10,000 per calendar year for 2025. Ms. Amir Lin seconded, and it was unanimously approved via a roll call vote, Ms. Amir Lin, Mr. Stuntz, Mr. Rosen.

Discussion of Power Purchase Options

Mr. Mostoller updated the board on their previous discussion of joining the Acton Power Choice program. They are now in a position where they are close to getting caught up on their solar program credits. Staff recently spoke with the Acton Sustainability Office, who informed them that the town uses a third-party energy contractor instead of the Acton Power Choice program. Ms. Orciuch and other staff are looking for other energy alternatives that could provide additional cost savings, they have received a proposal that they will begin to evaluate and present at a future meeting.

Mr. Mostoller then informed the board how their direction to balance cost savings with renewable energy contribution informed their proposal evaluation metrics. Mr. Mostoller then briefly went over some of the early conversations in the proposal process. Mr. Mostoller and Ms. Orciuch continue to make progress on exploring energy alternatives to lower the District's costs, improve the predictability of their energy costs, and to better understand their energy portfolio.

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

Meeting Closed at 8:23 pm.

FY 26 Budget Draft

	Actual FY 23	Budget FY 24	Actual FY 24	Budget FY 25	2nd Qtr Actual FY 25	%	FY 25 Projection (as of end of 2nd Qtr)	FY 26 Proposed	% increase/decrease from approved FY 25 Budget
EXPENSES									
Audit/Accounting	16,000	20,000	15,800	22,500	16,000.00	71%	16,000	28,000	24%
Auto Maint & Fuel	38,197	52,000	35,039	53,560	26,891.80	50%	53,560.00	75,000	40%
Short Term Debt	215,986	-	383,554	184,273	258,638.81	140%	1,202,796	-	-100%
Long Term Debt	1,661,539	2,752,416	2,137,481	2,164,711	211,869.41	10%	961,915	2,255,740	4%
Chemicals	101,504	160,000	128,371	168,000	71,652.93	43%	168,000	184,800	10%
DEP Withdrawal	5,121	5,000	4,967	5,000	4,791.15	96%	5,000	5,000	0%
Employee Education	9,627	17,500	10,899	17,500	4,703.79	27%	17,500	17,500	0%
Engineering	30,319	60,000	18,893	60,000	26,670.45	44%	60,000	60,000	0%
Health/Life Insurance Active	236,718	267,896	104,922	258,418	130,864.59	51%	258,418	295,601	14%
Health/Life Insurance Retiree	-	108,899	100,187	115,847	53,675.04	46%	115,847	131,121	13%
Information Reports	34,130	50,000	38,163	30,000	2,556.31	9%	30,000	40,000	33%
Insurance	97,644	118,800	98,781	133,056	111,843.50	84%	113,157	141,650	6%
Laboratory Analysis	83,991	100,000	80,371	85,000	35,095.50	41%	85,000	85,000	0%
Legal	55,170	75,000	74,992	100,500	34,004.90	34%	100,500	110,000	9%
Lights/Power/Fuel	454,572	600,000	581,743	600,000	292,211.08	49%	600,000	600,000	0%
Maintenance & Operations	466,116	420,000	407,534	608,000	201,760.35	33%	608,000	750,000	23%
Media Replacement	-	-	-	-	-	0%	-	100,000	100%
NAWTP PFAS Filter Lease	-	-	-	335,750	154,483.00	46%	335,750	322,000	-4%
Middlesex Retirement	288,240	330,838	330,838	354,740	354,740.00	100%	354,740	397,791	12%
Meters	75,000	125,000	121,245	125,000	105,489.39	84%	125,000	400,000	220%
Office Supplies & Postage	82,576	96,000	63,362	62,000	18,216.09	29%	62,000	50,000	-19%
Software Subscriptions/ IT Maintenance	-	-	-	60,000	30,475.41	51%	60,000	125,000	108%
Telephone	-	-	-	21,000	9,916.87	47%	21,000	21,000	0%
Reserve Fund	100,000	100,000	89,506	100,000	-	0%	100,000	100,000	0%
Salaries & Wages	1,552,117	1,727,988	1,430,640	1,633,565	716,550.70	44%	1,633,565	1,675,000	3%
Vehicle	-	-	-	-	-	0%	-	60,000	100%
Total	5,604,567	7,187,338	6,257,288	7,298,420	2,873,101.07	39%	7,087,748	8,030,202	10%
REVENUE									
Water Revenue	3,070,585	3,084,795	2,887,849	4,052,399	2,599,412.75	64%	4,499,777	4,602,230	
Service Fee	538,005	544,500	537,645	534,000	268,905.00	50%	534,000	534,000	
Debt Fee	2,152,020	2,752,629	2,486,668	2,349,600	1,183,182.00	50%	2,349,600	2,260,600	
Total Water Revenue	5,760,610	6,381,924	5,912,162	6,935,999	4,051,499.75	58%	7,383,377	7,396,830	
Fire Protection Sprinklers	40,931	41,000	42,326	41,000	42,337.96	103%	41,000	41,000	
Rent/Lease	655,092	493,570	545,337	115,000	65,692.28	57%	115,000	115,000	
Solar Field lease revenue	-	-	-	385,000	-	0%	385,000	385,000	
Repairs/Installation	57,314	50,000	32,118	50,000	11,817.54	24%	50,000	50,000	
Cross Connection	18,285	21,000	25,145	21,000	14,990.50	71%	21,000	21,000	
Demand Fees	263,000	300,000	35,800	200,000	39,600.00	20%	150,000	250,000	
Mitigation Fees	66,776	100,000	17,402	100,000	9,595.00	10%	75,000	-	
New Services Meter Installation RF	-	-	15,392	100,000	7,363.13	7%	25,000	-	
Total Other Revenue	1,101,398	1,005,570	713,520	1,012,000	191,396.41	19%	862,000	862,000	
Total	6,862,008	7,387,494	6,625,682	7,947,999	4,242,896.16	53%	8,245,377	8,258,830	
Revenue Estimate FY 25	July billing	1,856,335	Actual					\$ 228,627.31	potential revenue surplus
	October billing	2,277,022	Actual						
	January billing	1,737,442	Actual						
	April billing	1,500,020	Projected						
	Fire Protection	41,000							
	Repairs/Misc	50,000							
	Cross Conn	21,000							
	Rent	115,000							
	Solar Lease revenue	385,000							
	New Service Meter Revenue	25,000							
	Mitigation	75,000							
	Demand	150,000							
	Projected Income	8,232,819							
	Units	8,900							
	Services	6,864							
	6/30/2024 Free Cash	45,895							
	Appropriations	-							
	Free Cash Balance	45,895							
	12/31/2024 Grace Unappropriated	547,139							
	Filter M&O	-							
	Wells	100,000							
	Grace Balance	447,139							
3% rate increase	4,468,184.22	4,602,229.75							
FY 2025	July Actual	October Actual	January projected	April projected	Total				
Service Fee	134,310	134,595	134,310	134,310	537,525				
Debt Fee	590,964	592,218	590,964	590,964	2,365,110				
Debt fee = \$66.00/unit per qtr									
Service fee = \$15/ unit per qtr									
FY 2026 Debt fee projected to be \$63.50 per unit/per qtr based on 8,900 units									

DRAFT

Report of the Commissioners for 2024

This year has been a busy one for the District, with many significant things taking place—seemingly simultaneously—keeping staff, management and your commissioners very active throughout the year. Our Environmental Compliance Manager, Alex Wahlstrom, resigned during the summer to accept a position with the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection. The District was pleased to welcome Katy Orciuch, from the Cambridge Water Department, as our new Environmental Compliance Manager. Christine McCarthy, our District Treasurer and her husband William welcomed their daughter, Corinne, on August 31. Christine has returned from her leave and has been busy with the financial affairs of the District.

Compliance with the United States Environmental Protection Agency's (USEPA) Lead and Copper Rule Revisions began on October 16th, 2024. An initial service line inventory was due on this date and is the first step towards finalizing a baseline service line inventory, due in October 2027. The inventory is used to determine if there are any service lines categorized as lead or galvanized requiring replacement in the system. At that time, we must replace 10% of service lines categorized as lead, galvanized requiring replacement, or unknown each year, completing all replacements within 10 years. Staff reviewed historical records, interviewed former employees and excavated connections to buildings. As required by law, informational letters utilizing the USEPA required template were sent to customers with service lines categorized as lead or galvanized requiring replacement. Another letter was sent to customers who have a connection of an unknown type to their home, requesting they do a self-inspection or to contact the District for assistance in determining the connection within their home. We will continuously update this inventory as we uncover more information. Corrosion control is practiced at all of the treatment facilities to minimize lead leaching from pipes into the drinking water and we maintain compliance with all lead and copper regulations.

The first per- and polyfluoroalkyl substance (PFAS) filtration system was publicly celebrated in North Acton at a ribbon cutting ceremony on June 26. The event was covered by Acton TV, and attendees included Fran Arsenault, Dean Charter and Alissa Nicol, representing the Acton Select Board, the District commissioners, District Manager, staff and many members of the community. Prior to the ceremony, one of the design engineers and the District Manager explained the operation of the PFAS plant and how it was connected to the existing North Acton Water Treatment Plant. Water leaving the plant has been regularly tested for PFAS and continues to have no detectable PFAS since the June 1st startup.

On June 13, a Special District meeting was held with a single article asking voters to approve an additional \$2.53M to the \$7.82M already approved at 2023 Annual Meeting for PFAS mitigation at the Central Acton Water Treatment Plant (CAWTP). This was necessary because the bids to construct the PFAS filtration system and to connect the new bedrock wells at 549 Main Street to the CAWTP came in higher than the money previously allocated. Due to competition for public construction projects, and PFAS filtration construction specifically, only 2 qualified vendors bid on the contract. In order to avoid rebidding and taking a chance, that new bids could be higher, and avoid losing the opportunity for a Clean Water Trust loan, with the possibility of some principal forgiveness, the commissioners asked you, the voters, to allow the District to increase the bonding commitment. The vote was unanimously approved allowing us to apply for a larger loan and award the contract to one of the contractors. The commissioners thank you for your support

and trust. We will continue to do our best to make the right decisions in providing you with high quality water. Currently, the Central Acton and South Acton PFAS treatment plants are under construction with anticipated completion by the end of 2025.

After several years of ongoing discussions and negotiations, the District and BALDCO, the operator of an AM radio station, reached agreement and closed a deal in which the District would purchase BALDCO's land adjacent to our Assabet wellfield. We are leasing back to BALDCO that portion of the land on which their radio antennas and equipment building are located. Now the District will control all access to the property, which will better protect our water supply and prevent encroachment from commercial property uses along Knox Trail.

Like you, the District has experienced cost escalations in items like property insurance, health insurance, materials and energy. At the same time, the amount of water sold—our only product—decreased. After a thorough financial analysis and thoughtful deliberation, the commissioners approved a significant rate increase which went into effect with the July 2024 water bill. The average customer should see between a 15 – 18% increase in their quarterly water bills due to this rate change.

The question of whether the District should pursue a connection to the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA) and, if so, what type of connection should be made has been a question on many people's minds for some time. It is a complicated question because there are many moving parts, including the number of municipalities that might participate and the high cost to construct the necessary infrastructure. With high level feasibility having been completed, we need to seek answers on the local issues to better understand costs, strategies, availability of financial assistance, benefit analysis and how a regional approach may benefit all of us. The Town of Maynard has expressed interest in aggressively pursuing these "local" issues and the District began discussions with Maynard to partner with them. The commissioners authorized our attorney to draft an IMA (intermunicipal agreement) to be circulated to several towns to join us in exploring cost sharing models associated with the pursuit of an MWRA expansion to MetroWest. Partnering with our neighbors will reduce the cost to individual towns and provide the consortium with a single representative who would be able to focus the effort examining these issues. Several towns have expressed interest in signing the IMA. We hope that this process will move forward so that in the future, the District will be able to present the findings to the community along with recommendations for action by the voters.

As you may know, the commissioners typically meet twice a month. Our meeting schedule is posted on our website along with up-to-date information on other District activities. The commissioners encourage you to attend our meetings whenever possible. We make it a practice to begin each meeting with time for any attendee to ask questions, seek clarifications, tell us about a problem/issue or just let us know how we are doing. Of course, you are always welcome to phone (978-263-9107), visit the staff at our office, or by emailing us at commissioners@actonwater.com.

Respectfully submitted,

Barry Rosen, Chair
Erika Amir-Lin
Stephen Stuntz

Power Purchase Agreement

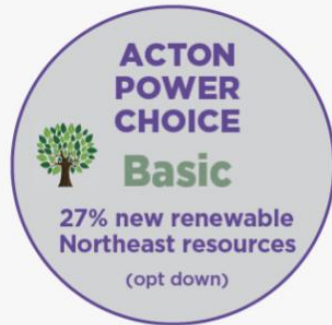
Acton Power Choice Vs. Constellation

Current Set Up

- All accounts use Acton Power Choice except South Acton
- NAWTP and CAWTP are enrolled in basic, which is the Massachusetts minimum of 27%
- All other accounts are enrolled in standard with is 73% green energy
- SAWTP is not enrolled in a power purchase agreement, the rate changes monthly and it's 27% green.
- An average of 75% of the power used in SAWTP come directly from solar
- Credit savings stay the same no matter what the rate is because there is always \$.01 difference between what we pay Standard Solar and what we get as a credit

Acton Power Choice

Constellation



14.411 ¢/kWh



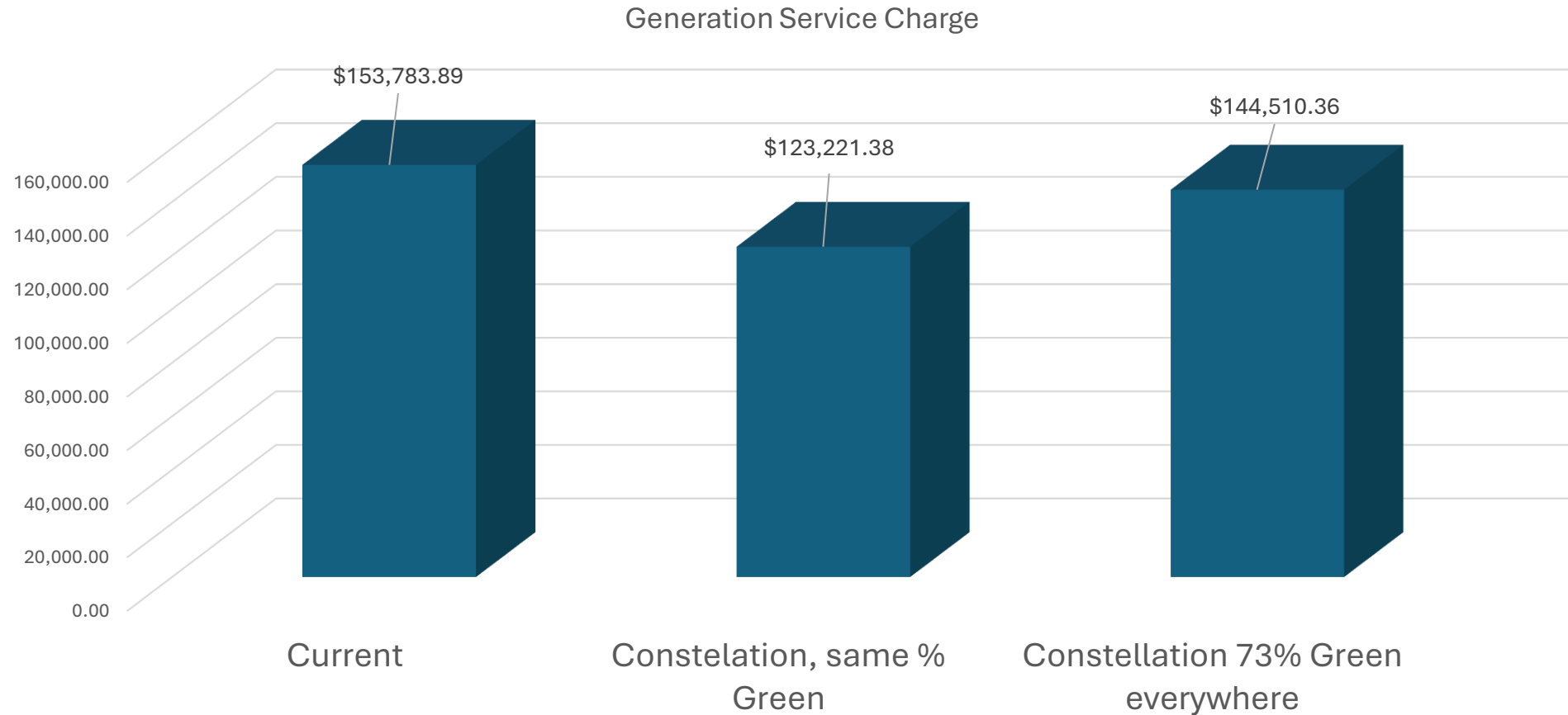
16.031 ¢/kWh



17.039 ¢/kWh

Start Month) on meter reads)	End Month (on meter reads)	PO Rate (No Additional Green)	PO Rate = Meets Current State Mandates + Additional MA Class 1
April 2025	Dec 2025	\$.1087	\$.1408 = 73% additional MA Class 1
Dec 2025	Dec 2026	\$.1192	\$.1489 = 70% additional MA Class 1
Dec 2026	Dec 2027	\$.1186	\$.1469 = 67% additional MA Class 1

Overview, not including SAWTP



South Acton Generation Charge and Credits

