



# Chelmsford Water District

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## CHELMSFORD WATER DISTRICT REGULAR COMMISSIONERS' MEETING December 21, 2022

### PRESENT:

Commissioners

Bill Martin

Ron Wetmore

John Harrington

Superintendent

Andy Reid

Business Director/Treasurer

Lisa Quatrale

Environmental Compliance

Todd Melanson

Consultant

Robert Delaney

Recording Secretary

Michaela Thompson

Town Selectperson

Pat Wojtas

Commissioner Martin called the Regular Meeting of the Commissioners to order at 1:01pm with all reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

### Open Session:

Nancy Yoder of 207 Dalton Road did not attend the meeting.

### Environmental Compliance Report – Todd Melanson

Mr. Melanson updated the Commissioners on the District's efforts in complying with the EPA's required sampling pool following the Lead and Copper Rule Revisions (LCRR). Although the District performs the sampling twice a year, Mr. Melanson stated he was having trouble getting District customers to participate in the program and was wondering if the District could offer an incentive to get volunteers. Commissioner Martin asked him to first reach out to other District Superintendents to find out what they are offering and what their success rate is with getting volunteers for the program. Commissioner Martin added that a request for volunteers should be listed on our website.

Mr. Melanson distributed a document, titled "**Environmental Compliance Manager's Report Summary**", dated December 21, 2022.

- 1) PFAS** – Compliance readings for 4<sup>th</sup> quarter 2022: Crooked Spring WTP: 14, Riverneck WTP: 16, Smith Street WTP: NT. **Short term required PFAS actions** MassDEP status is same as last update: MassDEP approve bottle rebate program, should the District violate the MCL again. **Long-Term Corrective Action Plan** was approved by MassDEP with conditions at Crooked Spring WTP. **Class Action Suit**: same as last update. Bell Weather case due to start trial January 2023; Initial settlement talks have gained momentum.
- 2) Summer Restrictions**: same as last update. Given the water indices (wells, tanks, stream gage and GW monitoring wells), the Restriction Program was allowed to expire on October 15<sup>th</sup>.
- 3) Energy Program Update: A) Solar REC Credit Sales**: The District received the new contract with Sol Systems, LLC; 587 credits YTD/Dec=13 so far. **B) Solar Array**: Operating well within norms. **C) National Grid Billing**: No overlapping in billing has continued in neither Electric nor Gas. **C1) NG**

**Natural Gas Overcharge:** Mr. Melanson is tracking and states that this should be used up this fiscal year. It is now down to \$818.00. **D) Third Party Electric Supply Contract:** working with same company (**Single Source Energy Solutions, Inc.**) should still consider another round of price quotes.

- 4) Town Issues:** **A) Town Center Improvements:** Same as last update (Continue to monitor the situation and progress of what is being proposed as this section of town has roughly 7 separate RTN's spread out within this area. **A1)** Mr. Melanson has concerns over work done at 1 Billerica Rd with the monitoring well there detecting PFAS above the groundwater threshold. He recommends no private well be allowed for irrigation and should have runoff protections put in place). **A2)** Same as last update: 9 Acton Rd project does not have our submitted concerns and requests noted on the project: Monitoring well(s), a Preliminary PFAS sampling and certification on excavated soil and fill brought in. **B) Apollo Drive Development:** Mr. Melanson is maintaining communication with the Town on this site about the District's concerns. Board of Health is providing cooperative assistance. **C) Riverneck Road Project:** Same as last update. Mr. Melanson's concern is the near proximity to the Riverneck Road wells and Treatment. He has noted that all stormwater needs to be directed towards the Northeast side of the property. At this time, he is unsure as to the sewer/septic determination for this project.
- 5) State Drought Status:** The State Drought Task Force met December 9<sup>th</sup> with the following decisions: **A)** Western Regions placed at Normal (no drought). **B)** Conn River Valley at Level 1. **C)** The Northeast Region, Cape and Islands Regions placed in a Level 2 drought.
- 6) Outreach:** **A)** Schools: organizing for this year. **B)** Website Email Opt-In: now online. **C)** Meetings with Jason Kauppi: continuing with good progress. Contact made with Congresswoman Trahan's office/staff.

#### **Business Director/Treasurer's Report – Lisa Quatrale (out of order)**

Ms. Quatrale presented her report titled "December 2022 - Business Director Report" which included documentation on FY2023 Expense and Revenue, FY2023 Article Balances and Enterprise Investment and OPEB accounts.

**Audit Activity:** Waiting for free cash certification.

**District Financial Policy Guidelines:** Same as last update. Work in progress and first draft was submitted to Superintendent and Commissioners on August 15<sup>th</sup>. Plan is to finalize and have adopted by Board of Water Commissioners FY23.

**Liens:** 91 accounts were submitted to the Town for non-payment of bills through end of prior fiscal year (June 2022). These accounts will be included on the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> quarter tax bills. Ms. Quatrale noted that this is the largest amount of liens the District has sent to the Town, since placing the shut-off program on hold. Benefit to not shutting off water: it assists customers from being imposed fees associated with turn on, turn off and registered letter fees. Disadvantage: District has longer accounts receivable timeline and accumulation of fees. She noted that the District does continue to charge interest on all overdue bills. The Commissioners agreed that the best course of action with all non-payment billing is to send to lien.

**Tampering with Meter – disconnected and bypassed:** Details of meter tampering account were shared with Board of Water Commissioners and District Attorney. Two certified letters were sent to homeowner regarding updated billing charges and the need for inspection. District and Town Plumbing Inspector have inspected and all information has been forwarded to the Town's Sewer Department. As of the date of this meeting, balance due on account is \$10,217.70, with interest accruing daily. This account was not included in the lien program as the charges were after prior fiscal year.

**Meter Program and Vadar Cloud Conversion:** Concerns over Vadar processing speeds for reports has continued. Vadar indicated that moving the program from the server and into the cloud will help speed up processing times. Ti-Sales has indicated that it would be in the best interest of the District to convert

the Meter Reading Program from the current N-Sight software (which is being sunsetted) to Neptune 360 at the same time as the Vadar conversion. The District's IT company, Stratuspoint, supports the move for both programs. Ms. Quatralle created a team to review timeline, budgeting and interaction with other systems, such as the District's GIS system. The team consists of Lisa, Andy, Michaela, Jim Rogers and Dan Tringale. Cost is approximately \$20k and will be absorbed in the FY23 Meter Replacement budget and FY23 Infrastructure Upgrade. The Meter Replacement Program will also continue as it is important to replace the remaining 187 meters that cannot data download.

***Preparing for January 2023 Rate Increase and Infrastructure Increase:***

First bills with new rate structure will be sent out approximately the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of January. The team has created a timeline with dates and steps needed to successfully update Vadar program, City Hall Systems, website, schedule of fees pamphlet, etc.

***Irrigation SOP Meeting:***

Amy and Todd are developing a standardized SOP program in regards to permits and irrigation. More information will follow once SOP is completed and accepted. Currently in process.

***FY24 Holiday Schedule:***

Ms. Quatralle presented the FY24 Holiday Schedule which was approved by all three Commissioners.

***Real Estate Activity:*** Finals processed in November = 20 properties.

***Staff Lunch:*** Enterprise Bank treated the District staff to a wonderful lunch. Everyone appreciated the gesture and are appreciative for the incredible customer service they provide to the District.

Ms. Quatralle summarized the financial reports. Commissioner Martin asked how often the investment account is reviewed with Enterprise Bank. In response, Ms. Quatralle said generally once a year but that we could invite the bank representatives to a Commissioners' meeting or schedule a meeting with them to review sooner. Commissioner Martin said he would just like to be reassured and compared it to reviewing the District's IT security.

Review of the expense and revenue report brought up questions regarding the increase of the cost of Police details. The District is paying the same rate as any other contractor for Town of Chelmsford Police Services. Andy Reid had a discussion with Lt. Colin Spence and he indicated that this has always been the rate and is part of the Police Contract. The Rate increased this year and will be increasing again soon which has caused concern for our budget line item. Commissioner Harrington indicated he would have a conversation with Town Police.

**Superintendent's Report – Andy Reid**

A document titled "Superintendent's Report for December 21, 2022 BoWC Meeting" was distributed to the Board.

1. **Draft Language for Rules and Regulation Update:** At issue is the cost of the replacement material needed for a finished surface, after a service line leak or water main break. Updating the rules and regulations would address who is responsible for the cost of surface replacement, when the surface area to be replaced is more expensive material (e.g., brickwork or tile), than what CWD typically uses (e.g., paving with bituminous asphalt) as a finished surface material. Commissioner Martin pointed out that the recent costly repair in the Center could have been worse. Commissioner Wetmore stated that he felt the cost was on the District, and that the situation in the Center was incidental. Mr. Reid presented two choices of new language for the update to the Rules and Regulations. Discussion ensued. Commissioner Martin asked Superintendent Reid to reach out to the Town for a meeting in order to set some parameters before we face another situation like the Center one. Commissioner John Harrington was in agreement and thought that as a good neighbor, a sit-down meeting would be good.

2. **Leak Detection Survey Completed:** Chart showing total leaks and type of leaks. Service leaks are the largest portion. Operation currently working on addressing.
3. **Canal Generator:** Repaired and propane tank replaced.
4. **AECOM PFAS:** Bench scale testing complete. Looking for report early next year.
5. **Land behind 243 Riverneck Road Watershed Protection Land:** Discussion ensued over two appraisals that produced opposite end evaluations. More information is needed before the Commissioners make any decision.
6. **Patriot Way Looping:** Mr. Reid has received no response to certified mailings, phone calls and door knocking. Recommends discontinuing project and shifting funds to other projects.
7. **Finished annual well cleaning process.**
8. **Breaks:** a) Main Breaks at Proctor, Old Westford Road, Carriage and Brook/Winter Street. b) Operations addressed several service lines and service-related items.
9. **First phase of the horizontal asset management** was initiated with hydrant flow testing.
10. **Funding Sources:**
  - a) FEMA/MEMA HMG Update: Final review of proposal provided by MEMA in December. MEMA in Jan. 2023 provided recommended proposals to FEMA. FEMA now estimated to take up to 1 year to review proposals, instead of the 6 months they told them before. Mr. Reid suggests shifting the culvert replacement costs to FY24.
  - b) Community Project Funding Requests (via Congresswoman Lori Trahan). Have begun coordination with North Chelmsford Water District and East Chelmsford Water District. Project update.
  - c) Exploring MVP grant expression of interest for Misty Meadows well testing as well as Canal Street drainage.
  - d) Water System Cybersecurity Application Community Compact Regionalization: Grant headed by Town of Avon. The main goal of the District, along with other towns involved, is to share knowledge.
11. **Workshop Requests:**
  - a) Future Water Planning: Where will District obtain water next 50-100 years? b) Vacuum truck endorsement. The Commissioners agreed to discuss this after the holidays.

Commissioner Ron Wetmore requested that Zoom be available for the January 2023 meeting. Todd Melanson volunteered to be in charge of zoom setup.

Commissioner Bill Martin requested, in the interest of time, that the two items listed on the agenda for discussion (Atmospheric Water Generation and Addition of Water Rate Tier) be postponed until the January 18, 2023 meeting.

Commissioner John Harrington brought up Protocol & Policy for Infectious Illness. A short discussion revealed that more time was needed for Operations and Administration to meet with staff, to go over concerns and to further research CDC guidelines and protocols. Commissioner Martin asked that Andy Reid and Lisa Quatralle set up a meeting with staff to review their concerns. Commissioner Martin also asked that Ms. Quatralle review the Town's policy and CDC policy for COVID specifically.

**Motion to approve the minutes of the Commissioners' Meeting of October 26, 2022 was made by Commissioner Wetmore, seconded by Commissioner Harrington. All were in favor. Motion passed.**

**Motion to approve the minutes of the Executive Session of December 9, 2022 was made by Commissioner Wetmore, seconded by Commissioner Harrington. All were in favor. Motion passed.**

**Motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Wetmore. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Harrington. The Commissioners voted as follows: Mr. Wetmore, Aye. Mr. Harrington, Aye, and Mr. Martin, Aye. Motion passed.**

**Next Meeting Schedule:  
Commissioners Regular Meeting January 18, 2023 at 1:00pm**

Meeting adjourned at 4:15pm

Respectfully submitted,

Michaela A. Thompson  
Recording Secretary