



Chelmsford Water District

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CHELMSFORD WATER DISTRICT REGULAR COMMISSIONERS' MEETING JANUARY 18, 2023

PRESENT:

Commissioners

Bill Martin

Ron Wetmore (Remote)

John Harrington

Andy Reid

Superintendent

Business Director/Treasurer

Lisa Quatralo

Environmental Compliance

Todd Melanson

Consultant

Robert Delaney

Recording Secretary

Michaela Thompson

Town Selectperson

Pat Wojtas

Guest

Paul Pines

Guest

Rick Romano

MA State Representative

Rodney Elliott

Commissioner Martin called the Regular Meeting of the Commissioners to order at 1:00pm with all reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

Open Session:

Commissioner Martin asked Selectperson Pat Wojtas for an update on Town news. She stated that the Select Board election was coming up on April 4th and that the Town has two new police officers and two more training in the academy.

Commissioner Martin asked Mr. Melanson to start the meeting and then the Board could come back to Open Session.

Environmental Compliance Report – Todd Melanson

Mr. Melanson distributed a document, titled “**Environmental Compliance Manager’s Report Summary**”, dated January 18, 2023.

- 1) **PFAS** – Compliance average readings for 4th quarter 2022: Crooked Spring WTP: 12, Riverneck WTP: 15, Smith Street WT:11. **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) **Discolored Water**: Beginning late last week, the wells supplying water to the Riverneck Water Treatment Plant began to have some color (similar to the color of a tea bag in water) associated with total organic carbon. Affecting an isolated area below Billerica Road on the Riverneck side only. Working on identifying the wells and limiting their use. This is an aesthetic issue only that will subside in time. It is not any sort of a health issue.

- 3) **Energy Program Update:** **A) Solar REC Credit Sales:** The District received the new contract with Sol Systems, LLC; 610 credits final/Dec=23 so far. Equals \$30,500 **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 continuing to track and states that this should be used up this fiscal year. **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). **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:** Mr. Melanson is maintaining communication with the Town on this site about the District's concerns. Board of Health is providing cooperative assistance.
- 5) **State Drought Status:** The State Drought Task Force met January 9th with the following decisions: **A)** Conn River Valley, Central and Western Regions placed at Normal (no drought). **B)** Northeast at Level 1. **C)** The Cape and Islands Regions kept in a Level 2 drought.
- 6) **Outreach:** **A) Schools:** Still organizing for this year. **B) Website Email Opt-In:** now online with good feedback on it. **C) Meetings with Jason Kauppi:** continuing with good progress. Contact made with Congresswoman Trahan's office/staff and new legislative delegation.

Open Session (continued):

Commissioner Martin welcomed Massachusetts State Representative Rodney Elliot to the meeting.

Superintendent Reid explained to Representative Elliot that PFAS is the District's largest project and because of the ongoing costs, the District is looking for financial support. He asked if the next round of ARPA funds could include the Districts, as well as the Town. Commissioner Martin explained that even though state legislators rewarded money to the Town, the funds didn't come to the District because of the way the legislation was written, as it didn't specifically address Districts.

Lisa Quatrale stated that there's a real misconception from the public, of who's getting the money and that customers will call and question why rates are increasing when the government is giving out billions through ARPA. She explains to them that the money went to cities and towns to distribute where they see fit, but not to the water districts for PFAS remediation and other projects.

Todd Melanson stated that the District has been in touch with Congresswoman Laurie Trahan's office regarding legislation and offered to email Congressman Elliot the District's concerns and requests, as well.

Representative Elliot stated he looked forward to open lines of communication with the District and that he will be able to provide updates as they work on the State Budget. The next Representative meeting is scheduled for January 24, 2023 and he believes ARPA will be part of the next legislative bill. He stated he would reach out to Congresswoman Lori Trahan's office and get an update on the Federal Level to provide the District more information.

Business Director/Treasurer's Report – Lisa Quatrale

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.

Billing: Once again, City Hall System, the District's billing vendor inserted the CWD return envelopes into the Town's Sewer Bills, which caused confusion for customers and increased work load on staff. After discussion with CEO of CHS, they credited the District's bill \$800.

Personnel: Tyler Morgan has resigned effective 1/20/2023. Open position posted in Indeed, Mass Water Works and CWD Website.

Vacation Buy Back: Using new Personnel Policy, this was first year in which a maximum of 40 hours of vacation buyback was followed.

Operations Meeting (w/Andy Reid): Reviewed Covid, 2 Factor Authentication and Sick Time were reviewed with staff. Questions asked, discussion ensued. Team understood policies and had no further concerns.

Cell Tower Revenue: Sprint sent notification of cancellation of contract. This results in a decrease of revenue in the amount of \$71k annually.

Tampering with Meter – disconnected and bypassed: (Same as previous meeting) 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. **Update:** There has been no communication or payment from customer. Ms. Quatrale recommends proceeding with shutoff, as she has growing concerns regarding payment on account.

Shut off at Street: Despite being told water would remain off at 10 Independence Drive, usage was detected this quarter. Property is vacant and has now been shut off at the street. In December, the property was liened \$21,714.32 for last fiscal year balance. Current FY23 shows an unpaid balance of \$1,115.98. There is a separate water line with fire protection which is still on.

Meter Program and Vadar Cloud Conversion: TiSales presented to team benefits of Neptune 360 program. District saves \$2,000 by converting Neptune, Vadar Utility and Cloud together. Access to Vadar applications via system's internet browser with a secured encrypted internet connection. Vadar includes virus protection and multiple backups per day, as part of the Vadar Cloud implementation.

Roundtable with Mass Water Works Association and the Division of Local Mandates (DLM) to discuss Water District Research Project: Ms. Quatrale and Mr. Reid attended a roundtable discussion to learn more about the DLM team's goals and objectives regarding Survey for Special District Officials in Water, Fire and Sewer Districts. DLM wanted input on Budgeting, Grants, Loans, Rates, lack of available funding, aging infrastructure. Ms. Quatrale will provide a copy of the survey to the Commissioners for their review.

Preparing for January 2023 Rate Increase and Infrastructure Increase: All activities associated with updating District's systems for new rates has been completed.

W2's: 2022 W2's have been distributed.

New Conflict of Interest Database: A new conflict of interest law online training program began 1/12/2023. Amy has signed up for online training and is rolling out to District team for compliance. The new process is much easier to use.

Lead and Copper Rule Door Hangers (in conjunction with Andy Reid): Ordered and received door hangers for meter department to use in order to gain access to homes for inventory of lead and copper.

Irrigation SOP Meeting: Currently in process.

Real Estate Finals Processed in December: 19

Superintendent's Report – Andy Reid

A document titled "Superintendent's Report for January 18, 2023 BoWC Meeting" was distributed to the Board.

1. Locke Road Tank leak repaired with some areas of rust needing attention.
2. Meeting on 1/20/2023 with Town DPW on brickwork repair.
3. Supply Chain issue continues: The only domestic permanganate manufacturer facility burnt down. Mr. Reid placed order in anticipation of slow down. Staff will be working on caustic conversion in February and hope to have switch done by end of month.
4. AECOM PFAS bench scale testing complete. Meeting with AECOM end of January for budgeting purposes to discuss remaining design, permitting and bidding effort. Commissioners are invited.
5. Land behind 243 Riverneck Road Watershed Protection Land: Offer from CWD was rejected.
6. MB Well No. 2 (c. 1983) weld between steel casing and screen is failing, without aquifer material intrusion as of this date. Will need well insert or new well in near future. Well and pump which was just cleaned and redeveloped is only pumping at ½ capacity. Will replace pump in FY24.
7. Sprint (T-Mobile) sent notice that they will be discontinuing rent on Turnpike. Mr. Reid has touched base with Dish network and they have expressed interest on the side by the end of the this year.
8. Verizon representative has asked if Board will reconsider their decision on Summit site for monopole.
9. Private pool company reached out to ask if District will sell them water via a 5,000 gallon tanker.

Commissioner Harrington made a motion to allow Bad Bob's Pool Water to purchase water from the District. Commissioner Wetmore seconded the motion. The Commissioners voted as follows: John Harrington, Aye, Ron Wetmore, No, Bill Martin, No. The motion failed 2-1.

10. Breaks and associated work:

- a) Main Breaks: Overlook Drive, Newtowne Way and Eagle Nest Road.
- b) Addressed several service lines and service related items.
- c) Replaced two hydrants

11. Mr. Reid outlined District Funding:

a) History – Awarded to District

- i) 2021 MassDEP PFAS grant for pilot testing - \$199,996
- ii) 2021 Dept. of Industrial Accidents – Safety Grant - \$21,850
- iii) 2021 National Grid Incentives
 1. 20 Watershed Attic Insulation: \$1,090.
 2. CSWTP conversion to LEDs: \$4,860.
 3. RNWTP conversion to LEDs: \$2,100.
 4. Two transformers at Office: \$4,888.
- iv) 2022 SRF Asset Planning Grant: \$150,000.

b) History – Not Awarded to District

- i) 2022 Culvert Grant – Design of Watershed Lane Crossing: \$134,000
- ii) 2022 MassDEP Tag Grant – PFAS outreach for WTP: \$40,000
- iii) 2023 Water supply protection grant – Funds 60% of purchase with max. funding of \$350k
\$80k-\$90k offer for portion of 243 Riverneck rejected by owner.

c) Current/Pending

- i) 2022 AWWA M36 Audit (Leak Audit) (Revenue vs. Non-Revenue water): interest letter submitted. No cost to District. Should hear decision early 2023
- ii) 2023/2024: FEMA/MEMA HMG updated: MEMA in Jan 2023 to provide recommended proposals FEMA. FEMA now estimated to take up to 1 year to review proposals (~Jan. 2024). Total project ~1.7M with 90% reimbursement.
- iii) 2023: Community Project Funding Requests (via Congresswoman Lori Trahan). Federal Earmark for 100% project. Feb. 2023 application for FY24 budget.

1. CWD ~\$1M for PFAS removal, ECWD ~\$750K for PFAS removal and NCWD ~\$500K for membrane replacement.
 - iv) 2023 MVP grant expression of interest submitted in January 2023: 75% grant of total project.
 1. Misty Meadows well testing: Total project \$300k - \$400K.
 2. Canal St. Well Drainage Improvement Study (in conjunction with ECWD). Total Project - \$200K.
- d) On Horizon:**
- i) State Revolving Fund. Submit intended use plan August 2023 for PFAS WTP. 20 Year loan at 2% +0.15% interest with principal forgiveness (30 year option as well).
 1. Interim loan during construction is at 0%.
 2. PFAS projects have larger principal forgiveness.
 3. House chose community interest rate reduced from 2.0% to 1.50%. If PFAS a portion or all project would be at 0% +0.15% interest.
 - ii) Third round of ARPA (estimated \$100M). Exploring to get language opened up to Districts.
 - iii) Water Management Act: Pays up to 80% up to \$100k
 - iv) CISA IT security grants in FY24/FY25?
12. DW Professional organization participation discussion.
13. Workshop date requests.
- a) Future Water Planning: Where will we be obtaining water for the next 50-100 years?
 - b) Vacuum truck endorsement

Motion to approve the minutes of the Commissioners' Meeting of December 21, 2022 was made by Commissioner Wetmore, seconded by Commissioner Harrington. The Commissioners voted as follows: Mr. Wetmore, Aye. Mr. Harrington, Aye, and Mr. Martin, Aye. Motion passed.

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

Next Meetings Scheduled:

Work Session – January 25, 2023 @ 1:00pm

Work Session – February 1, 2023 @ 9:00am

Commissioners Regular Meeting - February 15, 2023 at 1:00pm

Meeting adjourned at 3:39pm

Respectfully submitted,

Michaela A. Thompson
Recording Secretary

