



Chelmsford Water District

20 Watershed Lane • Chelmsford MA 01824-4884 • www.chelmsfordwater.com

CHELMSFORD WATER DISTRICT REGULAR COMMISSIONERS' MEETING October 6, 2021

PRESENT: Commissioners

Superintendent

Business Director/Treasurer

Environmental Compliance Manager

Recording Secretary

Auditor

Town of Chelmsford

T-Mobile Smartlink Group

John G. Harrington

Bill Martin

Ron Wetmore

Andy Reid

Lisa Quatralle

Todd Melanson

Ruth Anne Blair

Maureen Mara

Pat Wojtas

Joseph Rollins

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

T-MOBILE – Mr. Rollins was present to discuss T-Mobile's request for rental space for a backup generator at the Turnpike Tank. Historical data supports the need for backup generators at cell tower sites during extreme weather that could cause power outages. They would like to rent space for an 8' by 10' or 9' by 13' pad to support a 25KW Generac Generator. He indicated that our current lease agreement with T-Mobile will end in 2025. T-Mobile's current rent is \$4,700 per month. They would be willing to increase that by no more than \$300 for the additional rental space. They are requesting two additional five-year lease terms bringing the lease end to 2035. Their preferred power source would be diesel, but they could use natural gas. Mr. Melanson indicated that there are natural gas lines in that vicinity. Mr. Wetmore asked why the Sprint lines were still in place on the tank if they are no longer in business. The SEC would determine at some time in the future whether those lines are needed or not. Mr. Wetmore indicated that typically when leases are being renewed or extended an increase in rental fees is also discussed. Mr. Rollins suggested that there was probably an escalator in the current contract for yearly increases. Mr. Melanson indicated that CWD would need to be advised about who would be responsible for the maintenance of the generator. Mr. Rollins will check to see if the generator could be under a separate lease. He will also look into the Sprint lease terms. CWD is not opposed to two additional five-year lease extensions. Mr. Rollins will submit a draft of the proposed lease extension to Mr. Reid.

Commissioners

Bill Martin, Chairman
Ronald W. Wetmore
John G. Harrington

Operations

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Administration

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MAUREEN MARA, AUDITOR – Ms. Mara informed CWD that this year’s audit will be her last audit for CWD as she is retiring. She assured the District that she is prepared to be available for the year end June 2022 audit and will be there to support us with the new accounting firm. She will also help Lisa with seeing how much more automated CWD can become for the future. She was pleased to see the rate increases and bond fund resolution the District has just initiated. The OPEB account is currently very robust and she suggests the District see how these funds could be used to enhance the retirees’ benefits going forward. The District’s Middlesex County Retirement assessment is in good financial shape. Mr. Martin asked if we should start looking at automatic rate increases. Ms. Mara felt that if the District felt it could handle a long period of unknown financial stress, if it should occur, that might not be necessary. Ms. Quatralle is always cautious about suggesting increases.

Environmental Compliance Report – Todd Melanson

Mr. Melanson distributed a document titled “Environmental Compliance Manager’s Report Summary”, dated October 6, 2021.

PFAS6 – Mr. Melanson reported that we are very likely to exceed the MCL limit soon at the Crooked Spring plant. This would require a Public Notification which would then require both short term and long-term action plans. Short term would require alternate water sources be made available to those in the population of concern (pregnant women, breastfeeding women and those immuno-compromised). Possible options could be – a rebate program, installing a spigot in the Riverneck water treatment plant to allow customers to draw their own water containers, individual water vending units (cost per year could be \$50,000 to \$100,000). Providing a supply of bottled water was not considered to be a viable solution. It was decided to install the spigots now, whether they get used or not. Mr. Melanson reminded the Commissioners that no matter what we do, the DEP would need to approve any plan first. The District needs to come up with a plan for a new treatment plant. It was noted that Weston and Sampson is working on completion of the Pilot Proposal

PFAS6 CLASS ACTION LAWSUIT – The District has been assigned two environmental attorneys. Mr. Melanson is currently completing their questionnaire and providing them with documentation related to this suit.

DISINFECTION BYPRODUCT RULE 2 – Mr. Melanson has written and submitted an Operational Evaluation Leve (OEL) report for the Mill Road 89.9 ppb reading. Flushing hydrant in operation to bring in fresher water and keep it moving.

NEWWA - Mr. Melanson has been asked to write a cover article of the District’s success with the Crooked Spring array and the issues presented by PFAS.

NEWWA is raising funds for a Virtual Technology campaign and asking Districts to help fund this initiative. Ms. Quatralle was unsure about this request due to the fact that we already pay them membership fees for their services.

Superintendent’s Report – Andy Reid

A document titled “Superintendent’s Report” dated September 8, 2021 was distributed to the Board.

TURNPIKE TANK ROADWAY – A sketch that was prepared by Mr. Harrington was distributed by Mr. Reid showing a proposed location for a roadway around Turnpike Tank. There was discussion about filling in the areas bordering the roadway on the sketch that surround the tank with clean fill. It was decided that the District was not sure of the property boundaries around the tank. **A motion was made by Mr. Harrington, seconded by Mr. Wetmore that a survey be done of the property around the Turnpike tank. Mr. Harrington voted aye, Mr. Wetmore voted aye, and Mr. Martin voted aye. Motion**

passed unanimously.

PLOWING/INSURANCE COVERAGE – A Draft Inter-Municipal Agreement (IMA) between the District and the Town of Chelmsford was distributed by Mr. Reid. This covers the question of insurance coverage of the individual entities' personnel when they are performing assisting services for each other. The BoWC approved sharing a draft copy with the Town for review and comment. .

NATIONAL GRID TRANSFORMER UPDATES – National Grid has an electrical energy saving transformer improvement incentive program that we could take advantage of to update our large transformers at 20 Watershed Lane. The total project cost is \$11,243, with National Grid paying \$4,888 and the District paying \$6,355, resulting in a 3.8 year simple payback. There are uncommitted funds in the Warrant Article for Infrastructure Upgrades that could be used to take advantage of this program. The BoWC agreed to use some of the funds from the Infrastructure Upgrade warrant article to move forward with the transformer replacement.

BIDS – Confirmed Meadowbrook Well #1 paving and FY21 Well Redevelopment invitation for bid can be released. Fern and Juniper pipe replacement is in design by Resilient CE and the bid is expected in February 2022 with construction in the spring if pricing stays steady. The District has been approached by a company to put antennas on the Turnpike Tank. Mr. Reid will prepare an RFP to advertise this opportunity.

BACKFLOWS – The District will begin doing Backflow testing in-house starting October. Previous contractor has provided a hardcopy documentation and files to the District and currently exploring if a digital copy can be provided.

Business Director/Treasurer's Report – Lisa Quatrale

Ms. Quatrale's report for September's activity was presented, with backup documentation on FY2022 Expenses vs Revenue, FY22 Article Balances and Enterprise investment and OPEB accounts.

PERSONNEL POLICY GUIDE – Ms. Quatrale will set up a meeting for her and Mr. Reid to meet with Attorney Brewer of Miyares-Harrington Law Firm to review Attorney Brewer's recommendations to our personnel policy guide. These recommendations will then be presented to the Commissioners at the next work session.

ADMINISTRATIVE CLERK POSITION – Nine candidates out of the 150 applicants have been selected to be interviewed for this position. Four interviews were scheduled for October 8 and three for October 12. One applicant has not responded, and one has rescinded her application. Ms. Quatrale hopes to have someone on board by November 1st.

COMMUNICATION FOR CHANGES IN WATER RATES AND FEES – The overall response to the correspondence about the rates and fees changes was positive. The staff will be working on completing a smooth transition with all systems over the next three months.

FY21 AUDIT – Ms. Mara and the District staff were able to complete the audit smoothly and on time. Ms. Quatrale and Ms. Mara met to discuss future closing of the books and audits.

CUSTOMER PAYMENTS ROUND TABLE – MASS WATER WORKS – Ms. Quatrale attended a meeting with Mass Water Works as well as other water districts to discuss accounts receivable, shut off programs and how Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) may be able to assist customers that are struggling with payments. When the program is fully defined it may be able to help customers that are in jeopardy of losing their home/rental units for non-payment. This program would be administered through the cities and towns LIHEAP coordinators.

LEIN PROGRAM – FY21 Lien program begins this week. Once the list of delinquent accounts is created notifications will be sent out to customers that fit the lien criteria.

10 INDEPENDENCE DRIVE – account had a failed backflow event that required shutting off water to the building until the backflow event was corrected. The customer paid their account in full, so the water was turned back on and that eliminated the need to pursue a lien this year.

CITY HALL SYSTEMS – CHS has once again caused us problems by sending out bills with the wrong remittance envelopes. Ms. Quatrala contacted the CEO of the company and they have assigned a product manager to our account to review and approve every job we send to them.

METER REPLACEMENT PROGRAM – The team (Micheala, Amy, Jimmy and Ms. Quatrala) have changed the meter change notification system from a USPS mailing to a “door hanger” notification. The door hanger informs the customer about the steps they need to take for their meter change-out. A new email alias account has been created that will forward all information captured to team members and allow for tracking meters that are still pending or complete. Ms. Quatrala has received praise from customers about the professionalism Jimmy Rogers shows when interacting with them.

FINAL WATER READINGS – In spite of the chaos in the current real estate market Michaela was able to complete 40 final readings in the 21 working days of September.

VADAR – met with Vadar Systems to discuss potential changes in our reporting methods and asked them to come to the District office to train staff on the accounting and utility accounting systems, once the new employee is in place.

BACKFLOW PROGRAM – Ms. Quatrala and Mr. Reid met to discuss the status of the backflow program and outlined an SOP developed by Amy to assure that we are getting backflow reports to bill customers consistently the same months of each fiscal year to keep revenue flow consistent and customers can depend on the month that they will be billed.

A motion was made by Mr. Wetmore, seconded by Mr. Harrington to approve the minutes of the Regular Commissioners’ Meeting from September 8, 2021. Commissioner Harrington voted Aye, Commissioner Martin voted Aye, Commissioner Wetmore voted Aye. Motion passed with unanimous support.

A motion to schedule the next Commissioners’ Work Session be held on November 10, 2021 at 10:00AM was made by Mr. Wetmore, seconded by Mr. Harrington. Commissioner Harrington voted Aye, Commissioner Martin voted Aye, Commissioner Wetmore voted Aye. Motion passed with unanimous support.

A motion to schedule the next Regular Commissioners’ Meeting be held on November 10, 2021 at 1:00PM was made Mr. Wetmore, seconded by Mr. Harrington. Commissioner Harrington voted Aye, Commissioner Martin voted Aye, Commissioner Wetmore voted Aye. Motion passed with unanimous support.

A motion to adjourn this meeting at 4:10PM was made by Mr. Harrington, seconded by Mr. Wetmore. Commissioner Harrington voted Aye, Commissioner Martin voted Aye, Commissioner Wetmore voted Aye. Motion passed with unanimous support.

Ruth Anne Blair
Recording Secretary

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