



Chelmsford Water District

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CHELMSFORD WATER DISTRICT REGULAR COMMISSIONERS' MEETING SEPTEMBER 13, 2023

PRESENT:

Commissioners

Ronald W. Wetmore

John G. Harrington

Richard Romano

Superintendent

Andy Reid

Business Director/Treasurer

Lisa Quatrале

Environmental Compliance Mgr.

Todd Melanson

Consultant

Robert Delaney

AECOM

Stephen DeFrancesco, PE

Rhonda Pogodzienski, VP

Town Selectperson

Pat Wojtas

Recording Secretary

Michaela Thompson

Commissioner Wetmore called the Regular Meeting of the Commissioners to order at 1:03pm with all reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

Open Session:

• ***Contract for Design Services for PFAS Removal and SRF Funding:***

Superintendent Reid addressed the Board with a clarification of the State Revolving Funds (SRF) funding cap. For FY23 that cap was \$15M and it can vary year after year depending on funding available. He stated that PFAS projects would likely have to be staggered, unless the District wished to pick up some of the funding outside of SRF.

Listed as “1a” in his report titled, “**Superintendent Report for September 2023 BoWC Meeting**”, Mr. Reid presented two amendments for the PFAS engineering design contract from AECOM. The 1st option for full engineering and the 2nd for design only going to 30% for the Riverneck WTP, due to the complexity of the site.

The 1st contract amendment listed the design of PFAS treatment processes at the Crooked Springs WTP, the Riverneck WTP and the design of a transmission main from the Smith Street WTP to the Crooked Springs WTP. The lump-sum amount \$1,860,000.00.

The 2nd contract amendment listed the design of PFAS treatment processes at the Crooked Springs WTP, 30-percent design of PFAS treatment processes at the Riverneck WTP and the design of a transmission main from the Smith Street WTP to the Crooked Springs WTP. The lump-sum amount \$1,560,000.00.

Treasurer Lisa Quatrале asked why 30% was chosen for the Riverneck WTP. AECOM’s Stephen DeFrancesco stated that 30% is a typical milestone since the architectural, civil and mechanical

processes are usually at 80% complete at the 30% design mark. Ms. Quatrale voiced her concerns with having multiple PFAS projects going at the same time with a price tag of 40 million dollars. She said she didn't want to overwhelm the District financially, even with the SRF funding. She reminded all that there is the potential for more issues to arise when they do the transmission line from Smith Street WTP to the Crooked Springs WTP since they will be crossing public roads and private property.

Commissioner Romano motioned to accept the 1st Contract option with the lump sum amount of \$1,860,000.00. Commissioner Harrington seconded the motion. The Commissioners voted as follows: Mr. Wetmore, Aye. Mr. Harrington, Aye, and Mr. Romano, Aye. The motion was unanimously approved. Two clean copies were signed by the Commissioners.

Environmental Compliance Report – Todd Melanson

Mr. Melanson distributed to the Board his report titled “**Environmental Compliance Manager’s Report Water Commissioners’ Meeting: 09/13/2023**”. Updates to his report included:

- 1) **PFAS:** Individual results for July 2023: Crooked Spring WTP: 23.8, Riverneck WTP: 21.6, Smith Street WT: N/T
 - a) **Crooked Spring Water Treatment Plant:** Mr. Melanson states in his report that he is concerned with the increased concentrations from the samples taken on July 5th and Aug 11th. However, more of a concern is with the upcoming September sampling, as it must not total more than 13 ppt or it will trigger the requirement of a Public Notification.
 - b) **Riverneck Water Treatment Plant:** The upcoming September sampling results are a concern as they need to be below 24 ppt to avoid a violation.
- 2) **Precipitation Impact:** With over 65” of rain for the year so far, Meadowbrook Well #3 showed increased levels to 33 ppt in August.
- 3) **Class Action Lawsuit:** 20 State Attorney Generals have asked for a judicial hold on the settlement.
- 4) **SS WTP to Crooked Spring WTP via School Property:** Dr. Lang suggests a meeting in October.
- 5) **Disinfection Byproduct Rule 2 (DBR2) Concerns:** Results from the 3rd Quarter sampling and analysis for Disinfection Byproducts came in much higher than expected and more widespread throughout the system. The result came in at 79.1 ppb with a limit of 80 ppb. This missed triggering an Operational Evaluation Level (OEL) by 1 ppb. The next sampling scheduled for the first full week of November.
- 6) **Energy Program Update:** Solar REC Credit Sales – 427 for the YTD and 19 so far for September. Production is continuing to slow due to the cloudy/wet weather.
- 7) **Town Issues:**
 - Hildreth Street:** Mr. Melanson is concerned with the proposed development and the risk to the Turnpike and Riverneck well. He is talking with the developer’s team using the new BOH regulations, coordinating with BOH, Conservation and Planning Board to achieve proper protection.
- 8) **Water Management Legal:** Based on Water Resources Commission (WRC), the District will lose the volume but not the sources contained in its current Concord River Basin. All work performed so far will now go towards a new permit for the sources.
- 9) **PFAS Communication Plan:** Working on District’s PFAS public communication plan if violations occur.

Business Director/Treasurer’s Report – Lisa Quatrale

Ms. Quatrale presented her report titled “**August 2023 – Commission Meeting Business Director Report**” which included documentation on FY2024 Expense and Revenue, and Enterprise Investment and OPEB accounts.

Personnel: On-boarding of new employee Jake Kostro completed August 28th.

FY23 Audit: Waiting for FY23 closing journal entries from Powers and Sullivan to officially close the books and submit free cash to Department of Revenue. They would like to present audit results to the Commissioners in October.

Worker's Compensation Audit: Following the annual audit, the District received a large increase to its FY23 Workers Compensation premium. It pertained to Sick Leave buyout classification. Concerns were brought back to the auditor, his manager, Berry Insurance and ultimately to the Workers Compensation Rating and Inspection Bureau of Massachusetts (WCRIBMA). They all agreed with the auditor. Ms. Quatralle disagreed with the classification since the buyout was a one-time payment of *accrued* benefit time for grandfathered employees in the event of a catastrophic illness and it was not for actual sick time used during the year. The District's future liability for grandfathered-employees totals \$120k. Since Ms. Quatralle has no way of knowing for sure when a grandfathered employee will retire, she has budgeted the payout in the GL and will budget for any future worker's compensation hits due to grandfathered-employees retiring.

Meter Program and Vadar Cloud Conversion: Went live with the Neptune 360 program, but will keep older software in parallel until all bugs have been worked out. The first reading with new system ran into some syncing issues with Vadar which produced inaccurate readings. Specifically, the Vadar program was adding multipliers to certain coded meters which then displayed incorrect large volumes of usage. Jim Rogers and Michaela Thompson did significant analysis and have scheduled meetings with Vadar and TiSales to discuss. Vadar developers and Ti-Sales technical support have identified the issues and are working on resolving.

Insurance Claim: Homeowner at 13 Hillside filed claim against the District with insurance company. Ms. Quatralle and Andy Reid are working with insurance agent to provide details.

T-Mobile: The District received a check in the amount of \$64,964.02 which is comprised of \$60k lump sum and monthly rent. Check deposited into Cell Tower Revenue account, upon site approval from Superintendent Reid.

District Vehicle: Auto body shop returned District Vehicle, which then was sent to dealership for a vehicle call back.

Irrigation SOP: Still in progress.

Superintendent's Report – Andy Reid

The meeting continues with the Report from the Open Session, titled **"Superintendent Report for September 2023 BoWC Meeting"** distributed to the Board.

Prior to addressing the report, Mr. Reid told the Board he received a call regarding a fundraiser for the Melanoma Foundation asking if the District would be interested in joining the "Touch-a-Truck" event. Ms. Quatralle expressed concern with the District supporting non-profits and how would it be possible to say yes to one and no to another. She felt it would lead to potential liability with the District. Lisa Quatralle then asked the Commissioners how the District was going to support all non-profits that call and pointed out that the District should not be using tax payer money towards any non-profit cause and that there was also the liability with using one of the trucks. Commissioner Wetmore turned down the request.

2. Superintendent Reid met with Town Departments (Town Mgr, BOH, Cons Com, Planning Board, Community Development and DPW) and Districts to discuss developing a methodology for reviewing projects located in the Zone II.

3. Completed Items:

- a) Conversion from Potassium to Sodium Hydroxide complete at Riverneck WTP and Crooked Springs WTP. This provides chemical cost savings and insulates against price swings.
- b) All the red hydrants now have silver painted on them.
- c) Timeclock at WTP installed and currently working.

4. Project Updates:

- a) MEMA/FEMA HMGP. MEMA has asked if the District would like to re-submit for a grant for the Watershed Lane Culvert. This grant was previously put on a waitlist.

Superintendent Reid offered his support in re-applying for the grant by stating that it's the only road in and out of the property, \$135k has already been allocated for the design and that if granted, the District would only have to pay 25% of the total cost of the project. He added that a temporary road could be created out back that would come out onto Woodhead Road and that if the project was done then it will withstand everything going forward and it would be good for the environment.

Commissioner Wetmore stated that it is a reimbursement project and that the District would have to come up with and spend \$1.7 million first to do the repair, and then ask for reimbursement. Which if granted, would still end up costing the District 25% of the total cost for a total of \$425k. Since \$135k has already been allocated, the District would need \$300k more. Commissioner Wetmore was satisfied with putting project on hold and retaining the design.

Commissioner Harrington said it's like gambling.

Commissioner Wetmore stated that he had previously expressed that the culvert project needs to be on the back burner and the District's primary focus should be on PFAS only at this time. He again reiterated that this project needs to be put on hold.

Lisa Quatrone said that the District has already spent money on the design but that the total cost of the project doesn't include the application fees. She reiterated her concern of undertaking too many projects at the same time and that this project would overlap with the Riverneck WTP PFAS project. She expressed her concern over the impending costs for PFAS treatment that are not happening right now but will most likely cause the water rates to be increased in January 2024, to cover the budget.

Commissioner Romano asked Superintendent Reid how much would an emergency repair on the culvert cost if it washed out in two years. Mr. Reid estimated between \$350k-\$400k emergency replace in kind but that no credits would be received. Commissioner Romano said that he thinks the ultimate risk cost is not a whole lot different than the cost would be if they receive the grant.

Commissioner Romano motioned to wait on pursuing the culvert project. Commissioner Harrington seconded the motion. The Commissioners voted as follows: Mr. Wetmore, Aye. Mr. Harrington, Aye, and Mr. Romano, Aye. The motion was unanimously approved.

- b) Riverneck IMA has been signed by all parties.
- c) Tank mixer status. Radios installed by IXOM. A/D Instruments targeting end of September to finalize the installation.
- d) Turnpike Tank Telecommunications Lease. Currently working on lease reviews of lease contract with Dish.
- e) ATT at Turnpike tank wants to put a generator within their leased area which is a change in scope. Waiting for rent offer and noise impact study.

- f) Security Updates: PW system installed for SCADA and computer systems. Working on separating SCADA network from IT network and installing AI Antivirus (MDR system) slated for installation in November.
- g) Rules and Regulations: Updated surface material to be replaced on surface line to include plain concrete in addition to asphalt.

5. Bids:

- a) Riverneck WTP roof replacement results

Lowest Qualified Bidder – JJS Universal Construction Company \$48,300.00

Commissioner Harrington made a motion to accept the bid from JJS Universal Construction Company for the Riverneck Water Treatment Plant roof replacement. Commission Romano seconded the motion. The Commissioners voted as follows: Mr. Romano, Aye, Mr. Wetmore, Aye and Mr. Harrington, Aye. The motion was unanimously approved.

Misc. Distribution Items Bid Results:

Hymax - F.W. Webb - \$9,700.00

Mega Lugs-Kits-Gates-H2O Main-Accs - \$20,390.52

6 Ft. Hydrants – F.W. Webb - \$24,872.00

Wraps – H.R. Prescott - \$5,025.00

6. Work Item Updates:

- a. Jake Kostro started working on Distribution team on 8/28/2023
- b. Distribution (snapshot):
 - i. Focusing on meter readings at the beginning of the month and back flow testing for the month.
 - ii. One major break at Tadmuck Road.
 - iii. Emergency vehicle received new tires
- c. Treatment
 - i. RLCR sampling in Oct and DBPs in Nov.
 - ii. RNWTP Chlorine bulk tank ordered. Will install once arrives.
- iii. Site Upkeep
 - 1. CSWTP
 - a. Paint Bollards (Done)
 - b. Paint Exhaust Fan Hoods (One Done)
 - 2. Crooked Spring #2
 - a. New Screens for Vent Holes (Done)
 - 3. Meadowbrook #1
 - a. New Screens for Vent Holes (Done)
 - 4. Meadowbrook #2
 - a. New Screens for Vent Holes (Done)
 - 5. Locke Rd Tank
 - a. Paint Hydrants (Done)
 - b. Paint Bollards (Done)
 - 6. Amble Rd Tank
 - a. Paint Hydrant (Done)
 - b. Paint Overflow Pipe (Done)
 - 7. Repair Light in Building (Done)

Motion to approve the minutes of the Commissioners' Regular Meetings held on August 16, 2023 was made by Commissioner Romano, seconded by Commissioner Harrington. The Commissioners voted as follows: Mr. Wetmore, Aye. Mr. Harrington, Aye, and Mr. Romano, Aye. The motion was unanimously approved.

Next Meeting Scheduled:

Commissioners Regular Meeting – October 18, 2023 at 1:00pm

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

Meeting adjourned at 3:59pm
Respectfully submitted,
Michaela A. Thompson
Recording Secretary