

Groton Water Commission

Regular Meeting of the Board of Water Commissioners

Wednesday, February 15, 2012

1st Floor Selectmen's Meeting Room- Town Hall

Minutes

Present are BOWC Chair James Gmeiner, Member Gary Hoglund, Member Jessica Cajigas, Superintendent Tom Orcutt, Business Manager Sandy Pellicchia, and DPW Assistant April Iannacone.

Mr. Gmeiner called the regular BOWC meeting to order at 7:30 pm. He then introduced the newest Water Commissioner Jessica Cajigas and thanked her for her willingness to serve on the Commission.

Great Ponds Committee Discussion Re: Chemical Application for Baddacook Pond-

Mr. Orcutt informed the Commissioners that the Great Ponds Advisory Committee was present to inform the Water Commission of a type of chemical treatment that they would like to use to destroy and control weed issues at Baddacook Pond. The treatment is one that has been used in Littleton on Spectacle Pond which feeds Littleton's water supply as well as supplementing Ayer's water supply. Mr. Savas Danos, Groton resident and General Manager of the Littleton Light and Water Department was present with Val Prest, Art Prest and Bill Strickland. Mr. Danos gave a presentation on the use of the aquatic herbicide Sonar, the chemical Fluridone (Paper copy of the presentation is attached). Mr. Danos stated that multiple tests of the water serving the Production Well, both raw and finished water for the Littleton Water Supply, as well as 2 Private Wells servicing homes on the lake all came up with no detection of the Flouridone over the few months following the treatment of the lake.

Mr. Orcutt asked if the treatment is still something that has to be done on a yearly basis. Mr. Danos replied that maintenance treatments, in smaller doses than the original treatment, are done every other year. Mr. Val Prest stated that the Town of Ayer used this treatment for Sandy Pond and the applications results were good for them for 5 years. Mr. Danos stated that every other year was more consistent for maintaining significant improvement levels. It was not something that once it was done once or twice you could assume it was no longer necessary.

Mr. Art Prest stated that Martins Pond in Groton was approved for Sonar treatments up to 150 parts per billion (ppb) however they find they typically use 10-20 ppb so they are not going anywhere near the high level limits for treatment. Val Prest also stated that the water at Baddacook Pond was getting so deteriorated that eventually the Town may find that the drinking water is affected and needs more treatment anyway. He also explained that the other ways of dealing with the weed issues are to harvest, or mow, the lake but the weeds tend to come back thicker, there was the option to dredge the lake and suck it all out but could cost anywhere from \$14 million and up, and then there was the option to treat chemically. He then asked Mr. Danos if there was any other option for weed control. Mr. Danos replied that the one other option that he knew of was to lay down special barriers over the weeds to block the light to the plant which would cause it to deteriorate but that worked best on small limited areas of weeds and he believed that Baddacook Pond was so far gone that it would need a far greater level of treatment than this. Mr. Danos also stated that the Town of Littleton was dealing with a smaller, shallow lake and so far they have exceeded \$2 million in dredging costs.

The Commissioners thanked Mr. Danos as well as the other residents present for their information. The Commissioners would review the information provided and would have a more formal discussion with the Great Ponds Advisory Committee at a later time to be determined if action would be necessary by the Commission.

Shirley Road Water Quality Issue –

Mr. Orcutt informed the Commissioners that Mr. Hale Smith of Groton School was present before the Board for this discussion. The house at the end of Shirley Road is owned by John Maynard, but the Groton School rents the house for their faculty. Mr. Orcutt stated that the tenant had complained of some iron issues and requested that the department test the water. Mr. Orcutt stated that results of these tests do indicate a secondary iron and manganese problem in the household’s water, but the secondary contaminants are more of an aesthetic issue rather than a health concern. The service line to the house is fairly new so the problem is not from the street to the house, but the line in the road is large and only feeds 2 or 3 houses. Mr. Hoglund asked how big the water main in the road was. Mr. Orcutt replied that it was either a 4 or 6 inch unlined cast iron pipe. Mr. Orcutt stated that the department had been doing a small bleeding of the line from the fire hydrant past the house.

Mr. Smith stated that he had heard from Mr. & Mrs. Lions that the water has been significantly better since the water department began bleeding the line. Mr. Orcutt also informed the Commissioners that Mr. Maynard had installed a gravel activated carbon filter to the house at the same time. Mr. Orcutt stated that the hydrant bleeder was releasing a constant slow flow of 5 to 10 gallons per minute which would cost the department money treating that amount of water to be sent out of the system unused over an extended period of time. The Commissioners discussed a few options as an alternative to bleeding the lines or replacing the whole main in the road. Mr. Orcutt stated that he would try to get costs for these options as well as the cost of the treated water being bled out of the system for a year and would report back to the Commissioners at their next meeting in 2 weeks.

Superintendents Report

Mr. Orcutt informed the Commissioners that the department had found the large leak in the distribution system on Monday which was causing a loss of 130 gallons per minute. There was a circumference crack all around a pipe on the property at Groton School about 200 to 300 feet off the road which could not be heard when checking the roadway lines. There had been no water lifting to the surface of the campus to alert them, but the water spike had gone into their sewer treatment system causing them to try to determine their problem. It wasn’t until Groton School called to request that the water department further investigate their issue that the 2 problems were determined to be connected.

Mr. Hoglund made a motion to exit the regular session meeting at 9:15 and enter into executive session to discuss union negotiations and not reconvene in open session. Ms. Cajigas seconded the motion. Roll call vote Gmeiner – yes; Hoglund – yes; Cajigas – yes.

Respectfully Submitted,
April Iannacone
DPW Administrative Assistant

James Gmeiner _____ Date _____

Gary Hoglund _____ Date _____

Jessica Cajigas _____ Date _____

Superintendent's Report

January 22nd, 2012

1. Unkety Brook Well Site: DEP-CERO is continuing its review of our new source application and therefore, there is nothing new to report at this time.
2. Forestry Management: Stan Dillis has flagged the property and Baystate has also blazed the property for the Cutting Plan. The Cutting Plan is being developed and will be filed shortly on the Shattuck Property.
3. Consumer Confidence Report (CCR): began compiling the CCR for our customers and DEP. The feature story this year will be on the Groton Inn fire and how well the water system and staff responded to the fire flow requirements.
4. Annual Statistical Report: received notification that the Annual Statistical Report is due by March 23, 2012. This is filed electronically, but will be time consuming effort for the Business Manager and me.
5. Water Treatment Plants: Baddacook filtration system has been optimized by George with the sand filter run times being doubled. George undertook this after some discussion with me. Heating issues seem to be resolved for now – but, I am looking into having a Trane representative come and look at the system as recommended by John Murphy. LMI representative to come next week to assist us in making some adjustments to the chemical injector pumps (stainless steel heads & feed lines). Plumber assisted George and I at Whitney with some minor plumbing problems we experienced with the analyzer feed line. George received some training from a Hanna representative on the Chlorine/pH Analyzer. Some minor adjustments were made.
6. Miscellaneous: The Comprehensive Leak Survey has been completed by m2 Facility Solutions. Internal employees (George and myself) have looked and surveyed approximately 75% of the system to no avail (listening devices on fire hydrants).