

Groton Water Commission
Regular Meeting
Of the
Board of Water Commissioners
Tuesday, May 12th, 2020
Virtual Meeting using Zoom

Minutes

Present are Chairman Jack McCaffrey, Vice Chairman Greg Fishbone, Member James Gmeiner, Superintendent Thomas Orcutt, Business Manager Lauren Crory, Office Assistant Ann Livezey, and Michael Ohl of CEI.

Mr. Orcutt called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

Manganese – Schedule, Piloting, Concept Plan, Finances, Consent Order

Mr. Orcutt said the pilot testing began today. Mr. Ohl said that different filtering dynamics will be piloted at each location. They will also test a blend of Baddacook and Whitney to determine how much flow can be pushed through the existing Baddacook treatment plant. They hope to have results for the board by the end of the month, followed by a formal report in June. Mr. McCaffrey asked for draft information at our May 26th meeting. Mr. McCaffrey asked if they are still keeping Shattuck Well capacity in mind and Mr. Ohl confirmed that they are. Mr. McCaffrey asked if the report will include backwash waste handling and Mr. Ohl said that it will, although that piece may not be ready for the next meeting, they will include it in the official report. Mr. Orcutt said we may be able to send the backwash material to DPW depending on what it is composed of. We will reach out to Tom Weaver if needed. Mr. McCaffrey asked if we expect the Manganese levels to remain the same and Mr. Ohl said we should expect they will rise. Mr. Orcutt asked if he has heard anything from MA DEP regarding the pandemic in terms of our schedule and any added time and Mr. Ohl has not. He said there have been some changes to dates regarding SRF Funding. Mr. Gmeiner asked if we end up bringing Whitney water to Baddacook, would the new filters only treat Whitney, and Mr. Ohl said yes, but they would have the capability to treat more in an emergency. Mr. McCaffrey added that we will want room for a PFAS treatment tower somewhere and will need cost details.

Fiscal Year 2020 Operating Budget Review & Year End Projections

Mrs. Crory reviewed the current and forecasted FY20 budget. She manually separated out our manganese capital charge income and manganese expenses. Town Accountant, Mrs. Dufresne, said that although we can track our manganese capital charge income separately, we will need to vote to transfer that income out of our reserve fund and into our manganese expense fund. Mrs. Crory predicts the reserve fund will end up in the mid \$300,000's for the start of FY21, including manganese capital charge income.

Mr. McCaffrey asked if we are still buying meters and Mr. Orcutt said we have enough on hand for this year since we are not doing meter replacements right now. He also asked if we will be hiring a summer intern and Mr. Orcutt said no due to financial reasons and not wanting to add another person in close contact with our technicians.

Fiscal Year 2021 Operating Budget – Continue Spending Freeze?

Mrs. Crory said that she is waiting to hear instructions for the 1/12 budget for FY21.

Superintendent's Report: Well Cleaning, Water Levels and Pumping, Staffing

Mr. Orcutt said that Well Cleaning is complete and Baddacook will be back online tomorrow. The water levels are high and he reviewed the draw down marks. Mr. Orcutt explained that he gets the draw down data after pumping for about 20 hours. He expects these numbers to dip in the summer and said April data is misleading because of hydrant flushing. Mr. McCaffrey asked if there has been any increase in pumping yet due to dry weather and Mr. Orcutt said the data is off because of flushing but believes consumption is down by about 1 million gallons. He is just starting to see an uptick as people turn on irrigation systems.

Mr. Orcutt will put the conservation notice in the paper in July.

Mr. McCaffrey noted that Whitney Well II seems to have higher manganese levels. Mr. Fishbone asked if the levels look better because we are not using Whitney as much and Mr. Orcutt said that is correct and they are using Baddacook Well as much as possible. Mr. Gmeiner asked why the Whitney blend isn't an average and Mr. Orcutt said that there are different amounts coming from Whitney I and Whitney II.

Other Business: Bills, Minutes, etc

Mr. Orcutt said that DPW is applying for an MVP grant and they are the first in que, but Mr. Haddad said that GWD can be the next in line to apply for funding. The application would be due next year and the maximum amount is two million.

Mr. Gmeiner approved the minutes of March 10th, 2020 as amended, Mr. Fishbone seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

Next Meeting: May 26th, 2020

Mr. Gmeiner made a motion to adjourn at 8:19pm, Mr. McCaffrey seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lauren Crory

May 12th, 2020