

Groton Water Commission
Regular Meeting of the
Board of Water Commissioners
Tuesday, August 17th, 2021
Virtual Meeting using Zoom

Minutes

Present are Chairman Jack McCaffrey, Vice Chairman Greg Fishbone, Member James Gmeiner, Superintendent Tom Orcutt, Business Manager Lauren Crory, Bob Rafferty and Dave Patangia from Environmental Partners, and David Roman of CEI.

Mr. McCaffrey called the meeting to order at 7:32pm.

Manganese Treatment Plant – 75% Design Review

Mr. Patangia asked if there are any preliminary questions or comments on the plans. Mr. Fishbone didn't see any issues. Mr. Gmeiner had small observations such as Page 1 missing the new operator, Rob Maloney. On C2, the overhead wire and priority habitat the lettering appears to be upside down and may have a formatting issue. He asked if the HVAC condensing unit will have something covering it to protect it from snow/ice falling from roof and Mr. Patangia will look into that. He also asked about gutters and downspouts and Mr. Patangia said we will have them due to stormwater regulations. They will go below grade and discharge to a drainage ditch on west side of the building. Mr. Gmeiner said there are many electric outlets which was good. Mr. Orcutt will sit down with our technicians next week to review.

Mr. McCaffrey said it all looks very good and detailed and he has a few questions. He sees a demolition plan and sees the VFDs for Whitney Well I & II will not be reused and Mr. Patangia said they will be reused. Shaded lines mean it is existing. If there was a chemical spill there is no drains, and Mr. Patangia said there is a berm area because MA DEP does not allow drains. Mr. Patangia said if the safety shower goes off it will need to be mopped up or a sump pump would need to be used. Mr. McCaffrey asked if we would need to use potassium permanganate and Mr. Patangia said the chemical lines will need to be cleaned at least once a week. There will be a spare port available. There are no provisions for potassium permanganate because the pilot did not use that and used sodium hypochlorite. Mr. Orcutt thinks the iron & manganese levels entering the filters should be low enough that we won't have a big issue. Mr. McCaffrey asked what will the downtime be for demolition on Whitney I and Whitney II and Mr. Patangia said that during Phase I the contractor will probably need a year to begin prepping the site with piping, lagoons etc. Phase II will follow where Whitney Well I & II will need to be offline and this is estimated to be about 3 months because of the electrical changes. The Treatment Plant should run on Whitney Well I & II water to get any bugs out. Mr. McCaffrey asked if DEP will need to approve this and Mr. Patangia said it's been done different ways. You could possibly get a permit to put that water into the distribution system – but this should be about two weeks so think it isn't worth it for the partial approval. Phase III would be Whitney Well III would not be on at night so that it could be integrated into the treatment plant at night. Mr. McCaffrey asked if

the 3 months in Phase II would be for construction and DEP steps and Mr. Patangia said yes. Mr. Orcutt agrees this phase cannot start in June and we will need to make sure this timed correctly. He will talk to Mr. Knox about this and give any suggestions. Mr. McCaffrey asked if anything will be hard to do during the winter and Mr. Patangia said they will have 12 months so are not concerned. Mr. McCaffrey asked Whitney I and II pump sizes and Mr. Patangia said they are on variable frequency drives running at about 80% speed to they should be able to perform with the additional Delta P without problem. They can't confirm hydraulic calculations until they get the Whitney Well III pump curve from CEI. Mr. McCaffrey asked if we can expect to run all three pumps simultaneously and Mr. Patangia said yes that is the plan. Mr. McCaffrey asked if the new flexible adhesive solar panels would be an option down the road at this facility. Mr. Patangia said the roof is to be solar ready and the electrical design will prepare for this. Mr. Orcutt said solar panels are not included in the bid but it will be solar ready. Mr. McCaffrey wants to know if the roof would be capable of these types of solar panels and Mr. Patangia is not familiar so will need to check.

Mr. McCaffrey asked if our last cost estimate is still accurate and Mr. Patangia said he got a more detailed estimate from a third-party estimator and the materials and parts have gone up significantly. For example, the vessels were \$700,000 each and now are closer to \$1,000,000 each. The contingency will go down as project goes down. Mr. Patangia will send a total revised cost estimate to us by Labor Day.

Mr. Gmeiner added that we just said make sure there is nothing deer will want to eat. Mr. Orcutt thinks a 6-foot fence would be fine and Mr. Gmeiner suggested black fencing.

Mr. Fishbone asked if we have a tree warden that may have input on the landscape and Mr. Orcutt said it is Tom Delaney and he is ok with our plans.

Mr. McCaffrey asked if the engineers if they think that DEP will accept our extension request. Mr. Patangia said they accepted the handling of the lagoons, the high filter loading rate during backwash, and they said they received the extension but we do not know if Town has received response. It sounded like it should not be a big deal.

Mr. McCaffrey asked what the last 25% of the plan will be and Mr. Patangia said there will be a number of drawings and details and specifications. Mr. McCaffrey asked who will be doing the final testing of the system and the engineers said the contractor will be there and then there is typically a one-year warranty period. Environmental Partners will be available to provide support by phone. Mr. Orcutt thought Mr. McCaffrey might have meant what will DEP will want to see during startup. Mr. Orcutt assumes that the certain groups will need to be present for the verification. Mr. Rafferty said there will be extensive debugging before anything is turned over.

Mr. Patangia said the Stormwater applications and Planning Board applications were submitted yesterday.

Mr. Patangia said that there will be two more applications needed. One for Mass DEP Treatment Plan when we are done and one for Board of Health for the tight tank.

Mr. Patangia said they will submit the plans to DEP but will wait for Mr. Orcutt and the technician's comments.

Mr. Orcutt asked if anybody has looked at what DEP may rate this facility as and Mr. Patangia said usually Tier 2. Mr. Orcutt said Baddacook is Tier 1. Mr. Patangia said other greensand projects have been Tier 2.

Whitney Pond #3 Update

Mr. Roman said the pump test started as five-day pump test but the water level hasn't quite stabilized yet so DEP asked to continue the pump test until the level stabilized. It does look promising and our subcontractor sees about 350 gpm so that is about a 700 gpm production rate. Mr. Orcutt asked if the iron & manganese levels have been low and Mr. Roman said the water quality samples will be taken on Thursday. Mr. Orcutt said the iron and manganese numbers are looking promising on the samples the technicians have been looking at inhouse. Mr. Gmeiner asked Mr. Patangia to explain what DEP is looking for and Mr. Orcutt said the drawdown needs to stabilize. Mr. Gmeiner asked if we have seen any effects on Whitney Well I and Whitney Well II. We lost Baddacook over the weekend so were short cycling the tanks which used a lot of water.

Mr. McCaffrey said the pump test is now into August when it was supposed to be July so asked if the construction phase will be affected. Mr. Orcutt asked Mr. Patangia to make sure this is still online by June 1st. Mr. Orcutt asked what outstanding permits we have and Mr. Patangia is not sure about that but will get answers.

Mr. Patangia said they can't finish design until we get the pump curve from CEI.

Mr. McCaffrey asked Mr. Patangia if electrical will be able to handle Whitney Well III and he said the transformer will feed Whitney Well III and the new treatment plant. Mr. Orcutt thinks that the transformer should be ordered early because waiting there was 2-3 months for Baddacook. Mr. McCaffrey asked if we should buy this as a separate line item and Mr. Orcutt said we could pull money out of reserves to do this. Mr. McCaffrey suggested we make a list of any long lead items we should purchase and Mr. Orcutt said definitely for the Whitney Well III project.

Mr. McCaffrey said that the next meeting will be August 31st.

Other Business: budget, bills, minutes, meeting schedule

Mr. Orcutt told the Board that our new technician Mr. Maloney would like to join the on-call rotation beginning September 1st and he will take a truck home. Mr. Orcutt said we do have 3 trucks for the 3 operators. The Board was in agreement with this if it seems he is ready.

Mr. McCaffrey saw a federal package for Water Department funding and Mr. Orcutt said those typically come in the form of SRF funding but he will keep a look out for grants. Mr. McCaffrey asked about PFAS funding and Mr. Orcutt said that the state has a small pool of money for engineering and testing and some construction. This program should get a boost when the

bipartisan program passes. Mr. Orcutt said we will get PFAS samples taken at Whitney III later this week. Whitney I & II and Baddacook will be October 1st.

Mr. Orcutt said that Mr. Haddad has two Articles as placeholders for the Water Department for the Fall Town Meeting; a reserve fund transfer and to borrow for construction for the Treatment Plant and for Whitney Well III. Mr. McCaffrey said we will give them the numbers mid-September. Mr. Gmeiner said the Select Board has there public hearing on September 13th and Mr. Orcutt said that is ok and he will get numbers from the engineers.

Mr. Gmeiner made a motion to approve the minutes of July 13th, 2021 as amended, Mr. McCaffrey seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lauren Crory