

Groton Water Commission
Regular Meeting of the
Board of Water Commissioners
Tuesday, October 12th, 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 from Environmental Partners, Dave Patangia from Environmental Partners, and Michael Ohl of CEI.

Mr. Fishbone called the meeting to order at 7:30pm.

Manganese Treatment Plant – progress update, revised schedule

Mr. Patangia said they will provide drafts to Mr. Orcutt by the end of this week and will follow up with the specifications over the next couple of weeks. All local permitting has been completed and there will be two more permit applications to be submitted to MA DEP. Mr. Patangia presented an updated photo of the building design. The two big changes are the light grey with white trim and the blue and gold sign. Mr. Orcutt will pass the building photo to the Town Manager's Assistant for Town Meeting. Mr. Orcutt asked if we should bring anything else to Town Meeting or any numbers to present or to prepare for questions. Mr. Rafferty will put together some FAQ answers and numbers. The latest cost estimate was in the Herald and was \$8.7 million plus engineering.

Mr. Patangia asked Mr. Ohl if they have selected the Whitney Well III pump curve. Mr. Ohl said they have not because it depends on the 350 vs 450 gpm. The hydrologist is still working on the groundwater model and we should know in the second half of October. Mr. Patangia said they have to send something to DEP so will need to make some assumptions and will need to amend if necessary.

Mr. Gmeiner asked about SRF funding and Mr. Orcutt said he can speak on that if someone asks about it

Whitney Pond Well #3 – progress update, schedule

Mr. Ohl said things are moving along. The Water Management Act Package is being put together, the ENF (environmental notification form), and the groundwater model. We are still on track to have everything into DEP on time, in order to get out to bid by the end of the year. Mr. McCaffrey asked if we will have the GPM nailed down at next meeting and Mr. Ohl said we will.

Mr. Orcutt said Nashoba Tech starts building the shed next Monday.

Dunstable Water Operations – updates

Mr. Orcutt said he and Mr. Knox forwarded the Dunstable Town Manager job descriptions and has not heard back. They suggested hiring someone. Mr. Fishbone said the ball is in their court.

Other Business: budget, bills, minutes, meeting schedule

Mr. Orcutt said flushing will start next week. They had a heavy-duty plastic pipe blow up last week and it has been repaired and everything working fine. A hard rubber whip backordered as a backup in case this happens again. PFAS testing was taken today at Baddacook, Whitney Well I and Whitney Well II and we should get the results in two weeks. Mrs. Crory asked if we should expect more dirty water calls since we didn't flush as much in the spring.

Mrs. Crory reviewed the latest debt schedules and manganese spreadsheet. She discussed a 20-year debt schedule and 25-year debt schedule based on the 6/30/21 borrowing and upcoming borrowing for the Treatment Plant. The 25 year seems much more manageable. The first big payment appears to be in FY24 about \$300,000 and FY25 of about \$600K. She is hoping that the fee won't need to be increased to more than \$35 per quarter. Bond Counsel will be getting us Whitney Well III debt schedules also. The \$10.8 million number is the Treatment Plant only and does not include the Whitney Well III cost. Mr. Orcutt emphasized we have to get through FY25 when our current debt falls off of our budget. Mr. McCaffrey asked if we could tell people the increase would be temporary and Mr. Orcutt and Mrs. Crory believe it could. Mr. Gmeiner doesn't think the increased charge will stick very long. Mrs. Crory reviewed the Manganese tracking spreadsheet and the Board discussed the income and expenses and its relation to the reserve fund. We will continue to track this and adjust as we move along. Mr. Gmeiner suggested tracking what came in just for manganese fee income and what we have spent just out of that income. Mr. Fishbone agreed and wants to see the income from the capital fee and the transferred amounts from that fee income etc.

The next meeting will be on October 26th.

Mr. Fishbone made a motion to adjourn at 8:22pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lauren Crory