

Groton Water Commission
Regular Meeting of the
Board of Water Commissioners
Tuesday, July 12th, 2022
Virtual Meeting using Zoom

Minutes

Present are Chairman Jack McCaffrey, Vice Chairman Greg Fishbone, Member James Gmeiner, Superintendent Tom Orcutt, Dave Patangia and Bob Rafferty, from Environmental Partners, and Michael Ohl from CEI, and Jon Amaral from Omni Properties.

Mr. McCaffrey called the meeting to order at 7:37 pm. He stated that we are being recorded and everyone introduced themselves.

Mrs. Crory was not present and will be taking minutes via the recorded meeting on Zoom.

Manganese Treatment Plant – progress update, schedule

Mr. Patangia said the contractor has mobilized to the site this week and the trailers are arriving tomorrow. There have been 93 submittals returned and 10 are under review. The 10 RFIs have been returned and 1 is under review. Mr. Patangia said the next three weeks will be installation of erosion controls, tree removal, stripping of loam and setting up temporary electrical service. They hope to break ground the last week of July. Mr. Orcutt understands they will be working four 10-hour days and Mr. Patangia said they are ok with it but are waiting for an RFI on that. Mr. McCaffrey and Mr. Fishbone are ok with this. Mr. McCaffrey asked if they will block access to Whitney Well and Mr. Rafferty said they will not.

Mr. Patangia said the roof was designed to hold the weight of solar panels. The GC will get pricing from their electrical contractor and it will be looked into. Mr. Orcutt said the application will be put in for the grant and we need a ballpark number. Mr. Patangia said \$120,000 is a fine ballpark cost. Mr. Orcutt said the grant typically covers the installation and panels but the engineering may be the town's cost. Mr. McCaffrey asked about the kilowatts and Mr. Patangia said that they could handle 15-20 kW. Mr. Fishbone asked about the electrical requirements of the facility and Mr. Orcutt said this would be to supplement for heating and cooling for the facility and not to run the facility. Mr. Fishbone asked if it will help significantly and Mr. Patangia said it should help quite a bit to take away from the propane and electrical heat and Mr. Rafferty said it will also help the dehumidifier. Mr. McCaffrey said we want to make sure we get the most efficient panels and Mr. McCaffrey recommends SunPower Brand.

Whitney Pond Well #3

Mr. Ohl gave an update on the construction progress at Whitney Well III. The well and pump have been installed so the only remaining item is to do the final disinfection and power connections and make sure everything is running properly which is contingent on Dankris getting the water main fully installed and they should be done with their outdoor site work by the end of the month and they will shift into interior work. There may be issues getting the electrical

component due to supply chain issues. Mr. Orcutt asked what pieces are missing and Mr. Ohl doesn't have the details yet. Mr. Orcutt wants to be involved in any calls regarding this. Mr. McCaffrey asked about samples and Mr. Ohl said they were done and the results are not back yet and will be passed along. Mr. Ohl said they are trying to get in touch with SCADA. Mr. Ohl said the training to the operators will happen right before they go online. Mr. Orcutt said it will be the same but they may need training on SCADA. Mr. McCaffrey asked if they can see it from Baddacook and Mr. Ohl said that is where ITS should be working. Mr. Orcutt said there have been some pay requisitions coming through his office and those should be going to the engineers first. Mr. Ohl will let Dankris and Denis Mahar know. Mr. McCaffrey asked about the electrical and Mr. Ohl said GELD is ready once we are. Mr. Ohl wants to find out about the equipment and electrical sub first. Mr. McCaffrey said we also need wires and asked about the transformer and Mr. Ohl said the location of the last pole and the transformers are in close proximity to where they are doing excavation for the backwash pumping chamber, so the contractor is going to review the location. This was initially why GELD was holding off on the last pole. Mr. Orcutt said we could ask them about a temporary pole. Mr. Ohl said they have the transformer waiting for us.

Mr. Ohl said the Interbasin Transfer Act is still the biggest hurdle. They had a conversation with DCR and DEP and the initial thought of DCR was to transfer the registration from Shattuck Well to Whitney Well III but DEP said you can't transfer a registration due to the Water Management Act. One option would be to give up the Shattuck registration to free up that volume for Whitney Well III and would not need to pursue and Interbasin Transfer. The other option is to push forward with the ITA permit process which is lengthier and time consuming. There would be an Environmental Impact Report required which could take a year. The other option is if there are modifications that could be made to the previous State approval for the sewerage of Lost Lake. Mr. Orcutt recommends a dual approach where we give up the Shattuck registration because there is no capacity available for Shattuck. He thinks that we should go for the maximum amount that is recommended operating 12-13 hours at capacity at Whitney Well III, get the water management permit in 90 days and then start the process for the increased water we want to get out of Whitney Well III, which will trigger permitting but it gets our well online in the fall and gets stress off of Whitney Well I & II. We have to be careful when we give up the registration for Shattuck that we say it is a viable site but it is not the best site to draw water from right now. Mr. Fishbone asked about the timeframe and Mr. Orcutt said we would file the water management permit for Whitney and give up the registration for Shattuck we would then start the permitting for the increased withdrawal. Mr. Orcutt and Mr. Gmeiner confirmed it would be 90 days to get the permitting for Whitney Well III at the current limit. Mr. Fishbone asked about Shattuck's history and Mr. Orcutt said that Shattuck was put in during the 1950s and it was used when Groton began to grow. It was over pumped and sucked surface water into the well and it was discontinued. They went back out in the late 90's and had it re-approved but not for a big yield and it would require two pumps. There would also be environmental impacts due to wetlands and a water line would need to be installed. It may be cost prohibited but is the closest to Baddacook. Mr. Ohl said the water management act application has been in DEP's hands for months so the only thing they need is something in writing to relinquish the registration for Shattuck Well. Mr. Gmeiner is in favor of the dual approach and said DEP seems adamant that we would give up Shattuck and would need to go through the whole registration process to get it

back. He does not want to get into sewer issues either and thinks we get this new well running and go from there.

Mr. McCaffrey asked about Baddacook and if it will carry us for awhile and Mr. Orcutt thinks that Baddacook will be running for a while. Mr. Ohl said you could put a replacement well in if needed. Mr. Orcutt said Shattuck could be worded as an emergency source. Mr. Orcutt, Mr. Ohl, Mr. Rafferty, and Mr. Gmeiner will review the memo to rescind the Shattuck registration.

Groton Farms – John Amaral

Mr. Orcutt said there is information on the plans for the project at 500 Main St on the town website. The plan is for 200 residential units and will be three 4-story buildings. Mr. Orcutt will be on the site walk for boards and commissions. Mr. Gmeiner may attend.

Mr. Amaral said they are trying to get their 40B application to the ZBA and need to get their site eligibility letter from Mass Housing. The application has been submitted to Mass Housing and has preliminary details. The application will be submitted to ZBA in September. There will be a total of 200 units of housing (three 4-story buildings with 56 units each and 32 townhouses) for a total of 312 bedrooms and 50 of the units will be affordable housing. They will all be rentals so the town can count all the units towards its affordable housing totals. Mr. Amaral said the location is great given the gym, childcare, food, healthcare services and more nearby. They don't have plans for the frontage on Main St. at this point but will evaluate what would make sense.

Mr. Orcutt recommended an irrigation well for irrigating green spaces. A well would be better and we don't want to use up all of our new source approval on this area. He also asked Mr. Rafferty to do reviews on water infrastructure and we will need to run the hydraulic water model and fire flow tests on Main St. The hydraulic analysis maybe \$8,000 and we will need to do a pipe analysis also. There will need to be 8" water lines brought in. Mr. Amaral has no problem with these items and said they are working with a landscape architect for drought resistant plants and to reduce lawn space.

Mr. Rafferty said they looked at the plans on the town website and they are involved with the Taylor Street water main and they have the water model they can work on and don't see any issues at this point. Mr. McCaffrey asked when we start and Mr. Rafferty will create a formal quote.

Mr. Orcutt said that connection fees will not be waived but he will get credit for any of the infrastructure done. Mr. McCaffrey reiterated that the department is going through a lot of costs right now and Mr. Amaral understands that.

ARPA Funds – Taylor and Main Street Replacement Project

No updates.

Fiscal Year 2022 & 2023

No updates.

Other Business

Mr. McCaffrey read an article about the new generation of PFAS and it sounds like we have been testing for 9 types of PFAS but there are many more types (300+ types of PFAS). Mr. McCaffrey said we shouldn't overact but we should be aware and know that right now our wells seem clean but the testing will probably be expanded. He also said we have to be careful about remediating anything; we need to make sure it fixes what we have now and what we have coming down the road. Mr. Orcutt said it is a great point and rushing too fast may not be favorable. We don't know exactly what each treatment process does. Mr. McCaffrey thinks the osmosis process would be better but more costly. Mr. Orcutt said we are making sure our treatment plant is ready to add GAC module if needed but reverse osmosis may slightly change that. Mr. Fishbone asked if we would change the current footprint and Mr. Orcutt said it would probably be an attachment to the building. Mr. Fishbone asked if it is still possible to prepare for both of the treatment options at the site. Mr. Orcutt said it could be done since it would be an attachment to the existing structure so both would fit on site (not in the building). Mr. Fishbone said six substances are being regulated by the state but there are others (tens of thousands) and most are so obscure we don't need to worry about it but could see there being another six or so that will need to be regulated. They would need to redo the testing procedures as things evolve.

Mr. Orcutt said well levels are holding steady but it is dry out there. He thinks most people have given up on watering their lawn.

Mr. Orcutt said he is not sure on the status of the High School and will ask for an update. Mr. Gmeiner asked if Board of Health is pushing testing and Mr. Orcutt said they are offering it but not pushing it. Mr. Orcutt thinks people with shallow wells should be required to test.

Next Meeting is July 26th, 2022.

Mr. McCaffrey made a motion to adjourn at 8:46pm, Mr. Gmeiner seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lauren Crory