**Groton Water Commission**

**Regular Meeting of the**

**Board of Water Commissioners**

**Tuesday, July 26th, 2022**

**Virtual Meeting using Zoom**

# Minutes

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

Mr. McCaffrey called the meeting to order at 7:30pm. He stated that we are being recorded and everyone introduced themselves.

**Manganese Treatment Plant – progress update, schedule**

Ms. Longo said that R.H. White is moving along with submittals and Environmental Partners have received 115 and returned about 100. There have been 12 RFIs received. R.H. White mobilized erosion controls, safety fencing is up, construction trailers are on site, and one temporary power connection has been brought in. They are mostly delivering materials and laying stone down. There is no work on site this week and they are working on submittals. Ms. Longo will be meeting with them tomorrow to go over submittals and they are planning on excavating next week, so they are in line with their original schedule (a few days different). It will take about three weeks for the main building and then the footings. The first pay requisition came in for the June work. The July pay requisition has come in also and will be sent to Mr. Orcutt next week. The cash draw down schedule was given to Mr. Orcutt and Mrs. Crory and they will send an extended drawdown schedule until December 2023, also. Mr. Patangia said the drawdown schedule is an estimate. Ms. Longo will be meeting with everyone on site on Friday. The transformer will be put in at Whitney Well III according to Mr. Ohl. R.H. White is responsible for locking up the gate at the end of the day.

**Whitney Pond Well #3**

Mr. Ohl said the gravel packed well is complete and pump has been installed. The water quality samples were collected and we are still waiting on the results. They sent in a pay requisition and included some change order items that were previously discussed. Mr. Ohl needs to go over it and get it to an acceptable form. The final reporting and final operational test will be needed once power is on site. Dankris is supposed to get the power set up and was supposed to be done by August 1st and is not meeting their deadline. The electrical sub is the primary issue. The electrical sub and Dankris are working on getting a portable generator out to allow startup and testing of the well pump so the contract can be closed out. There is a meeting scheduled on Friday, but it should take a few weeks for power to get into the site. There is no wiring to the site yet, so the portable generator will be the quickest route. They were having trouble getting electrical submittals from their distributors because up until this point the only delay we knew about was regarding the VFD for the well pump. The town issued a cure notice to the contractor and we are waiting for an updated schedule, but its looking like a completion date the end of September.

Mr. Ohl gave a push to get moving on a lot of other things that they could be doing such as insulation, general wiring, and we are waiting on the updated schedule. If they need to wait on any electrical equipment, it will be a separate issue. Mr. Orcutt said we are expecting the schedule on Thursday.

Mr. McCaffrey said we asked about items that needed to be ordered early on and Mr. Ohl said at the preconstruction meeting they flagged one item which was the VFD, as a supply chain issue. Subsequent to that, we worked on how we could get around it and we were ok running the well pump with a soft start and full speed and Mr. Orcutt was aware of that. Mr. Ohl did get submittals on the electrical a week and a half ago, and they were returned because the panels as submitted did not meet specifications. Mr. Ohl said we currently do not have a VFD and Mr. McCaffrey asked if they have not ordered it yet and they have not, which is frustrating. The meter socket is another issue and was not flagged at the preconstruction meeting.

Mr. Orcutt asked what other components are being rejected on the submittals like meter sockets and lighting panels. Mr. Ohl said it was the rating of the panels that were the issue. Mr. Ohl said the well pump will be able to run in a few weeks but the facility will not be running yet (we are waiting for the revised schedule).

Mr. Ohl talked to the electrical sub after the meeting about supply chain issues and said at bid time it is assumed they can meet the requirements, and they agreed these aren’t new issues and they should have known what is delayed.

Mr. Ohl said that one plumbing shop drawing is outstanding.

Mr. Ohl said that they drafted a request to withdraw the registration for Shattuck as discussed at the last meeting. It will be sent to DEP’s Boston office. They had indicated it is likely 90 days from when they receive it from when they could issue the permit for Whitney Well III to operate with our current withdrawal limit. Mr. Orcutt is not sure it will take a full 90 days because there were no comments about this previously and many of the groups have reviewed this. Mr. Orcutt thinks we can nudge a bit to keep this moving along. Mr. Ohl will continue to follow up with them and Mr. Orcutt is welcome to follow up also. Mr. Ohl said that the Interbasin transfer is not triggered for the moment by going this route.

Mr. Rafferty wants to make sure the coordination between R.H. White and Whitney Well III is alright and they are not going to bump into each other. He wants to make sure that R.H. White is aware of the new schedule. They will be using the same access driveway and parking in the same areas etc. Mr. McCaffrey asked if someone can be on site when both contractors are busy. Mr. Ohl said someone will be inspecting during exterior work. Mr. Rafferty said that it may work out well because they will be done excavating before R.H. White is. Environmental Partner’s inspector will be there as long as R.H. White is on site.

The engineers were dismissed and the Board discussed the work being done by Comprehensive Environmental and the Contractors.

**ARPA Funds – Taylor and Main St Replacement Project**

Mr. Rafferty is working on the base plans now for the Taylor Street/Main Street water main replacement. The wet lands have been flagged and they have surveyed the property. Mr. McCaffrey asked when we need to start paying for this work. Mr. Orcutt said he signs these bills and then hands to the town to pay. Mr. McCaffrey asked if our technicians are needed and Mr. Orcutt said they are not needed besides marking out Digsafes. Mr. Orcutt said we aren’t expanding anything on Taylor Street. Mr. Haddad does have the Groton Farms project in mind and the Taylor Street mains would supply that project with an extra loop of water supply and solve other problems.

**Fiscal Year 2022 & 2023**

Mrs. Crory said that the financials reviewed on June 28th were very close to the actual year-end figures. She will review our debt schedules and FY2023 budget to ensure we do not need a Fall Town Meeting transfer from the enterprise fund.

Mrs. Crory updated the Manganese Treatment Plant financials to include the cashflow schedule from Environmental Partners. They will send the remaining months to show total estimated cashflow through December 2023. The estimated debt schedule from bond counsel has been added, as well as the spreadsheet showing the annual relation between current debt, new debt, and our manganese fee income.

**PFAS/PFOA Updates**

Mr. Orcutt sent out the results from Baddacook Well’s July sampling and they were a little higher than we would like to see. He said that we replaced the motor the last day of June which could have something to do with it. Mr. Fishbone asked if it could be coming from surface water upstream of the pond, and Mr. Orcutt said there is always a possibility of that. We are at the end of our four quarters that we were obligated to do sampling. Mr. Orcutt is going to resume sampling and do the next round in October. Mr. McCaffrey asked if there is something we are going to do to the pump, and Mr. Orcutt said they sit in the water (pitless adapter) so he is hoping it will flush itself out. Mr. Orcutt said that all of the samples are up to date on the website. Mr. Fishbone said DEP will be reviewing the levels every 3 or 5 years and he thinks they will change things in terms of levels and the number of PFAS/PFOS to look for. Mr. McCaffrey said we are actually doing more than what we’ve been required to do.

Mr. Orcutt said the high school’s engineer said they are working on a treatment plan right now.

**Other Business**

Mr. Orcutt said we are in a severe drought now. He suspects some communities to have a water shortage or broken equipment that will contribute to the situation. Mr. Orcutt is keeping an eye on water levels and recharge with Mr. Knox and he will start enforcing the water ban as needed.

Next meeting August 9th.

Mr. Gmeiner made a motion to approve the minutes of June 21st, 2022 as amended, Mr. McCaffrey seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. McCaffrey made a motion to adjourn at 8:42pm, Mr. Gmeiner seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lauren Crory