

Groton Water Commission  
Regular Meeting of the  
Board of Water Commissioners  
Tuesday, April 25<sup>th</sup>, 2023  
Virtual Meeting via Zoom

**Minutes**

Present are Chairman Jack McCaffrey, Member James Gmeiner, Superintendent Tom Orcutt, Business Manager Lauren Crory. Michelle Collette and Bob Fleischer from BOH, Judy Anderson Resident.

Mr. McCaffrey called the meeting to order at 7:01pm. He stated that the meeting is being recorded and everyone introduced themselves.

Mrs. Collette and Mr. Fleischer introduced themselves on behalf of the Board of Health.

Vice Chairman Greg Fishbone joined at 7:03pm.

**Board of Health: PFAS Discussion**

Mr. McCaffrey outlined the current PFAS situation and Mrs. Collette reiterated that it is everywhere and it is very challenging. The major concern is consumption through food and water and that focusing on drinking water and public education is important.

Mr. McCaffrey said Chairman Reilly suggested a town website regarding PFAS and Mr. Orcutt said we do have information on our website and the Water Department's testing results. Mr. Orcutt can share this data with the Board of Health to include on their website. Mr. Orcutt knows that there has been a struggle to get surrounding homes around the High School to test. Mrs. Collette said the Board of Health is trying to change the private well regulations to require testing the wells for PFAS before they can get an occupancy permit. Mrs. Collette said they are also looking at other hazardous materials. Mrs. Collette said they refer people to the Trust Commissioners for financial assistance for PFAS testing. She also said they are asking these residents to send the results to the Board of Health.

Mr. Gmeiner asked how much PFAS testing costs and Mrs. Collette said it is approximately \$400-\$500.

Mr. McCaffrey asked if the town should be offering financial assistance and Mr. Orcutt and Mrs. Collette agreed there should be some kind of assistance. Mr. Fleischer asked if the data will be available to the community and Mr. Orcutt said if there were any public funds used it should be public information. Mr. McCaffrey thinks people should be able to see how many homes have tested and the results, but is not sure they can disclose exact addresses and names. Mr. Fleischer said maybe someday this could be on the GIS system. Mr. Fishbone asked if residents are required to disclose the data. Mr. Orcutt said if they test on their own it is not required but at sale it may be required. Mr. Gmeiner asked if the school district is paying for any of the PFAS testing that has been done that is required by DEP and the Board of Health members were not sure. Mrs.

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Collette said that a map has been produced by the high school's legal counsel to show areas that have tested high and it is the high school's responsibility to remediate this.

Mr. McCaffrey asked if they should request the town to fund testing around the high school and maybe do random testing to see if there are other hot spots. Mrs. Collette said there is a bill on the state legislator to regulate private wells and provide funding for testing.

Mrs. Anderson said there are homes that were used for controlled burns and wonders if those sites should be tested. Mr. Fishbone thinks that is a good idea and the fire department could provide these locations.

Mr. McCaffrey thinks the Water Department and Board of Health should meet once a quarter. Mrs. Collette recommended inviting West Groton Water also.

Mr. McCaffrey said that our current PFAS levels will meet the upcoming EPA PFAS specifications although our goal is zero. He said we may want to start brainstorming state funding that is available and what kind of technology is needed to get something installed in a year or so. Mr. Fishbone agrees that it can begin to be explored and that the treatment plant is ready for it.

Mr. Orcutt said that Groton is involved in a possible long-term goal to get MWRA water (from the Quabbin reservoir). Mr. Orcutt said that building PFAS treatment is one thing but there are large annualized costs of treatment that are not eligible for funding. Mr. Orcutt said new technologies are being worked on also.

Mr. Gmeiner said although we are probably sourcing the High School, the YMCA camp on Massapoig is also 4 ppt.

Mrs. Collette made a motion to adjourn the Board of Health meeting at 7:30pm.

Bob Rafferty, and Tyler Schmidt from Environmental Partners, and Michael Ohl from CEI joined the meeting at 7:30pm.

### **Manganese Treatment Plant**

Mr. Schmidt said the treatment plant is on schedule. Interior masonry is moving forward to be complete two weeks, fire protection is almost completed, site work is almost completed, lagoons are being worked on, as well as HVAC piping, and a variety of compaction and met 95% compaction requirements. The trim work and paneling is ongoing and steel is being repaired where defective. The plan for the slab is to reseal the floor which involves prep work from RH White and they will complete it within two weeks. There have been 320/325 submittals returned and 49/54 RFIs returned. There are no changes to change orders and they remain at an additional cost of \$15,000. Solar Panels will result in another change order. The pay requisition is in for March around \$242,000.

Mr. McCaffrey asked who is paying for the floor repair and Mr. Schmidt said RH White will cover this repair. Mr. McCaffrey asked about Solar Panels and Mr. Orcutt said the contracts have been received from the state and will submit them back when the W9 is received from the Town

Accountant. Mr. McCaffrey asked if the engineers are aware of his preferences and Mr. McCaffrey said there are local companies we should be looking into. SunPower is Mr. McCaffrey's pick for our roof service area.

### **Whitney Pond Well #3**

Mr. Ohl said the contractor had the chemical feed line, sample line, and labeling finishing up for the final start up. He is hoping to get SCADA back to get the connection to Baddacook this week. They are concurrently working through how to run the pump safely into the system at the desired 450 gallons per minute flow rate without the VFD because its currently at full speed. They experimented with the motor starter and line voltage current to mock a lower horsepower motor. This did not work successfully. Mr. Ohl has emails out to resolve this overload fault and will continue trying this week and next week before DEP inspects.

Mr. McCaffrey asked if you could pump some water as waste and Mr. Ohl said there would be a way to do that. He also asked if there is a gate valve and asked if it could be used as a throttle valve. Mr. Ohl said it could be a short-term fix. Mr. Orcutt said if the VFD comes in June it could be installed under the Dankris contract. Mr. Ohl said the VFD is still on schedule to be shipped in June (delivery time a week) and it will take a about a week to start using it.

Mr. Ohl said that the Water Management Act is informally all set. The drinking water side had officially responded with comments and the issues have been resolved. We will just need to contact them when we are ready. Mr. Ohl will tell them tentatively two weeks out.

### **500 Main St**

Mr. McCaffrey and Mr. Orcutt are working with the developers at 500 Main tomorrow to try to come to an agreement regarding connection fees and Mr. Orcutt will discuss at the next meeting. Mr. McCaffrey hopes that this project and the connection fees will help offset some of the capital projects and provide fee relief for all customers.

### **Other Business**

Mrs. Barnes of 38 Fairway Dr wrote a letter to the Board in regards to their abatement decision and some water quality issues. The Board will stand by their abatement decision but agreed that the department can offer to send a technician over for a water quality check.

Mrs. Crory presented a water abatement form on behalf of Hassan Subhie of 15C Brookfield Dr. Mr. Subhie received a bill for 96 units (normally averaging 15 units) and contacted the department. The department installed a smart meter and confirmed he had a leak which Mr. Subhie identified and repaired in one of his toilets. Mrs. Crory has confirmed that the leak has stopped. Mr. Gmeiner made a motion to approve an abatement of 96 units of water at the lowest tier which will abate \$246.45, Mr. Fishbone seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Fishbone will reach out to Mrs. Crory about an additional set of minutes that need to be completed.

Mr. McCaffrey will be going on vacation and Mr. Fishbone will take the role of Chairman for the upcoming meetings.

Next Meeting is May 9<sup>th</sup>, 2023

Mr. McCaffrey made a motion to adjourn at 8:14pm, Mr. Gmeiner seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lauren Crory