

Groton Water Commission
Regular Meeting of the
Board of Water Commissioners
Tuesday, January 16th, 2024
Virtual Meeting via Zoom

Minutes

Present are Vice Chairman Greg Fishbone, Member James Gmeiner, Superintendent Tom Orcutt, Business Manager Lauren Crory and Bob Rafferty, and Dave Patangia and Tyler Schmidt from Environmental Partners.

Mr. Fishbone called the meeting to order at 7:32pm. He stated that the meeting is being recorded and everyone introduced themselves.

Manganese Treatment Plant

Mr. Schmidt said that as of January 8th, DEP gave approval to discharge into the system. On January 10th, the operators with assistance of engineers and vendors, pumped through the plant to distribution for the first time. The town, engineers and R.H. White met January 11th about the remaining punch list items and building permit. Most of the remaining items are electrical and HVAC. R.H. White requested another no cost time extension. The town put R.H. White on notice that this is the last extension. The Westford interconnection will begin on January 22nd so R.H. White can remove the temporary tie in to complete interior electrical work. Environmental Partners plans for substantial completion paperwork this week. There have been 417/422 submittals returned. There have been 79/79 RFIs 20/21 work change directives. A few work change directives to be added as we near completion. Additional carpentry, valves, and rain issues have not been valued yet but are not significant changes. Pay requisition 19 for December was sent to the town. About 3% is left to be billed and then retainage. The next progress meeting is tomorrow at 11am.

Mr. Orcutt clarified they pumped into the system last week and had a few backwash issues. They will be pumping into the system today and into the weekend until interconnection begins on Monday. All alarms are working. Mr. Fishbone said we have the DEP approval but are waiting on the town approvals and Mr. Schmidt said that is correct and they will close out their permits once the final items are completed. Mr. Orcutt said that electrical, plumbing, fire, conservation, other boards, and the building commissioner will sign the occupancy permit. Mr. Fishbone asked when the plant will be complete and Mr. Orcutt said that is when the building commissioner signs off on occupancy. February 12th is the date according to Mr. Schmidt.

Mr. Gmeiner said with the substantial completion we will pay out the retainage less the punch list items and Mr. Patangia said that is correct. Mr. Gmeiner asked about the solar panels. Mr. Schmidt said they have not been installed. Mr. Orcutt said the rails went up last week. Mr. Schmidt said R.H. White wanted it separate but Environmental Partners said no because they would need another electric permit so Fall River is being pushed to get that done.

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On Monday, there will be underground excavation for piping. They will be reconnected through permanent piping. A spool will be put in for about a week and the emergency interconnection will be made with Westford during this time. Mr. Orcutt said Westford water PFAS is less than 20 ppt. Mr. Fishbone asked if the pressure will be an issue and Mr. Orcutt said no, a few people may notice and call but no need to warn customers.

Mr. Patangia had a question on the administrative consent order. Mr. Orcutt said it is due next December so once everything is all completed, we will notify DEP. Mr. Patangia asked if Environmental Partners should prepare a letter. Mr. Gmeiner said we will want something from the state saying we are in compliance and would feel comfortable letting them prepare a letter. The ribbon cutting will be in May according to Mr. Orcutt.

Whitney Pond Well #3

Mr. Orcutt said there is not much to report on. Its only being used for backwash cycles and haven't been able to pump to waste in the past few weeks but will start that up again when there is time. Mr. Fishbone asked how frequently we are checking PFAS levels and Mr. Orcutt said the last sample was at the end of December and had a trace of PFAS around 7 ppt with all three wells.

Operational Updates (Superintendent)

Mr. Schmidt gave an update on the Taylor St and 500 Main St (Groton Farms) project. The developer design was added to Environmental Partner's design. There are a few more details to work out but are getting drawings to DOT for final approval of the second connection on Main St. They are working on finalizing hydrant locations. Once DOT approves, we will go out to bid with a target bid date April/May in hopes of construction in July.

Mr. Schmidt said that in terms of the GDRHS PFAS Water System Extension, 75% of the plans are completed. They are working on hydrant locations, chemical injection station locations, and permitting. The schedule is targeting a June bid date because of so many permits. The Intended Use Plan is to borrow \$12.8 million through the state revolving fund at a zero percent interest loan and will push for loan forgiveness. Mr. Schmidt said the IUP was #3 on the list from state drinking water fund. The next milestones will be to submit final specs to the state for disbursement of the funds in May or June. Mr. Gmeiner asked if #3 on the list helps with loan forgiveness. Mr. Schmidt said not necessarily but Mr. Orcutt said Mr. Haddad has been working towards it and hopes they will have luck.

Other Business

Mr. Orcutt submitted the first Solar Panel reimbursement for about \$40,000.

Mr. Orcutt will put a placeholder article on the Spring Town Meeting for a potential budget transfer.

Mr. Gmeiner asked how much under the borrowed amount will the treatment plant be and Mr. Orcutt estimated around \$150,000. Mrs. Crory will ask the Town Treasurer, Mrs. Moller, what happens with any unspent funds.

Mr. Orcutt noted that we are paying for the solar panels out of the borrowed funds but will get reimbursement from the state which will help our budget. The cost of the solar panels is included in the R.H. White pay requisitions.

Mr. Fishbone asked about the interest rates for the upcoming Bond and Mrs. Crory will be attending the rate meeting on Monday and will let them know.

Next Meeting is January 30th.

Mr. Gmeiner made a motion to approve the minutes of December 5th, 2023 as amended, Mr. Fishbone seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Gmeiner made a motion to approve the minutes of December 12th, 2023 as presented, Mr. Fishbone seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Fishbone made a motion to adjourn at 8:24pm, Mr. Gmeiner seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lauren Crory

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