

Groton Water Commission
Regular Meeting of the
Board of Water Commissioners
Tuesday, December 9th, 2025
Virtual Meeting via Zoom

Minutes

Present are Chairman John McCaffrey, Vice Chairman Greg Fishbone, Member James Gmeiner, Superintendent Tom Orcutt, Business Manager Lauren Crory.

Mr. McCaffrey called the meeting to order at 7:31 p.m. He stated that the meeting is being recorded and everyone introduced themselves.

Mr. Gmeiner opened the public hearing and read the notice that was published in the Groton Herald:

In accordance with Chapter 40, section 42-A to 42-I, of the Massachusetts General Laws and the Town of Groton Usage Fee Regulations, the Board of Groton Water Commissioners will hold a Public Hearing via Zoom to **Tuesday, December 9, 2025 at 7:30 P.M.** in order to review and adjust accordingly the water rates, fees and miscellaneous charges per the Town of Groton Water regulations.

Public Rate Hearing

Mrs. Crory began the rate hearing by showing an updated free cash estimate for the FY26 Fiscal Year. She estimates the free cash will end up around \$250,000 due to the purchase of a new truck, the delay of the Groton Farms project, and transition costs and Mr. Orcutt retires and Mr. Decker is onboarded. She noted that any increase put in place will also help this year's free cash forecast.

Mrs. Crory reviewed the FY27 Revenue Estimates which include a \$25,000 increase of the Whitney Well III capital charge and the need for a \$32,255 Water Rate Increase. She ran rate scenarios for both wet and dry summers and recommends using the wet summer scenario to ensure we meet our goal. The commissioners reviewed various increases and ultimately favored a 4% domestic rate increase (no tier 1) and a 4% irrigation increase (all tiers) which should result in an increase of at least \$26,529.

New Domestic Rates:

4% Increase (no tier 1)	
Units	Rate
0-15	\$ 4.45
16-30	\$ 6.13
31-45	\$ 7.02
46+	\$ 8.06

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New Irrigation Rates:

4% all tiers	
Units	Rate
0-15	\$ 6.58
16-30	\$ 7.55
31-45	\$ 8.66
46+	\$ 10.14

Mrs. Crory reviewed the income from the quarterly service charge. The commissioners agreed to increase the service charge from \$13.00 to \$16.00 per quarter. However, they agreed to keep ACH Customers at the discounted \$8.00 per quarter and will still offer this discount to new ACH Customers.

Mrs. Crory reviewed the Whitney Well III capital charge. The goal is to have this fee bring in an additional \$25,000 until FY31. At that point, the debt payment will drop by \$40,000 and the fee can be adjusted accordingly. Mr. Fishbone would like to keep the residential fee as low as possible. The Commissioners agreed to increase the residential domestic fee from \$7.00 to \$8.50 and the residential irrigation charge from \$7.00 to \$9.00. The duplex fee would increase from \$14.00 to \$17.00, small commercial fee will increase from \$15.00 to \$22.00, the large commercial fee will increase from \$25.00 to \$35.00.

The domestic and irrigation rate increases, along with the service charge increase should result in at least \$46,854 in additional revenue which covers the \$32,255 increase that is in the FY27 Budget.

Mr. Gmeiner made a motion to close the public hearing at 8:20pm. Mr. Fishbone seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Gmeiner made a motion to increase the quarterly service charge from \$13.00 to \$16.00 while maintaining the ACH discounted service charge at \$8.00, Mr. Fishbone seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Gmeiner made a motion to increase the quarterly Whitney Well III residential domestic capital charge to \$8.50, the duplex capital charge to \$17.00, the small commercial capital charge to \$22.00, large commercial capital charge to \$35.00, and residential irrigation capital charge to \$9.00, Mr. Fishbone seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Gmeiner made a motion to increase the domestic water rates to tier 2 16-30 units \$6.13, tier 3 31-45 units \$7.02, tier 4 46+ units \$8.06, Mr. Fishbone seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Gmeiner made a motion to increase the irrigation water rates to tier 1 0-15 units \$6.58, tier 2 16-30 units \$7.55, tier 3 31-45 units \$8.66, tier 4 46+ units \$10.14, Mr. Fishbone seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Gmeiner made a motion for all other rates and fees to remain the same, Mr. Fishbone seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Gmeiner made a motion for all rate and fee changes to have an effective date of January 1, 2026, Mr. Fishbone seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

Other Business

Mr. Orcutt reported that the new Whitney Well VFD replacement was ordered for about \$15,000 because the equipment is aging and it is important to have one on hand. The technicians have had success with the filters by altering the chlorine dosage. The Blue Leak piloting will be put on hold for now as this process is monitored.

Mr. Gmeiner made a motion to approve Mr. Decker to take the work truck home to Shirley, Mr. Fishbone seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Orcutt said that he is working on a contract with Mr. Haddad to assist the water department on an as needed basis.

Next Meeting will be December 23rd, 2025

Mr. McCaffrey made a motion to adjourn at 8.31pm, Mr. Gmeiner seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lauren Crory