

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

Minutes

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

Mr. McCaffrey called the meeting to order at 7:33pm. He stated that we are being recorded and everyone introduced themselves.

Operational Updates: Whitney, Flushing

Mr. Orcutt said that Water Consumption has started to slow down. July and August were moderately decent months. It seems like people abided by the conservation program. Mr. McCaffrey asked about the aquifer levels and Mr. Orcutt said they are overall good. Mr. McCaffrey asked how Whitney Well III looks and Mr. Orcutt said it is doing very well.

Mr. Orcutt said there has been a change in ownership of the 500 Main Street project. Mr. Orcutt and he will meet with the fire chief tomorrow to go over the hydrant placement and Mr. Orcutt will review the connection fee schedule. Mr. Orcutt said the number of units have stayed the same. Mr. Fishbone asked what the change is. Mr. Orcutt said they will be reducing from 3 buildings to 2 buildings which changes the layout slightly. Mr. McCaffrey asked if he had met the new owner and he did at the Land Use meeting. Mr. McCaffrey asked if affects the grant and it does not and the grant is almost closed out.

Mr. McCaffrey approved a trail through the well area. The trails committee asked if the area should not have pets going through it. Mr. Orcutt does not have a problem with it as we can't control wildlife either; at least until it becomes an apparent issue.

Financials

Mrs. Crory reviewed the FY26 Revenue Budget and forecasted what income may look like based on last year's data, the removal the deficit charge, and the delay in the Groton Farms project. She expects rate income to exceed the budgeted amount which will help offset the \$144,000 Groton Farms shortfall. She is estimating this year's construction income shortfall to be \$90,000-\$100,000.

Mr. Orcutt asked Mrs. Crory to run a few rate and fee adjustment scenarios.

Mr. McCaffrey asked about the additional rate income that the high school connection will provide. Mr. Orcutt noted that those funds are already allocated to help pay the town's debt. The Water Commission had previously voted to pay for \$1 million of the project debt over the course of the loan (30 years). Mr. McCaffrey asked about a development in the Cow Pond area and Mr. Orcutt does not expect to see income from that project this year. Other projects and income

streams were discussed and will be taken into consideration before any rate or fee adjustments are put in place. Mr. Gmeiner also wants to review the debt and potential capital fee decreases. Mr. Fishbone agreed it would be ideal to increase rates once the capital fees can be reduced to help keep bills level. Mrs. Crory said we can review the debt schedules again and believes a capital fee reduction is possible in FY27 when the old debt falls off. This will be reviewed as we construct our FY27 budget.

The Board will continue to monitor finances and will review the certified Enterprise Fund Balance in the upcoming weeks.

Qualification Requirements for work on Water Supply System

Mr. Orcutt sent out the drainlayer qualifications and all reviewed.

Mr. Gmeiner made a motion to approve the Drainlayer Instructions as well as the Water Service Installer's Qualifications application, Mr. McCaffrey seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Orcutt will share it with the sewer commission.

Other Business

Mr. Orcutt said there is an article on the Fall Town Meeting for a truck. The truck being used by the operator has a rotting bed. Mr. Orcutt is hoping to use \$70,000 from reserves to purchase the new truck. Mr. Gmeiner is hesitant given the shortfall this year but understands the need. Mr. Orcutt said the truck bed is rotted out and cannot carry certain equipment. The winter may be challenging if the truck is not purchased. Mr. Fishbone asked if the truck bed could be rehabilitated and Mr. Orcutt said there are other issues and the truck is 11 years old so would not be cost effective to go that route. He does hope to get some trade in value. Mr. Gmeiner said there may be questions on this being in the capital plan and Mr. Orcutt will answer any questions at the Selectboard meeting.

Mr. Gmeiner made a motion to approve the minutes of August 19th, 2025, Mr. Fishbone seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

Next Meeting is September 30th, 2025.

Mr. Gmeiner made a motion to adjourn at 8:16pm, Mr. Gmeiner seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lauren Crory