

Groton Water Commission
Regular Meeting
Of the
Board of Water Commissioners
Tuesday, January 29th, 2019
2nd Floor Lunch Room

Minutes

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

Mr. McCaffrey called the meeting to order at 7:30pm.

Water Conservation Program – Well Levels & Pumping Levels

Mr. Orcutt presented the precipitation and well level graphs and said not much has changed. Mr. McCaffrey asked if Whitney Well 1 has been running more and Mr. Orcutt said it has been running longer and at a lower rate along with Whitney Well 2. Mr. Orcutt said that cleaning specifications are out and we will be getting bids. The wells will be cleaned in March and should help with the manganese levels.

Baddacook Pond Update

Mr. Orcutt said specifications for bidding were sent to Jim Luening. Mr. McCaffrey met with Mr. Luening and Mr. Orcutt and it was decided that they need to begin to think about who would step in if Mr. Luening decides he is done working on this project. Mr. McCaffrey doesn't think we should interfere much with year 3. Mr. Gmeiner hopes to see lots of hydro-raking and doesn't want to see dredging done in the same coves. Mr. Gmeiner also thought that residents would be self-funding areas directly in front of their homes so that the funds could be used strictly on the invasive species. Mr. Fishbone asked if there are still invasive weeds after two years and Mr. Orcutt said there are. Mr. McCaffrey did say he saw improvements when he did a site visit. Mr. McCaffrey said if we receive a good rate, residents may be more likely to have their area hydro-raked. Mr. McCaffrey asked if we could use CPC funds to purchase capital equipment and Mr. Orcutt believes we can.

Budget – FY Budget 2020 / Spring TM

Mrs. Crory presented a worksheet regarding her recommendation for the water department's spring Enterprise Fund transfer. Mrs. Crory recommended transferring around \$122,775.00 based on extra funds needed in salaries and wages due to contract negotiations (\$34,775), Mr. Brackett's vacation payout (\$13,000), and the meter replacement project (\$75,000). The current balance of the Enterprise Fund is \$455,643. She also explained that the new truck (\$36,324) will be offset by our energy grant. We were able to use our energy grant to apply a double payment to our Whitney Well debt. We had budgeted \$42,000 for this debt that we no longer need to use.

Mr. McCaffrey does not feel comfortable with the \$122,775 transfer and would like to look into ways to reduce it. Mrs. Crory mentioned that our intergovernmental costs have gone down about \$30,000 this year since she dropped to a single health plan and Mr. Orcutt opted out of his family plan. We could use this excess amount to offset the extra expenses. The board will make a decision on the transfer amount at the next meeting.

Consulting Engineers

Mr. Fishbone believes that the board should discuss how each engineering firm would be at inputting information versus implementing. Some companies seem better at the informational level but others seem better at the implementation level. Mr. Fishbone thought that Comprehensive Environmental (CEI) seemed to have the best information but may lack implementation. Wright Pierce seemed to be stronger on the implementation level.

Mr. McCaffrey thought that BETA seemed average, Wright Pierce was thorough and brought a hydrogeologist, and CEI gave a lot of great information but didn't gain his full confidence. Mr. Fishbone agreed that not one company had the entire package we are looking for. Mr. Gmeiner also noted that each company had different opinions on how to handle the inter-basin transfer. He felt CEI was the most knowledgeable on this subject. Mr. Fishbone thought CEI also had a better understanding of what DEP is looking for. Mr. Orcutt agreed but did say that Wright Pierce's hydraulics specialist spoke directly with a contact at DEP.

Mr. Orcutt feels the main objectives are to get more water and cleaner water. He feels that CEI would be the best for increased water but thinks Wright Pierce would be a stronger candidate for work on a treatment plant. Mr. Orcutt said if the board does not choose a firm, they would have to get bids for each project which would be timely. However, hiring two firms could be an option. Mr. Orcutt also mentioned that CEI could be helpful in finding and pursuing grants.

The board discussed the benefits of having both CEI and Wright Pierce hired and Mr. Orcutt will speak with Mr. Haddad and Mr. Delaney about hiring two firms.

Other Business

Mr. McCaffrey asked if Mr. Brackett will want to be on-call after he retired. Mr. Orcutt does not believe he will, but he may be hired for extra work such as inspections. Mr. Orcutt also said that the technicians do not want more than a 3 person rotation for on-call, so Mr. Orcutt will not join the rotation until Mr. Brackett retires.

Mr. McCaffrey made a motion to approve the minutes of December 18th, 2018, Mr. Gmeiner seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. McCaffrey made a motion to approve the minutes of January 15th, 2018, as amended, Mr. Gmeiner seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

Invoices for Expense Warrant 17 were signed.

Next Meetings: February 12th, 2019

Per Mr. McCaffrey, he made a motion to adjourn at 8:55pm, Mr. Gmeiner seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lauren Crory
Business Manager