

Groton Water Commission
Regular Meeting
Of the
Board of Water Commissioners
Tuesday, February 11th, 2020
1st Floor Meeting Room
Minutes

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

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

Manganese – Open Public Forum

Mr. Orcutt presented a manganese schedule draft. Mr. McCaffrey said it is a pretty tight schedule so the board should review. He said the milestone point is to be able to ask for our borrowing at Fall Town Meeting. Mr. Orcutt said the schools will be looking for their funding next spring, so we would rather be asking for our funding approval in the fall. Mr. McCaffrey added that option 3C would bring water to Baddacook in FY2021, so we would need the funding in fall 2020 to make that happen. Mr. Gmeiner asked how much are we asking for and Mr. Orcutt said just the pipe portion for now (if option 3C is chosen). He said the three main items we currently need to stay on top of are pilot testing, concept plan approval, and keeping the Select Board informed.

Mr. McCaffrey wants to discuss what the board is looking for in the concept plan. Mr. Orcutt said it will outline the two potential plans. Mr. Gmeiner asked how long will we be thinking about the two plans. Mr. Orcutt said the piloting report should be done around May so the concept plan would begin after that time. Mr. Orcutt said we want to construct a plan that shows both the cost implications and that answers any other questions that people may have.

Mr. McCaffrey will be gone during the month of June.

Mr. Fishbone asked if the Select Board will be joining us through these meetings on the timeline and Mr. Orcutt said we will present things as we go along. Mr. Fishbone said ideally, we will know which option seems to be the best choice prior to creating the concept plan, but understands politically we may need to outline both of the options.

Mr. McCaffrey added that after pilot testing results are in, if there is a slam dunk option, we could just present one.

Mr. Fishbone would like to informally reach out to the Historical District Commission regarding Baddacook expansion because it is so old, even though it's not in the Historic District.

In regards to the manganese timeline, Mr. Orcutt and Mr. Fishbone worked on the final draft and it was sent to the Select Board.

Mr. McCaffrey asked if we should talk about manganese treatment efforts at the Spring Town Meeting. Mr. Orcutt said we can stand up at the beginning and briefly say we are working on it and will have updates soon but can keep it brief since we do not have a completed plan yet. Mr. Gmeiner said to check with the moderator because they may not allow this anymore.

Mr. Orcutt said we are not planning to transfer funds at the Spring Town Meeting. Mrs. Croy will review the current budget to ensure this is ok.

Manganese – Consent Order Update

To be discussed in Executive Session.

Water Conservation Program – Summer 2020

Mr. Orcutt said we haven't had much snow which is concerning as snow pack is critical to spring recharge. We have had rain but a lot of that will be run off. We have trimmed back on Whitney pumping and are getting much more use out of Baddacook. He said we have gotten 20 hour runs at Baddacook and water levels in the wells are creeping up very slightly due to less pumping.

Mr. Orcutt asked the board to vote on the summer conservation program. He proposed the same as the past few years; May 1- Sept 30 odd/even no Mondays. If we end up in a drought we can always change it. Mr. McCaffrey said we have a strong system so why not wait until July to institute a ban. Mr. Orcutt said it could cause issues as people are accustomed to this program. People will program their systems at the beginning of irrigation season and won't need to worry about remembering to change it.

Mr. Fishbone made a motion to institute a Water Conservation Program which will run May 1 – Sept. 30, odd/even days, no Mondays, Mr. McCaffrey seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

Baddacook Pond Program

Mr. Orcutt has another meeting with the Baddacook Pond neighbors tomorrow night. Jim Luening put together an outline for the neighbors, which will go over how weed harvesting works to see if there are any volunteers. Mr. Orcutt thinks that town contribution is restored in the budget. He agreed to put it out to bid for them if need be. Mr. Fishbone asked if hydro raking is on the table or just weed harvesting. Mr. Orcutt is going to suggest they also look into hydro raking.

Mr. McCaffrey said we should make it clear that we will support a mechanical weed removal in Baddacook.

Mr. McCaffrey asked if we can find out what the town is including in their budget and Mr. Orcutt said \$15,000. Mr. Gmeiner wants to know if its targeted or open-ended funding. He will agree to match targeted money not open ended. Mr. McCaffrey thinks we should say we will

match up to \$10,000 if we see a plan and are ok with it, and only if the town contributes \$15,000. Everyone agreed.

Lost Lake CPA Application – Letter of Support

Alex Woodle is the sponsor of a CPC article for \$95,000 for treatment of Lost Lake. Mr. McCaffrey said we would want boards to be up for an adequate amount of time so it would not get to Whitney Pond. Mr. Orcutt will make sure it is just for Lost Lake – not any other ponds. Mr. McCaffrey said they have been spending 20-30K on touching up and can't keep up with it so it makes sense they are going to CPC.

Other Business: Bills, Minutes, etc

Mr. McCaffrey moved to approve the minutes of 12/10/19 as amended, Mr. Fishbone seconded, all in favor.

Mr. McCaffrey moved to approve the minutes of 1/7/20 as amended, Mr. Fishbone seconded, all in favor.

Mr. McCaffrey moved to approve the Executive Session minutes of 1/7/20 as amended, Mr. Fishbone seconded, all in favor.

Invoices for EW18 were signed.

At 8:35pm Mr. Gmeiner made a motion to go into Executive Session – Pursuant to M.G.L. c. 30a, Sec. 21 (a) Clause 3 – To discuss strategy with respect to litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the litigation position of the public body and the chair so declares. Mr. McCaffrey, as Chairman, declared he found an open session would be detrimental. Mr. Fishbone seconded Mr. Gmeiner's motion. Roll call vote taken, Mr. Gmeiner, Aye, Mr. Fishbone, Aye, Mr. McCaffrey, Aye.

Mr. McCaffrey made a motion to adjourn at 9:03pm, Mr. Gmeiner seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lauren Crory