

Groton Water Commission  
Regular Meeting  
Of the  
Board of Water Commissioners  
Tuesday, June 9th, 2020  
Virtual Meeting using Zoom

**Minutes**

Present are Chairman Jack McCaffrey, Vice Chairman Greg Fishbone, Member James Gmeiner, Superintendent Thomas Orcutt, Business Manager Lauren Crory, Office Assistant Ann Livezey, Michael Ohl of CEI, and Select Board Member John Giger.

Mr. McCaffrey called the meeting to order at 7:32pm.

Manganese – Schedule, Piloting, Concept Plan, Finances, Consent Order

Mr. Ohl spoke about various PFAS treatment options that could be available if needed. He said we will want to make sure we have space for treatment down the road, but wouldn't recommend building right now. Mr. Orcutt asked if we have adequate space at either location and Mr. Ohl said we do. Mr. McCaffrey asked how long it would take to get PFAS treatment up and running and Mr. Ohl said if we had the space ready to go, he estimated about 6 months to get the equipment. Mr. Ohl added that anything over 18 ft tall gets expensive and we would have to consider digging into ground.

Mr. Ohl reviewed the previous cost estimates for the manganese treatment options. The Whitney to Baddacook option is now reduced to an estimate of \$7.3 million and the Whitney Well option is reduced to \$6.6 million (now using a pre-engineered building for cost savings). He reiterated that these are capital costs only and they do not take into account any O&M costs like extra staff. Mr. Orcutt does not want to weigh too heavily on extra staffing needs because he believes that MA DEP will end up requiring us to add staff in the future, regardless of the location. Mr. Fishbone asked if the costs were apples to apples and Mr. Ohl said yes. Mr. Gmeiner asked to clarify that both costs include updating the backwash system at Baddacook and Mr. Ohl said yes. Mr. Ohl noted the printout said masonry building for Whitney but it should say pre-engineered.

Mr. McCaffrey pointed out that backwash equipment is about \$600,000 and we should keep looking at other options. He asked Mr. Ohl to bring an alternatives spreadsheet. He also asked for more details on O&M costs such as how many more hours of staffing would be needed at one location versus the other. He recapped that we are looking at Whitney, Baddacook soon, or Baddacook later. He wants to make sure the difference between Baddacook soon versus later is very clear in terms of costs and benefits.

Mr. Ohl reminded the Board that the Baddacook Soon option would work 9 months out of the year but there could be issues or extra work needed to control the flow of summer months.

Mr. Giger said the town is going to be borrowing about \$70 million for the High School so we should see if that has any effect on our borrowing and schedules. Mr. Gmeiner asked Mr. Orcutt to find out if there would be any benefit to bonding with the High School etc.

Mr. Orcutt said we could be eligible for an MVP grant up to \$2 million. We would be applying next year. Mr. Ohl will bring a draft pilot report to the next meeting.

#### 73 Chestnut Hill Rd – Deed Restriction

Mr. Orcutt said the letter was delivered and the attorney responded and said they will cut and cap service to the shower and kitchen sink. A document from the attorney will be coming this week and Mr. Gmeiner asked if it could be sent to the Board so it can be reviewed prior to the property closing date.

#### Fiscal Year 2020 Operating Budget Review & Year End Projections

Mrs. Crory reviewed forecasted financials for FY20 and predicts a slightly profitable year. She also separated out all manganese related costs on a spreadsheet so we can track what has been spent and what is on the horizon.

#### Fiscal Year 2021 Operating Budget – Continue Spending Freeze?

Mr. Orcutt said that our 1/12 budget was sent to the Town Manager and Town Accountant who reported it to the state.

#### Superintendent’s Report: Well Cleaning, Water Levels and Pumping, Staffing

Mr. Orcutt said that there was about 2 inches of rain in May and summer pumping levels are approaching. The well levels are low and very dry. He will keep an eye on our conservation plan. Mr. Orcutt said they made adjustments to the pumping schedule to try to help and will keep an eye on it.

#### Other Business: Bills, Minutes, etc

Mr. Gmeiner would like the manganese debt schedules to be sent to the Board as soon as possible.

Mr. McCaffrey approved the minutes of May 12<sup>th</sup>, 2020 as written, Mr. Gmeiner seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. McCaffrey made a motion to adjourn at 8:48pm, Mr. Gmeiner seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lauren Crory