

Groton Water Commission
Regular Meeting of the
Board of Water Commissioners
Tuesday, July 13th, 2021
Virtual Meeting using Zoom

Minutes

Present are Chairman Jack McCaffrey, Vice Chairman Greg Fishbone, Member James Gmeiner, Superintendent Thomas Orcutt, and Business Manager Lauren Crory, Michael Ohl of Comprehensive Environmental and David Patangia and Bob Rafferty of Environmental Partners.

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

Manganese Treatment Plant – progress update, revised schedule

Mr. Patangia said the project is ahead of schedule. He received a notice from DEP that no further action required at this time. There is a Planning Board engineering meeting next week, we will have our application to them by August 17th, will be applying for stormwater management permit, and they are on track to submit 75% package on August 10th. He said that we still need feedback from GELD on how the plant will be powered. Mr. Orcutt will follow up with them.

Mr. Patangia said the administrative consent order had a September 30th submission completion date but they want to request an extension of 46 days to DEP. No other ACO dates should need to be modified. They will need to send a letter on Town Letterhead for the extension request, if the Board is in agreement with this. Mr. Orcutt verified that this is not a movement of the end date and Mr. Patangia said that is correct. Mr. McCaffrey asked if the 75% completion date will be the same and Mr. Patangia said it will. Mr. Ohl thinks DEP will be supportive and said the interim dates are usually just to make sure things are progressing. Mr. McCaffrey was supportive, Mr. Fishbone was ok with this as long as DEP has no issues, and Mr. Gmeiner agreed. Environmental Partners will prepare a letter for Mr. Haddad to sign.

Mr. McCaffrey read the description of the operating plan for larger capacities which require us to run the three units full time with only downtime to clean. Mr. Orcutt hasn't sat down with Mr. Knox to discuss yet and wants to wait for Thursday's meeting. He said that peak summer demands require pumping 6 days a week. One issue may be that more than a 2-hour weekend shift will be required in summer mode with new treatment plant. Mr. McCaffrey asked if that would be at full capacity or as we run today and Mr. Orcutt said only at peak capacity.

Mr. Orcutt asked why we would be adjusting the pH prior to filtration and Mr. Patangia said typically you want water in the right pH range to maximize the oxidation of iron and manganese and this was also determined during the pilot study

Whitney Well III – progress update, schedule

Mr. Ohl said the driller came back out to monitor the 8” test well installed last week. Everything looked as expected and the material showed what smaller tests showed. He said they figured out the screen size and it was ordered with a 2-week turnaround. We will get it at the end of next week and install it in the last week of July to start the pump tests. He sent a new schedule and it has improved with operation in June 2022. Mr. McCaffrey asked if we will want to watch the other Whitney Wells during the pump tests and Mr. Orcutt said that the technicians will be monitoring.

Mr. Ohl said they have the contact information for the technical school for the temporary facility at Whitney Well III, but they are holding off and hoping prices of lumber will come down.

Mr. McCaffrey asked if we can have a discussion of what summer will be like and Mr. Ohl said they had some initial discussions but Mr. Rafferty said once we hear from GELD we will have a better idea.

Redskin Trail/Boathouse Rd Water Main Extensions- Update

Mr. Orcutt said that one person on Redskin is inquiring and Boathouse has had interest and is evolving. DPW plans to pave these roads later this year, so any residents interested in connecting to town water need to do so prior to the paving taking place. He believes there is a better chance of connections happening at Boathouse Rd. Mr. McCaffrey asked when DPW will be paving and Mr. Orcutt said late fall but they could wait if active water connections were happening.

Other Business: Budget, Bills, Minutes, Meeting Schedule

Mr. Ohl discussed the problem Pepperell was having at their new treatment plant. They had issues starting up their new filtration system and were having issues getting good finished water. He reached out to Blueleaf and spoke to someone that was part of the piloting and he was contacted when the problems occurred. The new plant is serving several wells and one well had a specific iron problem and doesn't oxidize with just chlorine. They determined having the correct pH was very important. The operators were trained on the specifics of how to run certain parts of the plant, but not the overall system in regards to chemistry. It took a few weeks running raw water through the greensand and wouldn't work so they used chlorine to treat it once the pH was in the right range.

Mr. Orcutt said that he has a fall town meeting placeholder for Whitney Well III for design and construction and will try to hold off on the Manganese Treatment Plant for Spring Town Meeting. Mr. McCaffrey said this puts project back 6 months but still meeting ACO deadline. Mr. Gmeiner and Mr. Fishbone were in agreement with this.

Mr. McCaffrey asked how the Board felt about a placeholder for the Manganese Treatment Plant and Mr. Gmeiner said to put a placeholder so that we can figure things out as we get closer and Mr. Fishbone agreed with this. Mr. Gmeiner said that we may get better construction prices if we wait but should have better number in September

Mr. Orcutt said that we wouldn't have a bid number in hand by Fall Town Meeting. Mr. Haddad talked to firms about the new school and thinks construction numbers should soften by Spring, but can put a placeholder to keep our options open.

Mr. McCaffrey asked how the wells are running.

Mr. Orcutt said that June was a good pumping month for Baddacook and Whitney. There were good amounts of water at both.

Mr. Orcutt asked Mrs. Crory to make sure that he can attend the meeting when the Cow Pond project is discussed.

Mr. McCaffrey made a motion to approve the minutes of June 15th, 2021 as amended, Mr. Gmeiner seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Gmeiner made a motion to approve the minutes of June 24th, 2021, Mr. Fishbone seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lauren Crory

Business Manager