

Groton Water Commission
Regular Meeting of the
Board of Water Commissioners
Tuesday, October 26th, 2021
Virtual Meeting using Zoom

Minutes

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

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

Manganese Treatment Plant

Mr. Patangia said they are continuing working on the 100% design and have submitted some items for Mr. Orcutt to review. The architectural specifications will be coming and they are finalizing the mechanical and electrical. The plan is to submit the November 10th draft to Mr. Orcutt on November 3rd. He reported that it is not good news in terms of current inflation in the marketplace and they are seeing about 7% for the year. He advised that we will need to bid sooner rather than later. Mr. Orcutt said he thought the plan was to bid in February or March and asked if we should bump it up to December and Mr. Patangia said we should. Mr. McCaffrey said we will review the 100%, then asked what happens next with DEP. Mr. Patangia thinks approval will come by mid-December and we can go out to bid right away and we may gain two weeks. The ACO says to submit by November 15th and they plan to submit November 10th. Mr. Patangia said you can still look at it after it is submitted to DEP. Mr. Rafferty said DEP has seen this plan a few times so we don't expect any delay. Mr. Orcutt said we need to work on an internal schedule for borrowing. Mr. Patangia said bidding will be 8-10 weeks. Mr. McCaffrey would like to see the milestones for the next six months.

Whitney Pond Well #3

Mr. Ohl addressed the capacity issue and after looking at modeling and feels strongly that we can request 450gpm. Mr. Orcutt asked if they see any concerns that could pop up and Mr. Ohl said no and that it is a very realistic ask. Mr. Orcutt said there were very little comments from local agencies and environmental groups and Mr. Ohl doesn't expect anything. Mr. Orcutt asked if they have enough information on demands. Mr. Ohl said he will be submitting E&F to MEPA, Water Management Act, Test Well Report and Zone 2 contribution coming up. Mr. Orcutt said as they make contact to state regulators to copy Mr. Orcutt on emails so we don't lose sight of the June deadline. Mr. McCaffrey asked

about the bid timeline and Mr. Ohl said they were considering around January 1st also although there is no need to put it with the other project because it will be different bidders. Mr. Patangia said they are including Whitney Well III as being existing so need to keep that in mind. Mr. McCaffrey asked if we have ordered the transformer and Mr. Ohl said he believes GELD did order it but we will check. Mr. Orcutt asked who sizes the transformer and Mr. Patangia said the utility company will size it based on the loads which have been given to GELD. Mr. Patangia said it may be helpful if we can tell the contractor when Whitney Well III will be online. Mr. Ohl will get that to them as soon as possible. Mr. McCaffrey asked about pump sizing and Mr. Ohl doesn't see any reason they will have an issue and worse case would downsize it. They went through an initial screening process also. Mr. Orcutt said the Nashoba Tech students are working on the shed and they can wire it at cost. Mr. Ohl has the online wiring diagram and will send it. Mr. Orcutt said that local electrician, Tim Macgregor can install fixtures or switches or anything else we need.

Mr. Rafferty asked about the schedule for the integrator. Mr. Orcutt will work with Mr. Rafferty and Mr. Ohl. Mr. Orcutt would like to get someone by the first of the year.

Finances – Treatment Plant and Whitney Well III

Mrs. Crory reviewed preliminary updated debt schedules. She reviewed the fee income and the timing of when it can be spent. Mr. McCaffrey had concerns that the funds can't be spent until the following year. Mrs. Crory is going to talk to accounting about this. Mr. Gmeiner and Mr. Orcutt explained that our current debt is paid on July 1 and then we fund that debt payment throughout the year through our rates and income. Mr. Gmeiner thinks we will need to increase the capital charge and get the manganese fund built up. Mrs. Crory reviewed the income produced by various fee increases and the Board discussed various ways to assess the increased fee (different classes, meter size, residential, commercial, schools, etc). Mr. Fishbone wants to make sure a senior citizen isn't charged the same as a large user like Shaws. Mr. Gmeiner asked about charging different fees based on water usage. Mr. Orcutt said we should be careful basing a capital charge on water use because it can vary so much. Mr. Gmeiner said he meant just by tier not exact usage and Mr. Orcutt said people will then be trying to stay in lower tiers and thinks better off looking at meter size because those customers use more water. Mr. McCaffrey said he would rather not take every customer from \$20 to \$40 and find a convenient way to charge residents closer to \$35/quarter and higher users a higher amount. Mr. McCaffrey asked about seniors or income qualified groups and Mr. Orcutt said we will look at that also.

Dunstable Water Operations

Mr. Orcutt has not heard back.

Other Business

Mr. Orcutt said the PFAS results were good. Will not start quarterly testing of Whitney Well III until it is up and running. The Whitney Well III sample was inflated but probably due to all of the activity at the site because no other samples in the area were at that level. We will be required to do the testing for a year and then will get a new schedule. If any site gets over 10 you need to test monthly.

Mr. Gmeiner made a motion to approve the minutes of August 17th as amended, Mr. Fishbone seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. McCaffrey made a motion to approve the minutes of August 31st as amended, Mr. Fishbone seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. McCaffrey made a motion to adjourn at 8:36pm, Mr. Gmeiner seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

Next Meeting - November 9th.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lauren Crory