

Groton Water Commission
Regular Meeting of the
Board of Water Commissioners
Tuesday, March 1st, 2022
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 and Michael Ohl from CEI.

Mr. McCaffrey called the meeting to order at 7:33pm. He stated that we are being recorded and everyone introduced themselves.

Manganese Treatment Plant – progress update, schedule

Mr. Rafferty said that his coworker, Maria was onsite with GELD to review the location of the utility poles. GELD has a transformer available if ours does not arrive in time. On February 23rd, the Notice of Award was issued to RH White. They have ten days to respond so we should have all requirements in by the end of this week. We will then create a Notice to Proceed to be signed by Mr. Haddad and then they have 18 months to complete the project. April 1st is still the realistic start date. Mr. Orcutt said contracts need to be signed and we will need a preconstruction meeting maybe at the end of March or first week in April as well as other procedural things before breaking ground. Mr. Orcutt said that GELD was a bit confused about the transformer in terms of the location of the backwash but they have a few options. GELD wants to be done with their work before anyone else is on site.

Mr. Orcutt said the construction administrative contract was received by Environmental Partners at a cost of \$1.296 million. If we go over the 18-month construction window the contract would need to be amended. They have a candidate, a professional engineer, that will be on site and will work with Alyssa and Dave. Mr. Haddad will be signing the construction administration contract. Mr. McCaffrey asked if projects are getting behind schedule with supply chain issues. Mr. Rafferty said their projects are running ok and one is actually running under budget. Mr. Ohl thinks RH White will be on top of the schedule and has taken supply chain issues into consideration. Mr. McCaffrey asked if Mr. Orcutt has worked with RH White and Mr. Orcutt said they are very capable of small and large projects. Mr. McCaffrey asked if we will release press information and Mr. Orcutt said when we issue Notice to Proceed, we can contact Groton Herald for a Treatment Plant and Whitney Well III update. Mr. Fishbone can put it on the Facebook page also.

Whitney Pond Well #3 – progress update, schedule

Mr. Ohl said the well contracts were sent to DL Mahar and we are waiting on the contract and insurance requirements back by the end of this week. The Notice to Proceed will be sent out next week. The chemical feed building is out to bid tomorrow and we will have the results by the March 29th meeting. We are in the permit status and last Tuesday they had a virtual meeting from the Water Management Act which is the lengthy part of the permitting process. Mr. Orcutt and Mr. Gmeiner attended the meeting and DEP said they are going to try to move it along as quickly as possible. They clarified that they will push it through as an amendment as just another source to expedite it. To keep things clean, once that comes through, we will submit the actual application for a new permit for the increased withdrawal amount. Mr. McCaffrey asked why it won't be parallel and Mr. Ohl responded that with public notice requirements it would be too confusing to do at the same time. Mr. Ohl said that Groton is also in the next basin for 2023 renewals. Collectively they decided not to wait for the renewal period for the request and we will immediately follow the amendment which was submitted last week. Mr. McCaffrey asked if we will see it for June and Mr. Orcutt said they could by 90 days so hopefully mid-June.

Mr. McCaffrey asked where DEP is at and Mr. Orcutt said they need to approve the building and sign off on the final construction. Mr. Ohl said DEP is separate from the Water Management Act issues and DEP is reviewing the pump test report and we should hear from them shortly (60 day window). Mr. McCaffrey asked if we are dealing with central office for these other items and Mr. Ohl said yes and they are committed to the statutory review periods.

Mr. McCaffrey wished we could have submitted our Whitney Well III proposal as a need for our backwash issue at the treatment facility and Mr. Orcutt said we wouldn't need it for 18 months.

Mrs. Crory said the funds have arrived to pay for both projects. Mr. McCaffrey would like to see revised debt schedules.

Other Business

Mr. McCaffrey asked what is happening with the PFAS at GDRHS and Mr. Orcutt said he hasn't heard much and is not sure what they have done and may need to check in to see if they have reached out to the engineer he recommended. Mr. Orcutt said he has had some conversations with Mr. Haddad about the taxpayers possibly being affected and Ms. Collette gave another Board of Health member's information to take the lead on this PFAS issue. Mr. McCaffrey thinks that the Board should continue to be included in this issue. Mr. Orcutt may speak with some Selectboard members also.

Mr. Gmeiner said that the Selectboard said remote meetings will be allowed to continue through July 15th but need a vote.

Mr. Gmeiner made a motion to remain remote until July 15th, 2022, Mr. Fishbone seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. McCaffrey asked about labels on the well levels and Mr. Orcutt will label the 2022 levels. Mr. Orcutt thinks the levels look good but he would like to see more snow on the ground. Mr. Knox and Mr. Orcutt have noticed when Gibbet Hill leaks water on Route 40 and it has resurfaced which means the water table is full in that area and we haven't seen that in a few years. The lakes and ponds are also up. The aquifers show the levels are up when the pumps are off so let's hope for more snow and a wet March and April. Mr. McCaffrey said if we looked back beyond a few years the levels probably would look as lush and Mr. Orcutt agreed. Mr. Orcutt will bring the Water Conservation Plan to the next meeting that we can post.

The next meetings will be March 15th and March 29th.

Mr. Gmeiner made a motion to approve the minutes of January 25th, 2022 as amended, Mr. Fishbone seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Gmeiner made a motion to approve the minutes of February 15th, 2022 as amended, Mr. Fishbone seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. McCaffrey made a motion to adjourn at 8:13pm, Mr. Gmeiner seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lauren Crory