

Groton Water Commission  
Regular Meeting of the  
Board of Water Commissioners  
Tuesday, August 30th, 2022  
Virtual Meeting using Zoom

**Minutes**

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

Mr. McCaffrey called the meeting to order at 7:32 pm. He stated that we are being recorded and everyone introduced themselves.

Manganese Treatment Plant – progress update, schedule

Ms. Longo said R.H. White has provided 150 submittals and resubmittals so far and there are no outstanding RFIs at this time. There have been a few minor changes including adding fire alarm pull stations and some heat protectors were removed. There will also be some lining removed and it should provide a credit to the town. The site contractor has gotten the lagoons excavated and started digging for the low-grade pump station. The area was sandy so they will need to install some support. In the meantime, they will be excavating and grading other areas. The next monthly meeting is this Thursday, September 1st. The overall progress has been a little bit slow. The next pay requisition will be sent soon. Mr. McCaffrey asked about payment and Ms. Longo said payment is monthly based on progress.

Ms. Longo said that R.H. White has installed security cameras and signs due to vandalism. Mr. Orcutt will follow up with the police chief again because he has not gotten a response.

Mr. Orcutt asked for one printed set of the printer vessel process equipment that was submitted online. Ms. Longo will bring it on Thursday. Mr. McCaffrey asked if the cost of the project has changed and Ms. Longo said that the only changes have resulted in credits.

Mr. Patangia asked if there are color samples for the building and Ms. Longo said they will be sent to the trailer for review. Mr. McCaffrey asked if there has been any interference between the two contractors and Ms. Longo said there have not been any issues.

Whitney Pond Well #3

Mr. Ohl said that the pump station is moving along and the building inspector signed off on the insulation on the wells and the attic space. GELD did get the wiring on the poles and the transformer is set. A pay requisition will be sent this week. Mr. Orcutt asked about the VFD and Mr. Ohl said they will be using a soft start which will be permanently installed and then the VFD will be furnished and turned over to R.H. White. Mr. Orcutt asked when the soft start might be installed because we may want to run the well to waste while we are waiting on activation (to keep it flushed). Mr. Ohl is not sure because we are waiting to see how it fits into their schedule but would guess October. Mr. Ohl said the contractor is on schedule.

Mr. Ohl said that regarding the Water Management Act with DCR and DEP, we have been working on retracting the Shattuck Wells permit to free up capacity. Previously, DEP said doing that would help avoid the Interbasin Transfer and would be an expedited permitting process. Mr. Roman reached out to DCR who said they have no issues and DEP said they are working on the next step in the permitting process which will be a list of their questions to us. DEP said they would hope to have that to us by the end of September and after a follow up conversation they said next week. The clock has not started until they issue this and then will still be a lengthy process.

Mr. Roman reached out to DEP after meeting with everyone and asked about an expedited timeline (rather than a year). If they can meet the timeline, it would be ready by the end of this year. Mr. Ohl said that the DEP central office permit is in limbo because they won't issue their permit until the Water Management Act is issued.

Mr. McCaffrey said they talked about producing a letter and Mr. Ohl said Mr. Roman is drafting the letter. DEP said they can have a zoom meeting, but he wanted to wait until the OTC is issued and will be in touch with meeting dates and times. Mr. Orcutt will talk to Mr. Boswick prior to the meeting. Mr. Gmeiner will look over the letter.

#### ARPA Funds – Taylor and Main Street Replacement Project

Mr. Orcutt said there are no updates and we are waiting on a preliminary design in September. Mr. Gmeiner asked if this is complicated and Mr. Orcutt said it is pretty straight forward but there are some environmental permits required.

#### Water Conservation Program

Mr. Orcutt said that 70-75 hand-held letters may have been delivered and some fines have been issued. Some of the fines have been retracted. The pumps are running 12-13 hours a day. Florence Roche school will need irrigation for their sod. Groton Hill will be trying to irrigate some of the grassy areas and Mr. Orcutt is working with Gary Shepherd on possible alternatives. They will be hydroseeding, but Mr. Orcutt asked if they can wait until end of September or October. Mr. Gmeiner asked to see if they can delay it anymore. Mr. Gmeiner asked if Mr. Orcutt is pushing anything for Florence Roche School and Mr. Orcutt said it is a full irrigation system but it won't be up and running until mid-September anyways.

#### Other Business

Mr. McCaffrey asked about PFAS in the school. Mr. Orcutt spoke with the engineer and buildings and grounds and they are worried about what type of filtration system would work. They would also have to gut what they have. They may apply to SRF for some PFAS funding. It would not be done in the next 12 months. The most beneficial route would be town water from Groton or Pepperell. It would be hard to pick a treatment system because may be ineffective down the road. Mr. Orcutt spoke with Mr. Haddad and Mr. Rafferty regarding litigation and there are a number of lawsuits that have been filed by municipalities. It is a long process but we may want to join, along with the high school. Mr. McCaffrey asked if their best bet would be to

connect to Pepperell and Mr. Orcutt said it is the closest option, but he is not sure if they have the supply. They have a well offline due to PFAS but in the future may be used. Tighe and Bond is working with the school. Mr. McCaffrey asked who in the town is driving the bus regarding PFAS and Mr. Orcutt is helping out. Mr. McCaffrey thinks Groton has more interest in helping the High School because it's our kids in the school.

Mrs. Crory said R.H. White was paid about \$621,000 for their July work and we will continue to monitor and track the invoices for both capital projects. We have an article for Fall Town Meeting to get authorized to borrow another \$150,000 for the Whitney Well III project since the bids came in higher than forecasted. We will monitor this amount and can change it if necessary.

Mr. Gmeiner made a motion to approve the minutes of June 28<sup>th</sup> and July 12<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Gmeiner asked about the PFAS testing on Whitney Well III. Mr. Orcutt has not received a revised schedule from DEP. Mr. Orcutt plans to continue with quarterly sampling (next being October) for the current three wells. Mr. Orcutt does not think there are PFAS in the water and believe it is related to the pump replacement because we had previously been non-detect. Once Whitney Well III is up and running it will be sampled (possibly the next quarter/January). Mr. Gmeiner is in favor of running Whitney Well III to waste to flush it first.

Next Meeting September 13<sup>th</sup>, 2022.

Mr. McCaffrey made a motion to adjourn at 8:26pm, Mr. Gmeiner seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lauren Crory