

Board of Water Commissioners  
Meeting Minutes  
Acton Water District  
693 Massachusetts Avenue, Acton MA  
Thursday, April 2, 2020

**AGENDA**

A. Comments from Citizens

B. Approve Minutes of Meetings of 3/9 & 3/19

C. OLD BUSINESS:

1. Update on System-Wide Source Sampling for Per- & Poly-Fluoroalkyl (PFAS) Substances
2. Update on Measures Related to the COVID-19 Outbreak

D. NEW BUSINESS:

1. Appoint One Commissioner to Approve Warrants While Conducting Meetings Virtually
2. Discussion of Postponement of Annual & Special District Meetings
  - Both meetings are currently scheduled for Monday, April 13, 2020

**Present at Today's Meeting:**

Commissioners: Stephen Stuntz (Chair), Erika Amir-Lin, Barry Rosen

District Manager: Chris Allen

District Treasurer: Mary Jo Bates

District Counsel: Mary Bassett

Environmental Manager: Matthew Mostoller

Finance Committee: Dave Butler, Chuck Bradley

Commissioners Secretary: Lynn Protasowicki

District Moderator: Dick O'Brien

Citizens: Kim Kastens

Due to the COVID-19 stay-at-home order by Governor Charles Baker, the Board of Water Commissioners meeting was not held at the Acton Water District office instead the meeting was held via a video conference using Zoom. The meeting was called to order at 2:15PM on Thursday, April 2, 2020 by Mr. Stephen Stuntz.

**A. Comments from Citizens:**

No comments from citizens.

**B. Approve Minutes of Meetings of 3/9 & 3/19:**

Mr. Stuntz motioned to approve the modified minutes of March 9, 2020. Mr. Rosen seconded, and it was unanimously approved by a roll call vote.

Mr. Rosen motioned to approve the March 19, 2020 minutes. Mr. Stuntz seconded, and it was unanimously approved by a roll call vote.

**C. OLD BUSINESS:**

*1. Update on System-Wide Source Sampling for Per- & Poly-Fluoroalkyl (PFAS) Substances*

Mr. Mostoller provided an update on the system-wide sampling for Per- & Poly-Fluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS). He stated they received the confirmation results from the South Acton Water Treatment Plant (SAWTP). They are similar to the January 13th samples; we currently have a running average of 20.92 parts per trillion (20 parts per trillion is the drinking water guideline and proposed regulatory limit) so we are right at that number. He recently spoke with MassDEP regarding public notice and it is not clear how COVID-19 will impact the process. On March 26th we sampled the Conant 1 and 2 systems and do not have the initial results back from the lab. Today we collected samples from the Clapp/Whitcomb and North Acton systems and expect initial results back in mid-April. As previously discussed, MassDEP is paying for the initial and confirmatory samples as required and assisting with developing sample plans, reviewing data, and advising on next steps based on the results of samples collected. Mr. Stuntz asked Mr. Mostoller if we can wait until all samples come back before public notice goes out. Mr. Mostoller stated that it's possible that we will be able to do that but following the proposed PFAS regulations, MassDEP wants us to send out the public notice within 30 days of receiving confirmation samples. With the results we have it will help shape our narrative and can talk about what we know about our system, what we have done to-date, and potential interim solutions.

Mr. Rosen inquired as to whether the second round of testing was completed before or after the sample taps were replumbed. Mr. Mostoller stated that it was completed after the plumbing modifications but did not impact the results.

Ms. Amir-Lin inquired if the SAWT samples are post treatment? Mr. Mostoller stated that the SAWTP samples collected between January 13-March 2 is from our 100 ft sample taps and has gone through the complete treatment process and out to distribution.

Mr. Rosen inquired as to when can we are expected to get the next testing round below the guideline. Mr. Mostoller stated that we are not obligated to get it below the guideline in any specific time frame. We have triggered the requirements for public notice. We need to inform customers of the results and that a subset of customers (infants, pregnant women, nursing mothers, and women of childbearing age) that they should not be consuming the water above the guideline. Mr. Rosen asked if the District can use dilution at the SAWTP as a solution? Mr. Mostoller stated it might be a possibility and we have done some preliminary research along those lines. Based on initial results, it appears to get us down to approximately 13 parts per trillion which is still above 10 parts per trillion, which in Massachusetts would also require public notice and ongoing monitoring. In the interim, it is best to understand the extent of PFAS and for now would include that the Assabet 1A well has been left off-line since undergoing annual maintenance. Counselor Bassett inquired about the mentioning in the notice to the public that you are going to take Assabet 1A offline. Mr. Mostoller stated yes, if it is still offline when the notice goes out. Counselor Bassett asked that once Assabet 1A is back on-line are you going to send another letter notifying customers. Mr. Mostoller stated that until we can reliably show results below 20 parts per trillion through modification of operations or treatment then we will be required to send quarterly notices.

## *2. Update on Measures Related to the COVID-19 Outbreak*

Mr. Allen stated that the District office personnel are observing the Governor's stay-at-home order. Personnel are either working remotely or going into the office on specific days to complete what tasks need to get done to maintain workflow. Ms. Bates is controlling Accounts Payable and Accounts Receivable. Operations is split into two three-man crews. District will start flushing water mains the week of April 6th. District Superintendent Steven Peterson just came home from Arizona so he is on a 14 day self-quarantined and Operations Administrator, Charlie Rouleau is also on stand-by, should anyone in the current rotation get sick and be unavailable. Overall, we are doing regular functioning. Ms. Bates is doing all administrative functions at home. There is a set of questions being asked by technicians if they are to enter a home. Trying to maintain typical operations. Everyone that is working remotely is well set up for remote access.

#### **D. NEW BUSINESS:**

##### *1. Appoint One Commissioner to Approve Warrants While Conducting Meetings Virtually*

Ms. Bates would like to pay bills once per week to keep things current. She has a warrant from last week and this week that need to be approved. Mr. Stuntz suggested rotating week to week the Commissioners for signing.

Counselor Bassett stated that the Guidelines from Division of Local Services states that one member needs to approve warrants for the Board. Looks like we just can change every week.

Mr. Stuntz asked if we can change it at each meeting because he does not like the idea of having one Commissioner sign everything. Counselor Bassett suggested that once the Warrant has been signed Ms. Bates will scan the signed Warrant and email to the Commissioners for them to review. Mr. Stuntz decided that Ms. Bates will send to Steve for signature and will copy the others. If no questions from the other Commissioners then Mr. Stuntz will sign, scan and email to Ms. Bates.

If there are any issues or questions, they can call Ms. Bates directly.

Mr. Rosen moved to appoint Mr. Stuntz as the designated signer of the warrants until the next open meeting and Ms. Amir-Lin seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by a roll call vote.

##### *2. Discussion of Postponement of Annual & Special District Meetings*

Both meetings are currently scheduled for Monday, April 13, 2020.

Mr. Allen stated that it's obvious that the scheduled April 13th date is not going to happen due to extension of the Governor's stay-at-home order until May 4th. Postponement until June needs to be addressed. We need to figure out how to handle this because there is a lot riding on the Annual and Special District Meetings. He has letters in hand from low bidders for the Central Acton Water Treatment Plant (CAWTP) stating that they will hold bid prices through May 15th. We won't have a meeting before then, and he will have to ask them to hold prices longer. Additionally, we have no approval for capital improvements or typical maintenance activities but going forward without funding as is possible.

Mr. Allen will check with municipal properties for available dates after May 4th.

Mr. Rosen inquired that if the low bidders do not agree to hold the pricing, will the District have to go out for a rebid? Mr. Allen stated that we will need to rebid if it does not get extended.

Ms. Amir-Lin wanted to know if the Moderator must keep issuing 30-day extension notices. Counselor Bassett stated that before the rescheduled date he will have to notify as a date TBD.

Ms. Kastens asked why a Special District Meeting is needed. Mr. Allen stated that it is because the bids for the CAWTP came in high and we need to have a special meeting to get voter approval for the additional \$3.1- million for the new treatment plant. There is a potential that the additional funding would be financed through the MA Clean Water Trust, but that is unknown until the local appropriation by District vote at the Special Meeting is authorized.

##### *Other New Business:*

Mr. Allen stated that starting April 6th there will be water main flushing in West Acton. This will continue throughout the month of April.

*Mr. Rosen moved to adjourn the open meeting at 3:00 PM. Ms. Amir-Lin seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by a roll call vote.*