

Board of Water Commissioners

Meeting Agenda

Tuesday, September 8, 2026 @ 7:00 PM

- Call to order
- Comments from the public
- Appoint one Commissioner to sign warrants while conducting meetings virtually
- Approve Minutes from 8/10/26 meeting

OLD BUSINESS:

- Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS)
 - Current sample data, if available
 - Discussion of Additional PFAS Upgrades
- Drought Status and Water Use Restrictions
- MWRA MetroWest Expansion

NEW BUSINESS:

- Service Line Inventory and Replacement

Present at Tonight's Meeting:

Commissioners: Erika Lin (Chair), Barry Rosen, John Petersen

District Manager: Matthew Mostoller

Deputy District Manager: Corey Godfrey

Treasurer/Collector: Ashley Pinard

Environmental Analyst: Shawn Case

Members of the Public: Alissa Nicol, Kim Kastens, Ron Parenti, Joe Robb, Dan Groher, Mike Tusino

START OF MINUTES

Ms. Lin opened the meeting at 7:01 p.m. and ensured that everyone could hear and be heard.

Comments from the public

No public comments were made at the start of the meeting.

Appoint one Commissioner to sign warrants while conducting meetings virtually

Mr. Rosen motioned to authorize Ms. Lin to sign warrants while meetings are conducted virtually, through the next regularly scheduled meeting. Mr. Petersen seconded, and it was unanimously approved via roll call vote: Mr. Rosen, Ms. Lin, and Mr. Petersen.

Approve Minutes from the meeting of 8/10/2026

Mr. Rosen moved to approve the minutes from the meeting of August 10, 2026, as presented in the packet. Mr. Petersen seconded, and it was unanimously approved via roll call vote: Mr. Rosen, Ms. Lin, and Mr. Petersen.

OLD BUSINESS:

Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS)

Current sample data, if available

Mr. Mostoller reported that all three treatment plants were sampled on August 12 and continued to produce treated-water results below detection limits. Staff were preparing for September sampling.

Discussion of Additional PFAS Upgrades

Mr. Mostoller reported that the District continued working with the contractor, engineers, and equipment suppliers to troubleshoot pump issues at the South Acton facility. Based on testing completed that day, one PFAS pump was scheduled to be removed from the basin the following morning for additional electrical testing. Water may have entered through the pump seal, but the cause had not been confirmed. Mr. Godfrey said South Acton would likely operate with one PFAS pump for at least several weeks while the District awaited more information about repairs or replacement.

Staff explained that operating with one PFAS pump would not by itself reduce the plant's normal output, but it would eliminate the backup capacity provided by the second pump. The remaining pump would be evaluated after the first was addressed so the District would not risk taking both units offline. Replacement pumps may have a long procurement lead time. Mr. Mostoller noted that the bidding process limited the District's control over the specific pump supplied, although alternative pumps with comparable specifications might be more readily available. Staff would also investigate whether the problem could be associated with a manufacturing run affecting both pumps.

If both pumps became unavailable for an extended period, the District could consult the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection about temporarily bypassing the PFAS treatment system. Mr. Case reported that recent untreated feed-water results at South Acton were approximately 12 to 15 parts per trillion, below the state standard of 20 parts per trillion. Staff said South Acton's source-water concentrations had remained comparatively consistent, while concentrations at North Acton and Central Acton had increased as those facilities were used more fully. In response to a question submitted through Zoom, staff clarified that the non-detect results discussed earlier were for treated water.

Mr. Mostoller also reported that staff continued pursuing certifications needed to satisfy State Revolving Fund requirements. Discussions with the treatment-vessel provider remained ongoing, and programming issues at both project sites had not yet been fully resolved.

Drought Status and Water Use Restrictions

Mr. Mostoller recommended that the District remain at *Level Four*, which prohibits outdoor water use except for food and fiber production, public health, and public safety. July rainfall was approximately one-half inch above average, but August rainfall was approximately one and one-half inches below average. Recent rainfall and cooler temperatures had reduced discretionary demand, but overall conditions had not materially improved. The U.S. Drought Monitor continued to place Acton in Moderate Drought. The stream gauge remained below the District's trigger, and groundwater in the USGS monitoring well on Wetherbee Street remained well below normal and continued to decline, despite some improvement around District pumping wells.

The District had also taken one South Acton aeration tower offline that day to begin addressing a structural failure discussed earlier in the summer. The shutdown reduced South Acton's production from nearly 800 gallons per minute several weeks earlier to

approximately 450 to 500 gallons per minute. Mr. Godfrey explained that the contractor first needed to remove the existing media so the manufacturer could inspect the tower's interior. The inspection was expected during the week after next, and staff estimated that the work would require at least four weeks, although the schedule remained uncertain pending the inspection. Mr. Mostoller clarified that this production constraint was associated with the aeration tower rather than the PFAS pump issue.

Mr. Rosen said several residents at a neighborhood gathering had been uncertain that Acton was under a complete outdoor watering restriction, including residents who had checked the state website. He recommended reinforcing the restriction through the District and Town websites and other outreach, including communication accessible to English- and non-English-speaking residents. Staff had received numerous calls during the latter part of August and had waited for the Board's discussion before renewing outreach. Additional public communication was planned for the coming days.

The District had ordered 12 smaller sandwich-board signs that could be moved among locations around the community. Staff anticipated a seven- to ten-day production period. A large electronic message board was discussed, but Mr. Mostoller said flashing boards were generally not considered effective for water-restriction notices because the message could be overlooked among other roadside information. Ms. Nicol supported rotating the sandwich boards to keep them noticeable and suggested coordinating with the Town Manager's Office about placement at Town Hall or the Red House. Staff noted that the transfer station entrance had been an effective location for earlier signs and that the smaller frames would be easier to deploy and move.

Ms. Kastens suggested contacting the Acton Garden Club, which publishes monthly horticultural guidance in the Acton Exchange and could help reach residents especially attentive to landscaping. She noted that the Garden Club had begun including the District's current restriction level in its guidance, and that the Acton Exchange also displayed the District's latest notice in its online bulletin board. Mr. Mostoller said the District was not observing widespread violations and could manage current demand, but easing the restriction could cause use to increase too sharply. The District had made it through the back-to-school period, though staff observed a significant draw on the system the previous evening.

MWRA MetroWest Expansion

Mr. Mostoller reported that the cost-allocation study was nearing completion, with a final report anticipated by early October. Once finalized, the report could be shared more

broadly with the community to support discussion of the next steps in evaluating a potential MWRA connection.

A stakeholder meeting was scheduled in Concord for September 17. The Acton Town Manager, Ms. Nicol, and potentially other Town staff were expected to attend, and the District had invited state representatives and senators serving the nine participating communities. The meeting would provide an opportunity to present preliminary findings, receive feedback from the nine-community stakeholder group, and incorporate appropriate comments into the final report.

Mr. Mostoller planned to circulate a draft work product for internal review and asked that all comments be directed through him so the consultants would receive a consolidated response from Acton. A review deadline would be established shortly after the stakeholder meeting. Mr. Parenti stated that he planned to attend and was encouraged to participate in person if convenient, although remote attendance was also available.

NEW BUSINESS:

Service Line Inventory and Replacement

Mr. Godfrey reported that the District had used statistical analysis, supported by completed field inspections, to evaluate whether Acton's water system contained lead service lines. The approach is permitted by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA) and Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP). The District had worked with Blue Conduit for nearly a year and submitted its final modeling report and certification statement to MassDEP that day. The submission concluded that the system contained no lead service lines and had not historically used lead service-line materials.

MassDEP had not provided a review timeline. If the agency approves the analysis, the District will issue a public notice explaining the statistical determination. Approval would eliminate most of the fieldwork otherwise required over the next ten years, but the District would still need to validate the results by physically inspecting 341 service lines selected from uninspected properties where lead could potentially be present. If those inspections find no lead service lines, the District's service-line work under the applicable Lead and Copper Regulations would be substantially complete.

Although staff did not expect to find lead service lines, Acton has a number of galvanized service lines. Blue Conduit was modeling the locations where those lines were most likely to occur, with results expected later in the fall. Staff would then inspect predicted locations. Mr. Godfrey explained that galvanized service lines are often connected to lead goosenecks. US EPA and MassDEP do not classify goosenecks as part of the service line,

and the District is not required to remove one unless it is encountered during routine operation or maintenance work. Many galvanized lines are also old, corroded, leaking, or otherwise in need of replacement.

Over the next month, the District planned to replace four galvanized service lines and their associated lead goosenecks as a pilot project. The four locations represented different conditions, ranging from short service lines beneath lawns to lines affected by extensive landscaping or hardscaping. The pilot would help staff estimate the cost, labor, and restoration requirements for future replacements. Once the pilot and location modeling were complete, staff would return to the Board with a clearer estimate of the number of galvanized lines and options for addressing them.

The State Revolving Fund loan program could finance lead gooseneck and galvanized service-line removal at zero-percent interest with up to 40 percent loan forgiveness. The District already had an authorization in place that could support a timely application if the Board chose to proceed. Mr. Godfrey said the District has up to ten years to complete the 341 validation inspections. Completing the work with District staff would likely take several years, while including it in an SRF-funded contract could accelerate the schedule. Staff would compare the required validation pool with the predicted galvanized-line locations to avoid duplicating work where possible.

Mr. Mostoller said the validation work was required, while a broader replacement program remained optional. Replacing galvanized lines and lead goosenecks could nevertheless reduce potential lead exposure, leaks, and infrastructure failures. Coordinating the work through the District could also provide economies of scale for customers who might otherwise face approximately \$10,000 to \$15,000 in private service-line replacement costs. Depending on the eventual scope, the work could potentially be coordinated with other infrastructure improvements. Staff expected to return to the Board with an additional update later in the fall.

Ms. Kastens asked whether the District anticipated holding a Special District Meeting in the fall and when the master plan would be available. Mr. Mostoller said a Special District Meeting would be necessary, but no date had been established. He anticipated the master plan would be available in October or November.

With no other business, Mr. Rosen moved to adjourn, Mr. Petersen seconded, and the motion passed unanimously via a roll call vote, Mr. Rosen, Ms. Lin, and Mr. Petersen.

The meeting closed at 7:44 p.m.

The next Board of Water Commissioners meeting is scheduled for September 23, 2026.