

Board of Water Commissioners

Meeting Agenda

Monday, September 15, 2025 @ 7:00 PM

- Comments from the public
- Approve minutes from the meeting of 8/11
- Appoint one Commissioner to sign warrants while conducting meetings virtually

OLD BUSINESS:

- Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS)
 - Current sample data, if available
 - Discussion of Additional PFAS Upgrades
 - NAWTP PFAS System Operation
- RFP for Nagog Hill Tank Cell Tower Lease
- Annual Review of District Manager
- MWRA MetroWest Expansion

NEW BUSINESS:

- Foster Street Water Main Improvement Project
- Fall Flushing Program
- Outdoor Water Use Restrictions Fall 2025

Present at Tonight's Meeting:

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

Finance Committee: Bill Guthlein

District Manager: Matt Mostoller

Deputy District Manager: Corey Godfrey

Treasurer/Collector: Christine McCarthy

Members of the Public: Brewster Conant, Jr., Ron Parenti, John Petersen

START OF MINUTES

Mr. Stuntz started the meeting at 7:02 p.m. and ensured everyone could hear and be heard.

Comments from the public

Mr. Ron Parenti asked when the finance committee might receive the recommendations from the working group about the PFAS settlement funds. Mr. Mostoller responded that the working group is in the process of finalizing a presentation that reflects their thinking. That presentation should be before the finance committee in about a week and a half.

Approve minutes from the meeting of 8/11

Ms. Lin motioned to approve the minutes of 8/11/25. Mr. Rosen seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved via a roll call vote, Ms. Lin, Mr. Stuntz, Mr. Rosen.

Appoint one Commissioner to sign warrants while conducting meetings virtually

Mr. Rosen motioned to appoint Mr. Stuntz to sign warrants until the next regularly scheduled meeting. Ms. Lin seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved via a roll call vote, Ms. Lin, Mr. Rosen, Mr. Stuntz.

OLD BUSINESS:

Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS)

Current sample data, if available

Mr. Mostoller reported the August sample results to the board. Samples were collected on August 13, 2025. Center Acton sampled at 12.1 ppt, South Acton sampled at 16.3 ppt, and North Acton remained at non-detect. Mr. Mostoller then shared the available September results; these were not included in the packet because they had just been received. North and South Acton were sampled on September 3, 2025. North Acton remained at non-detect, while South Acton rose slightly to 16.8 ppt. Center Acton was sampled on September 10, 2025, and rose to 18 ppt.

Mr. Rosen asked how much pumping is taking place at Center Acton. Mr. Mostoller responded that they are probably somewhere between 150 and 175 gallons per minute and added that they have not been able to rest on pumping as they had previously over the course of the year. Mr. Mostoller explained that over the past year they have run Center Acton for 2 weeks, then let it rest for 2 weeks. However, with recent construction and conditioning needs that has not been possible. In the interim they have been resting the system for 8-10 hours overnight as demand and tank levels allow.

Discussion of Additional PFAS Upgrades

Mr. Mostoller stated that the two ongoing PFAS projects are making good progress. In Center Acton they are planning for a media load-in in early October, with conditioning trials to follow. This will lead to approval from DEP in late October or early November, however this timeline has many unknowns. Mr. Mostoller then turned to the update on the Bedrock wells. A communication issue between the wells and the plant was resolved earlier in the day. There is some more work to complete like the bacteria tests and gaining DEP approval.

Mr. Mostoller then provided an update on South Acton. They are planning on an early November media load in, however this is contingent on Center being completed. Right now, the overall time frame is dictated by the Center project. Once the Center plant is up and running, they can begin the conditioning process for South Acton which would be early to mid-November. After conditioning it would take a month to bring the plant into operation completely. This means there is a potential for a late November to early December date depending on how the process goes.

Mr. Stuntz asked if the plant is offline during the media load-in, which Mr. Mostoller affirmed. Mr. Mostoller stated that South Acton might be able to do a split flow during media conditioning because of its built-in redundancies. Mr. Mostoller noted that without operational experience, the bedrock wells are an unknown variable, but they are working with the engineers on how that will work.

Regarding South Acton, Mr. Mostoller said he believes they can continue to provide some water for distribution while using the rest for conditioning. However, that will be dictated by how the wells hold up during the next few months. There is concern that going into the 4th quarter they could exceed the PFAS MCL. Pushing the wells harder than normal while the PFAS treatment is not fully in place yet could contribute to that. Additionally, Mr. Mostoller warned they may not be able to meet all the demand based on their sources once they begin conditioning. Because of these concerns Mr. Mostoller has reached out to Concord and Littleton to see what assistance they may be able to provide, and internally they are looking at what water use restriction changes could assist with this. This is one of the reasons they have decided to suspend fall flushing. Mr. Mostoller added because of this tightened capacity they are looking at the Clapp/Whitcomb water quality to evaluate if it is acceptable for use and possibly increasing output from North Acton.

NAWTP PFAS System Operation

Mr. Mostoller reminded the board that in the spring the North Acton plant had its first media change out in that system. Since then, it has been closely monitored for depletion of

the old media. In June of 2024 new media were put in all 12 vessels, then this spring they replaced six vessels, and swapped the leading vessels with the lagging vessels. They are now seeing some breakthrough from the lag vessel. Mr. Mostoller explained they investigated changing that media before it is fully spent, hopefully before the other plants go into conditioning but that was proving to be challenging. The decision at this time is to press forward to see if they can get through most of the 4th quarter operating that facility in compliance, but that plant may have some increasing levels of PFAS beyond the non-detect they've had since June of 2024.

Ms. Lin asked if this meant they would be seeing exceedances or just detections. Mr. Mostoller replied that immediately they would have detections, but they cannot know for sure. The raw water PFAS concentrations are at about 40 ppt which is 10-15 ppt up from what they've had in the past.

Mr. Mostoller explained that there has been discussion about whether to do a media change out in-between Center and South Acton, but this could run into issues relying on the schedules of multiple different vendors. Because this was an original batch of media, they wanted to manage it in a way where they could test and understand how long media could last, along with different operational decisions. From their experience so far, Mr. Mostoller reported it is possible to get an extra 3-5 months of use from the media without a complete replacement, however operationally that would require more frequent shutdowns. Mr. Mostoller concluded that while full change-outs could leave some media life on the table, it would likely make more sense operationally.

Ms. Lin asked about the media life expectancy for the other two plants. Mr. Mostoller explained that those two other systems are larger and require more pounds of media, so they may last longer than the more compact temporary system in North Acton.

Mr. Stuntz asked about the regular shutdowns for media replacement. Mr. Mostoller replied that his current estimate is that media will last a year to a year and half. Media could hypothetically be pushed to last for two years. Because South Acton has more redundancies during media change outs it will still be able to produce water.

Mr. John Petersen commented that he is pleased with the scientific optimization testing on media life and added that it seems trying this out on the smallest system is the best learning environment before managing the larger systems. Mr. Petersen continued that if North Acton sample results go above non-detect but below the MCL a clarifying footnote in the table regarding the methods detection may contextualize this shift for users.

RFP for Nagog Hill Tank Cell Tower Lease

Mr. Mostoller reminded the board that at the last meeting they approved the lease to be signed. He updated the board that Tower Co has signed the lease and is moving on to permitting the site.

Ms. Lin asked if Tower Co gave an estimated timeline. Mr. Mostoller responded that Tower Co wanted to move quickly as they started permitting a different tower on the school campus on Charter Road. Mr. Mostoller added the tower for Nagog Hill tank in future town permitting processes will likely be named Tower 7, and the one at the school will be Tower 6.

Annual Review of District Manager

Mr. Stuntz revisited this item, noting that he asked Ms. Lin and Mr. Rosen to send him notes so that they may combine their thoughts into a letter that will be shared at a future board meeting.

MWRA MetroWest Expansion

Mr. Mostoller reported that they have made some progress on this study. Currently they have an IMA signed with 8 communities. The RFQ has been put out and has a closing date of September 19th. This is followed by a short review period before they begin scheduling interviews with potential consulting firms. Mr. Mostoller noted that because Maynard is the procurement agent and has approving authority, they are working to keep a timeline that works for their Selectboard meeting schedule. In the current draft they have a 6-month turnaround time after the contract is awarded.

Mr. Rosen asked what the projected award date is. Mr. Mostoller confirmed it would be around October 20th.

Mr. Stuntz asked if this requires all communities in the agreement to sign. Mr. Mostoller clarified that the IMA as laid out leaves room for the communities to review the decision before the contract is awarded but it does not require that it go back to each partner community.

NEW BUSINESS:

Foster Street Water Main Improvement Project

Mr. Mostoller shared his screen to show an aerial map of the relevant area of Acton. Mr. Mostoller outlined the Foster Street neighborhood, south of Hosmer St. moving towards School St. with Heritage St. to the south. Mr. Mostoller explained that this neighborhood

was built around 1957 and explained the original configuration of the water main for this area.

Mr. Mostoller reported that in the past 10 years this neighborhood has experienced about 5 breaks, none with an obvious causing factor. This has resulted in the replaced water main from Hosmer reaching nearly fully around the corner as every few years a break necessitates another segment of new pipe. Mr. Mostoller expressed concern over replacing so much of the line in emergency breaks.

Mr. Mostoller explained he has been meeting with Wright-Pierce about this issue and has been informed that a lining company is in town for another project, and there is an opportunity to potentially capitalize on their presence to get work done to improve this specific area of water main. There are funds in the water main improvement budget, and Mr. Mostoller is hoping to have the request out before the end of the month.

Mr. Mostoller wanted to introduce this project to the board, and cover what it includes, like the replacement of the hydrant and adding some valves which will help reduce the area they need to isolate when they make future repairs along School Street.

Mr. Stuntz asked if installing valves is done by the District or by the pipelining company. Mr. Mostoller replied that this is work typically done by the a site contracting company and explained how the work is done. Mr. Stuntz asked if this non-lining work is also going out to bid or if it's part of the lining work. Mr. Mostoller replied that it is one bid and that a single-lining company may bid multiple times with different construction firms on board.

Mr. Stuntz asked if they could investigate lead and copper service lines during this work. To which Mr. Mostoller said that they have good record for this area, and lining projects typically don't dig up services.

Mr. Mostoller then continued to explain the specifics of how lining projects work, including the temporary water service this contract will include, and the estimated duration of about a week with some extra days for cleanup and testing.

Mr. Rosen asked for clarification of the location of this project which Mr. Mostoller demonstrated on the map. Mr. Rosen asked if this work will be similar to what was done in the Indian Village neighborhood which Mr. Mostoller affirmed. Mr. Mostoller continued to share the details of the construction, design, and process with the board, noting that they might use in-house labor for other work, but this lining project would stem the bleed in this section of infrastructure.

Mr. Mostoller and the board discussed the need for an off-cycle meeting in October to approve the contract, and the engineer's anticipated costs for this project between \$200,000 and \$300,000.

Mr. Brewster Conant Jr. asked the board if because they know of one pipelining company that will already be in town for other work, and only the subcontractors are likely to change if the bid can still be considered competitive, or if another bid is expected. Mr. Mostoller responded that they do expect multiple bids from several vendors, including multiple local vendors, however given the tight timeline and differences in technologies, it is uncertain whether these other vendors could mobilize in the time available.

Fall Flushing Program

Mr. Mostoller informed the board that due to the pressures on the system from commissioning the PFAS plants they have decided to suspend the fall flushing program to ensure the system can meet the demand. Mr. Mostoller noted that there are a few problem areas in the system where they might do spot flushing but overall, because of the many demands on the system, fall flushing will be suspended until the spring.

Outdoor Water Use Restrictions Fall 2025

Mr. Mostoller reminded the board that the District is currently in a 2-day a week outdoor water use restriction. Since the meeting where that was imposed, the State has declared the Acton area to be in a level 2 significant drought. They are currently watching the drought indicators carefully. The stream gauge at Nashoba brook has been holding steady since the large storm last week but they expect it to decline in the coming weeks due to the lack of rain in the forecast. Subsequently groundwater levels have not recovered.

Mr. Mostoller expressed his concern about this drought given that the District is currently asking neighbors for water because of the demands on the system. Mr. Mostoller anticipates a stepped approach between this meeting and October and expects going to 1-day a week water restriction and then moving to a no-days a week restriction. Mr. Mostoller stated that this expected approach reflects both the drought and the needs for PFAS commissioning.

Mr. Petersen asked how many gallons are used in the flushing program. Mr. Mostoller did not know the exact number but explained that they have done truncated flushing in the past few seasons because of the PFAS work so recent flushing gallons are low.

Ms. Lin asked if October typically has high outdoor water use. Mr. Mostoller replied that in recent years with the hot and dry October they've seen the traditional irrigation season elongated and more people are doing lawn renovations before the winter.

Mr. Mostoller informed the board that they are closely watching conditions and trying to balance giving notice and giving people extra time with fewer restrictions.

Mr. Stuntz asked if meter reading had been wrapped up. Mr. Mostoller replied that the September meter reading finished up on Friday, and they are processing the results. Mr. Mostoller also informed the board that they completed some enforcement for the outdoor water use restrictions, but that the cooler temperatures has stabilized demand enough where they were able to shut down and/or rest the Center and South Acton plants.

Mr. Stuntz asked Mr. Mostoller to add an agenda item for the naming of the 549 Main St. property to the next meeting agenda.

Mr. Rosen motioned to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Lin seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved via a roll call vote, Mr. Rosen, Ms. Lin, and Mr. Stuntz.

7:50 pm Meeting Closed