

Water Supply District of Acton

693 MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE
P.O. BOX 953
ACTON, MASSACHUSETTS 01720

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Board of Water Commissioners
Meeting Minutes
693 Massachusetts Avenue, Acton MA
Monday, September 24, 2018

AGENDA

A. Maureen Mara of Mara & Associates for FY '18 Audit Report

B. Comments from Citizens

C. Approve Minutes of August 13th Meeting

D. NEW BUSINESS:

1. Request for a Waiver of Water Related Fees

- Local builder Mark Starr request for a waiver for new construction home on Cherry Ridge Road that he is building with all volunteer services and donated funds and materials to be gifted to a disabled veteran.

2. Discussion and Approval of the Warrant for Fall Special District Meeting

- Special District Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, 10/10 at 7:30PM at the Acton Public Safety Facility-Emergency Operations Center (EOC)

3. Review and Approve Reserve Fund Transfer

- Request for transfer of \$60,000 from Reserve Fund to Budget Account #15290-Maintenance & Operations

E. OLD BUSINESS:

1. Rollover of Bond for Indian Village Water Main Improvement
2. Update from Water Resources Workshop Held on Saturday, 9/22/18

Present at Tonight's Meeting:

Commissioners: Ronald Parenti (Chair), Stephen Stuntz, Erika Amir-Lin

District Manager: Chris Allen

District Treasurer: Mary Jo Bates

Environmental Manager: Matthew Mostoller

District Counsel: Mary Bassett

Commissioner's Secretary: Lynn Protasowicki

Finance Committee: Bill Guthlein

WLMAC: Barry Rosen

District Moderator: Richard O'Brien

District Clerk: William Stanford

Maureen Mara, Mara & Associates, Inc.

Green Acton: Kim Kastens

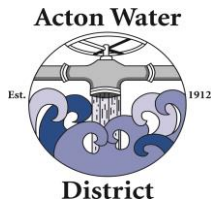
Citizens:

Terra Friedrichs

Mark Starr

Charlie Kadlec

All documents referred to in meeting minutes are available for inspection at the office of Acton Water District, 693 Massachusetts Avenue, Acton, MA 01720 (978) 263-9107.



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The Board of Water Commissioners meeting was called to order at 7:30 PM on Monday, September 24, 2018 at the Acton Water District office by Mr. Parenti.

A. Maureen Mara of Mara & Associates for FY '18 Audit Report

Enclosed in tonight's packets to the Commissioners is the FY 2018 Annual Audit Results. Ms. Mara is present tonight to review some of the most notable findings from the audit.

*Unsold Water Percentage: She noted that the current year results are quite impressive which is due to the District's very aggressive leak detection and leak prevention strategies

*Net Pension Liability: Middlesex County Retirement System reasonable in financial statements. She stated that the ongoing increase in the liability can be attributed to several calculations, including the reduction this year in the System's anticipated rate of return from 7.75% to 7.5% (noting that when the percentage goes down the liability goes up).

*Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB): changes in benefits; working towards liability of \$1,075,000 and currently District has cumulatively funded \$800,000 toward the OPEB liability and that those funds have been invested and are currently worth \$975,000. The District is due for a new valuation which should be completed by the end of November.

*Fund Balances: reviewed what is in each of these funds (free cash, capital projects, grace trust fund, and OPEB trust fund). The District has not received the free cash certification but expect it any day now.

*District Investments: OPEB is growing by investments unlike Grace that is not having money put into it. OPEB has consistently maintained growth.

B. Comments from Citizens

Ms. Friedrichs would like to thank the District for allowing the public to speak at these open meetings because the Town of Acton is not allowing this to happen much anymore. She also mentioned that she heard that a water study is not necessary and that there is plenty of water. Mr. Parenti said this is false and the District is willing to take part in a water study.

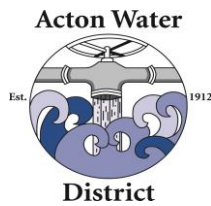
C. Approve Minutes of August 13th Meeting

Mr. Stuntz motioned to approve the minutes of August 13, 2018. Ms. Amir-Lin seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

D. NEW BUSINESS:

1. Request for a Waiver of Water Related Fees.

Enclosed in tonight's packet to the Commissioners is a project overview that Mark Starr submitted to the District and his reasoning for requesting a waiver of water related fees. Mark Starr introduced himself to the Commissioners as a local resident and builder in town. He mentioned that the Town of Acton sold him the Cherry Ridge Road property for \$1 and it is his intent to give the home that he plans to build on this property to a disabled veteran family. He stated that James McCrae, who works for the Acton Veterans Commission is doing the search and vetting of the family. Mark mentioned that he has lots of volunteer services to help get this home built. He is asking the Town Boards to waive fees and is asking the town residents to help raise \$200K. He is building all handicap accessible. He would like to know if the Acton Water District would consider waiving water related fees. Mr. Stuntz asked him if the Town has agreed to start waiving fees. Mark not sure



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yet, he just started the process. He stated that the building and sewer departments need to get approval by the Selectmen so waiting to hear on that. He noted that the homeowners will still need to pay for the yearly taxes and maintenance just no mortgage payment. Mr. Allen stated that the water connection fee is \$7,400 for 1-inch connection plus mitigation fees, so roughly \$10K.

He stated that the deed restriction is for 35 years. Ms. Friedrichs hopes it is for forever; and restricted for disabled; she hopes he makes it for very low income under \$30K per year. He wants to restrict it so that nobody can make profit off it should they sell it.

Mr. Parenti stated that the District needs to be very cautious in waiving fees because we don't want to start a precedent. Ms. Amir-Lin stated that there could be opportunity to get lower mitigation fees if he would consider a more environmentally friendly home and landscaping. Mr. Allen suggested that Mark submit the impact report based on the water needs and he can then work with Matt Mostoller, the District Environmental Manager.

2. Discussion and Approval of the Warrant for Fall Special District Meeting.

The Special District Meeting to be held at the Public Safety Building at 371 Main Street, Acton on October 10th at 7:30 PM.

Mr. Allen reviewed the two Articles for the Commissioners.

-Article 1. This is land is 11.23 acres at 585 Main Street, Acton is owned by Brewster Conant, who passed away this year. The District would appropriate the sum of \$1,095,000 to purchase the land. Mr. Allen mentioned that the District will look into applying for a Water Supply Protection Grant through the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to defray the bonding. The Grant can be for up to \$300,000 of the purchase price. This Article as worded has been approved by bond counsel.

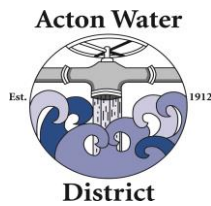
Ms. Friedrichs asked if a community garden can be built on this parcel. Mr. Mostoller told her that this is all tree farm and not garden space and for source protection reasons we cannot allow active agriculture on the land. The District is purchasing the land specifically for water supply protection purposes.

Ms. Kastens asked the District the following question, "if the District borrows the entire amount and you don't get a grant how much would customers have to pay per year?" Mr. Mostoller stated that the District is using short term borrowing to finance it and, it would be about \$35 per year (\$7.80 per quarter increase) per unit for 4 years and then that fee goes away. Ms. Kastens asked the following question, "Regarding the Master Plan, is this going to take away from something that you wanted to purchase?" Mr. Allen stated that, no, it will not preclude other capital improvements, and the only large capital project the District has planned is another water treatment plant where the Conant Wells are located.

Mr. Mostoller mentioned that a web page is going live tomorrow with more information about this land purchase.

Mr. Stuntz motioned to approve the District applying for the grant that will, if approved, help defray the bonding for purchasing the property at 585 Main Street, Acton. Mr. Parenti seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

-Article 2. This article pertains to property located at 3-33 Knox Trail in Acton which is currently in the process of a tax taking by the Town of Acton. When these proceedings are complete, the District has requested that the town transfer the parcel to it, and has requested that back taxes, penalties and fees be waived if at all possible. .



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The purposes of taking ownership of this property are for protecting the groundwater aquifers and recharge areas for water supply wells, including assisting in the ongoing Superfund process, and conserving the land for watershed protection purposes.

Mr. Parenti motioned to approve Article 2 as written. Ms. Amir-Lin seconded and it was unanimously approved.

Counselor Bassett stated for the presentation of these two Articles, Mr. Parenti will present Article 1 and Mr. Stuntz will present Article 2.

Counselor Bassett confirmed that the District Moderator is not able to attend the Special District Meeting. The night of the meeting, as soon as the meeting is brought to order, a Commissioner will move to appoint William Stanford, the District Clerk, as the temporary moderator for the meeting. Counselor Bassett will swear him in as Temporary Moderator and he will further conduct the meeting.

3. Review and Approve Reserve Fund Transfer.

Mr. Allen informed the Commissioners of the need for the reserve fund transfer. He stated that the Granular Activated Carbon vessels at the Clapp/Whitcomb site sprung a leak in a piping connection that cannot be isolated from the system while in operation, thus it is necessary to remove the media to make the repair. Typically this exchange would take place in the spring, so that will not happen since it is being done this month. The extra time will be absorbed in the normal course of operation, as the Clapp/Whitcomb site is not typically used during the off-peak (winter) period. This will remove the need for the typical spring maintenance to occur.

Mr. Parenti motioned to approve the reserve fund transfer. Mr. Stuntz seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

Other New Business:

1. Fall flushing starts on 10/1 through the month of October. The areas to be flushed are the South Acton quadrant; and some of the dead ends in North Acton. Flushing takes place M-Th 8am-8pm. There will be no flushing on Monday, October 8th due to the Columbus Day holiday.

E. OLD BUSINESS:

1. Rollover of Bond for Indian Village Water Main Improvement.

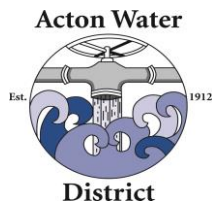
Ms. Bates explained to the Commissioners that what they are voting on is to award the rollover bond for Indian Village Water Main Improvement project of \$500K to Century Bank at a 2.5% interest rate.

Mr. Stuntz motioned to approve the rollover of bond for Indian Village Water Main improvement. Mr. Parenti seconded and it was unanimously approved.

2. Update from Water Resources Workshop Held on Saturday, 9/22.

Mr. Allen thought it was a good workshop; he thought the facilitator was good; the sessions were lively; Senator Eldridge did a great job; and he was happy to see a full house of attendees. Mr. Parenti thought it was beneficial and stated that a lot of people are showing more interest in the District and thinks that is a good thing. Ms. Amir-Lin said participants went with the original intent of the workshop, with folks asking questions instead of trying to provide answers; it was a good opportunity for her to talk with people; and she thought it was worthwhile.

Mr. Rosen was happy with the workshop as well and believes that there are lots of positive things to come out of this workshop.



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Ms. Kastens asked if there are any other suggestions/ideas for future discussions. Mr. Parenti stated that in future years we may need to consider looking at MWRA for more support instead of the District building more water treatment plants. Mr. Mostoller stated that the committee needs to start planning the next steps and to work on what was discussed at this workshop. Ms. Amir-Lin asked if there will be some sort of preliminary memo of what was discussed. Mr. Rosen stated yes and that at the meeting on Wednesday night the committee will start this process. He noticed that there were some common themes so those will need to be culled out first.

Mr. Rosen stated there are some groups of people in Town who believe that the District should have a say in the planning and development in Town and that there is still some convincing in Town that it's not the District's role. Mr. Mostoller stated that with a shared vision and partnerships with other Boards this will help with clarifying the roles of the different departments in Town.

Mr. Parenti moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:30 PM and it was unanimously approved.