

Board of Water Commissioners
Meeting Minutes
Acton Water District
693 Massachusetts Avenue, Acton, MA
Monday, November 14, 2022

AGENDA

- A. Comments from the public
- B. Approve minutes from the meeting of 10/17
- C. Appoint one Commissioner to approve warrants while conducting meetings virtually

D. OLD BUSINESS:

Peter Bay of EDF Renewable for update on the Knox Trail Solar Array project
Town of Acton's Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP)
Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS)
 Current sample data, if available
Update on the Assabet #3 Project
Follow-up discussion of scheduling the next meeting

E. NEW BUSINESS:

Review Administrative Consent Order (ACO) for the Clapp/Whitcomb Backwash system

EXECUTIVE SESSION: --To consider the purchase, exchange, lease of real property as an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the District.

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 Zoom Webinar and was recorded. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM on Monday, November 14, 2022, by Mr. Stephen Stuntz.

Present at Tonight's Meeting:

Commissioners: Erika Amir-Lin, Barry Rosen, Stephen Stuntz (Chair)
District Manager: Chris Allen
District Treasurer/Collector: Christine McCarthy
District Counsel: Mary Bassett
Assistant District Manager: Matthew Mostoller
Finance Committee: Chuck Bradley
Commissioners Secretary: Lynn Protasowicki

Public Present:

Kim Kastens, Ron Parenti and Bill Guthlein

A. Comments from the Public

No comments from the public.

B. Approve minutes from meeting of 10/17

Ms. Amir-Lin motioned to approve the meeting minutes of 10/17/2022. Mr. Rosen seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved by a roll call vote: Mr. Stuntz, Ms. Amir-Lin, and Mr. Rosen.

C. Approve one Commissioner to approve warrants while conducting meetings virtually

Mr. Stuntz motioned to appoint Barry Rosen as the Commissioner to approve warrants while conducting meetings virtually until the next meeting of the Commissioners. Ms. Amir-Lin seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved by a roll call vote: Mr. Stuntz, Mr. Rosen, and Ms. Amir-Lin.

D. OLD BUSINESS:

1. Peter Bay of EDF Renewable for Update on the Knox Trail Solar Array Project

Peter Bay provided an update. He stated that last week we had a battle with EverSource because they have been delaying a review of the one-line diagram for about seven months now (we submitted back in March 2022). The actual review finally got feedback. We resolved one of the comments which was related to a grounding transformer. There is one other piece of equipment that they should have sent comments on but haven't so that we could have ordered the part. We will need to add a new relay to the architecture of the system to serve as a trip to the system when it goes offline if there is an over voltage sensor on the EverSource system. EverSource is committed to finalizing their approval of the project after we submit a new one-line diagram. We are on track to do that on Wednesday. We got an extension to the SMART program deadline from January 20th to March 20th. The hope is that it is not necessary, but we have that additional time.

Barry Rosen asked Peter Bay the following: once the transformer arrives, how much more time before testing the array. Peter stated that he believes it's about three weeks, but he will need to get an update from the project manager.

2. Town of Acton's Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP)

Erika Amir-Lin provided an update. There was a public forum last Thursday to solicit public comment for the draft Open Space plan for 2023-2030. There was a survey sent to all of Acton and 525 people completed the survey. You can review online the results and the presentation given by the recreation department. The takeaway for the District is that the drinking water supply and protection had the highest average score of all the areas surveyed. There is interest in prioritizing protection of parcels that not only have recreation value but also ecosystem and drinking water value. There is value for the District to give input during this process. There will be another public session just not sure when.

Kim Kastens: she was at the open space forum. She stated that early winter the working group of Town staff reconvenes to propose goals and after that in winter 2023 the working group of Town staff amends the goals for committee review and then late winter 2023 the working group of Town staff and committees presents proposed goals and feedback and then spring 2023 the working group of town staff review and analyzes public input from engagement session so there will be another engagement session. A couple of places where the District could get their voice heard is in two places in the plan. Appendix E which is where the ranking of parcels is done. Each parcel is ranked 1-10 on attributes including recreation, environmental and open space. It is not clear where water protection comes in so Green Acton provided comments stating that water protection should be shown as its own category on the parcel ranking. Another place to try and get the Districts comments into is the 5-year action plan which is section 9 in the old document, and it has a section on water that could potentially be strengthened.

3. Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS)

-Current sample data, if available

Chris Allen provided update. Unfortunately, we have seen an increase in 20 ppt MCL in North Acton and Acton Center in the recent past. We will be providing public notice based on the exceeding. Currently serving water is Acton Center and South Acton. North Acton is on the off cycle. We haven't determined when to send the public notice. The draft has been approved by MassDEP. Most likely in late November to early December it will be sent out.

Matt Mostoller: we are meeting with Acton TV to have another spot to discuss PFAS levels and Districts response efforts to update folks in another format where things stand.

Chris Allen: we are currently doing a 90% design review on the NA system concurrently with Mass DEP so comments will be fed back to engineer. The SRF application is in process. To be submitted soon. We have been approved for emergency funding for that project. We are on track to go out to bid the first of the new year. Additional update that the ARPA funding had been approved. We submitted the first reimbursement package this morning to the town treasurer's office. We accumulated \$65K in design costs so that was our first submittal.

Erika Amir-Lin: do you have any update on the South Acton pilot? Chris Allen stated that it is ongoing and will conclude prior to Christmas. The results have shown non-detect levels.

Kim Kastens: any news about the detective efforts where we are with the local PFAS sources and is there any news about the lawsuit with respect to the PFAS manufacturers? Chris Allen stated that we spoke with Napoli Skolnick to get an update on the lawsuit. There have been a couple attempts from the defendants to stop the motion. The court ruled against them. I don't have a time frame when we would see damages.

Matt Mostoller: we are trying to adjust the operating schedule of the Central Acton Water Treatment plant. Starting tomorrow we are going to modify the operation of that to see if we can get the levels lower again as that is our highest concentration source.

Chris Allen: the funding that was appropriated at the annual meeting last year was dual purpose: had a North Acton component for the design; and then revert to an Acton Center pilot study for PFAS filtration there once ARPA was received/approved. Now that the ARPA funds have been approved, we are planning to start the pilot after the first of the year consecutive with the South Acton pilot study.

4. Update on the Assabet #3 Project

Chris Allen provided an update. The pump test will begin Wednesday, 11/16/22, and will run for 5 days. Soon we will be able to turn that well on into the treatment plant for the conclusion of the pilot study and see where things stand with that source.

5. Follow-up Discussion of Scheduling the Next Meeting

Chris Allen: There is a scheduled meeting on November 21st with a bump potentially to November 28th/ We have scheduled meeting on December 5th. Do we want to cancel the 21st meeting? Steve Stuntz suggests skipping the 21st and going right to the December 5th meeting. The Commissioners are good with that decision.

E. NEW BUSINESS:

1. Review Administrative Consent Order (ACO) for the Clapp/Whitcomb Backwash System

Chris Allen provided an update. This ACO was issued by MassDEP's Central Region. This had been an ongoing discussion with them over the course of several sanitary surveys. We have taken some steps to remedy the situation based on the feedback from DEP. It was a confusing message over the course of time with what their desires were and what they were trying to achieve. Based on the feedback, we did install a basket strainer on the backwash discharge to collect suspended solids. The last sanitary survey they routed the issue to Wastewater division in the Central Region. We had to get a permit or modify the system in some manner, so they issued us the ACO. It is to be executed.

The desire was to not want to spend a lot of money on this system being that it is probably earmarked for a full filtration system in the future. We have not used the Clapp/Whitcomb (CW) system at all this year because water quality has not been great, and we haven't needed it based on PFAS concentration control strategies. No telling what role this plant will play but we need to maintain it for supply. The GAC does a good job removing PFAS, and it does render it non-detectable for about 6-months. There is still relatively new carbon in the vessels since we haven't used it.

Kim Kastens: what is unsatisfactory about CW water? If it has low PFAS isn't it a potential opportunity.
Matt Mostoller: it does a great job with PFAS. We relied on it for 8 months in 2021. Took it offline last year and replaced the carbon. Once the carbon was replaced it wasn't removing the minerals. It has become a challenging source water relative to iron, manganese and arsenic. We are asking a lot of this carbon system which was designed for organic color removal and now we are asking it to do some pretty heavy mineral removal, remove arsenic, remove PFAS and other natural occurring constituents. It has a lot of quality issues. When it does remove the PFAS it is helpful and could be an emergency source. If we see Center Acton go up we may say that's an emergency so then we may use CW. Where it stands right now we will be running it to waste to see if conditions will change, which we have been doing quarterly over the past year and unfortunately it has not improved.

Chris Allen stated that for the Board's reference, Assabet 3 is going to give twice the output of Clapp Whitcomb. Once Assabet 3 comes online we will be able to extract more water from South Acton Water Treatment Plant from the microfiltration system.

Barry Rosen motioned to approve that Stephen Stuntz as the signatory for the Clapp Whitcomb ACO. Ms. Amir-Lin seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved by a roll call vote: Mr. Rosen, Ms. Amir-Lin, and Mr. Stuntz.

Mr. Stuntz motioned to adjourn the open meeting and move into Executive Session at 7:50 PM to discuss the purchase, exchange, lease of real property as an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the District. Mr. Rosen seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved by a roll call vote: Ms. Amir-Lin, Mr. Rosen, Ms. Amir-Lin, and Mr. Stuntz.

Next Meeting: December 5, 2022