

Board of Water Commissioners & Finance Committee

Meeting Agenda

Monday, January 12, 2026 @ 7:00 PM

- Comments from the public
- Approve minutes from the meeting of 11/24, 12/8, 12/17, and 12/22
- 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
 - Bottled Water Rebate Update
- US EPA Lead & Copper Rule Improvements
- Review Draft Budget for FY '27 and proposed articles for 2026 Annual District Meeting Warrant
- Recruitment for Treasurer/Collector

NEW BUSINESS:

- Update on District's water conservation and efficiency programs
- 126 Massachusetts Avenue, Boxborough
- Discussion of FY'27 Projected Debt Fee

Present at Tonight's Meeting:

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

Finance Committee: John Petersen

District Manager: Matthew Mostoller

Environmental Analyst: Shawn Case

Members of the Public: Brewster Conant Jr., Gill Watt, Ron Parenti, Bill Guthlein

START OF MINUTES

Mr. Stuntz opened the meeting at 7:00 p.m. and ensured that everyone could hear and be heard.

Comments from the public

During public comment, Mr. Conant asked for updates regarding the District's relationship with the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA) and inquired about a Water Management Act grant referenced during a meeting of the SUASCO Climate Action Collaborative.

Mr. Mostoller responded that MWRA matters were not scheduled for discussion that evening and would likely be addressed at a future meeting. He explained that the District had applied for two grants through the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, including a Water Management Act grant, and that staff were exploring regional partnership opportunities as an alternative approach to long-term water supply planning. He noted that grant determinations were expected later in January or February.

Approve minutes from the meeting of 11/24, 12/8, 12/17, and 12/22

The Board proceeded to consider approval of meeting minutes from November 24, December 8, December 17, and December 22, 2025.

With respect to the November 24 minutes, Mr. Rosen noted two clarifications: that Mr. Watkins attended meetings of the *Water Resources Advisory Committee* but was not a committee member, and that a committee acronym required correction. Upon motion by Mr. Stuntz, seconded by Ms. Lin, the November 24, 2025 minutes were approved by unanimous roll call vote.

Minutes from December 8, December 17, and December 22, 2025 were each approved following motions by Mr. Stuntz, seconded by Ms. Lin, with all votes taken by roll call and passing unanimously.

Appoint one Commissioner to sign warrants while conducting meetings virtually

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

OLD BUSINESS:

Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS)

Current sample data, if available

Mr. Mostoller reported that no new PFAS sampling data were available at the time of the meeting. January sampling had commenced, and December sampling results had been distributed earlier today via the District's PFAS email list, which includes approximately 400 recipients.

Discussion of Additional PFAS Upgrades

Mr. Mostoller provided an update on PFAS treatment system progress at both plants. At the South Acton facility, conditioning of the final vessel had been completed, and testing was underway to ensure integration of the new PFAS treatment system with the existing plant. MassDEP had been notified to schedule a final inspection. At the Center Acton facility, backwashing has been completed and efforts to provide automated conditioning were underway, which would allow continuous operation resulting in a reduction of the time and water required for conditioning and a reduction in overtime costs.

Mr. Case and Mr. Mostoller responded to questions regarding monitoring protocols, confirming that pH is monitored in-house while arsenic and bacteria testing are conducted externally.

Bottled Water Rebate Update

Mr. Mostoller reported that 155 participants remained enrolled in the bottled water rebate program. He stated that staff anticipated recommending discontinuation of the program after the first quarter of 2026, once PFAS treatment systems are fully approved and operational. He noted that participants would receive advance notice prior to the program's conclusion.

US EPA Lead & Copper Rule Improvements

Mr. Mostoller and Mr. Case reviewed the District's recent compliance efforts under the updated Lead and Copper Rule. Approximately 3,015 consumer notification letters were distributed, categorized based on known and unknown service line material. They described a significant public response that required extensive staff outreach. The template letters were included the packet which include language required by MassDEP and the assumption that unknown service lines are lead. To date, no lead service lines have been identified in our water system.

Mr. Mostoller further reported that semiannual sampling at 60 homes and two schools continued to show low risk of lead exposure in Acton. Mr. Stuntz asked if we should rotate the 60 homes to get a better representation of geography. Mr. Mostoller and Mr. Case indicated that the site selection process is highly prescribed by regulation and is designed

to look for changes in our corrosion control program. Discussion included ongoing service line verification efforts, modeling work, and anticipated future reporting requirements, including twice-yearly Consumer Confidence Reports beginning in 2026.

Review Draft Budget for FY '27 and proposed articles for 2026 Annual District Meeting Warrant

Mr. Mostoller stated that finalization of the FY27 budget and proposed warrant articles was pending free cash certification. He indicated that staff anticipated presenting finalized materials in February.

Recruitment for Treasurer/Collector

Mr. Mostoller reported that an additional candidate interview was scheduled for January 14th following direction from the Board at the December 17th meeting.

NEW BUSINESS:

Update on District's water conservation and efficiency programs

Mr. Case presented an annual update on the District's water conservation and efficiency programs. He reported that approximately \$5,400 in rebate credits had been issued during 2025, along with \$1,400 in rain barrel incentives. He also described continued public outreach and free conservation device giveaways at community events.

Following discussion, Ms. Lin moved to authorize up to \$10,000 for calendar year 2026 water efficiency rebates, and incentives. The motion was seconded by Mr. Rosen and approved unanimously by roll call vote.

126 Massachusetts Avenue, Boxborough

Mr. Mostoller reported that a 7.5-acre parcel at 126 Massachusetts Avenue in Boxborough had been successfully transferred to the Town of Boxborough Conservation Commission via donation, preserving the land without cost to the District. The District had been in discussions with the Town of Boxborough and the property owner to protect this land as it is in the Zone 2 of the Clapp/Whitcomb wells.

Discussion of FY'27 Projected Debt Fee

Mr. Mostoller explained that the projected increase in the FY27 debt fee reflects the transition from construction financing, which previously carried no cost, to permanent financing. He noted that despite the increase, the cost of the debt fee remains under one dollar per day per billing unit and emphasized that the District avoided earlier increases

through favorable state financing. The proposed FY 27 budget was also predicated on not increasing the volumetric rates in recognition of the increasing debt fee.

Mr. Petersen commented on equity considerations and fee structure, while Mr. Parenti observed that overall water service costs remain modest compared to other household expenses. The Board was not compelled to address this further pending a more finalized budget and warrants.

There being no further business, Ms. Lin moved to adjourn. Mr. Rosen seconded the motion, which passed unanimously by roll call vote.

Meeting Closed at 7:54 p.m.