

**Acton Water District
Finance Committee Meeting Minutes
July 17, 2026, 9:00 AM
693 Massachusetts Avenue
Acton, MA 01720**

In attendance were Finance Committee members Bill Guthlein, Ron Parenti, and Dan Groher.

Also in attendance:

District Manager: Matthew Mostoller

District Treasurer: Ashley Pinard

Public Present: Alissa Nicol, Barry Rosen

Mr. Guthlein called the Finance Committee meeting to order at 9:06 AM.

New Business:

1. Approve minutes of meeting held on May 27, 2026
2. Welcome new committee member
3. 4th quarter FY26 financial update
4. FY28 budget process timeline
5. Review draft Finance Committee charter by Barry Rosen

Old Business:

1. Status of Free Cash Certification
2. Future objectives
 - a. Propose changes to budget format
 - b. Propose changes to annual meeting presentation
 - c. Review district financial resiliency, stress testing contingencies
 - d. Review the status of the Water District's rate study
 - e. Other ideas

Comments from the Public

No Comments

New Business

Approve Minutes of May 27, 2026

Mr. Parenti moved to approve the minutes of the May 27, 2026, meeting. Mr. Guthlein seconded. Mr. Groher abstained as he was not on the committee during the meeting. Mr. Parenti and Mr. Guthlein voted yes.

Welcome New Committee Member

Dan Groher was welcomed as a new member of the Finance Committee.

Review Draft Finance Committee Charter and FY28 Budget Process Timeline

Mr. Rosen summarized the conceptual charter that he presented at the last Board of Commissioners meeting. Mr. Guthlein acknowledged that the charter points out the minimal definition of the Finance Committee in the

by-laws and it acts in the same capacity as the Town of Acton Finance Committee. He also felt the term charter was not the proper word for this. Mr. Rosen pointed out that by-laws would need to go to a District meeting to be changed but the charter could be approved by the Board and Finance Committee. Ms. Nicol noted the significant difference between the Town and District Finance Committees. Mr. Guthlein noted that no direct mechanism exists for a budget timeline and he proposed coming up with one for the charter. The budget timeline was discussed and Mr. Guthlein said he will work with staff to create a timeline for the charter. Mr. Guthlein questioned that the charter can be amended solely by the Board of Commissioners. Mr. Parenti asked if under this charter the Finance Committee could do a rate study or investigation. Mr. Mostoller clarified that a good model for an advisory board, which the Finance Committee is, would be to go to the Board with their idea and get permission, but this could be confirmed at the next Board meeting. Ms. Nicol cautioned the Finance Committee from going on too many deep dives. Mr. Guthlein stated he will email his notes to Mr. Rosen so that he can share them with the rest of the Board at their next meeting.

4th Quarter FY26 Financial Update

Mr. Mostoller and Ms. Pinard explained that ending numbers for the quarter are not available yet as it is the end of the fiscal year and there are still outstanding invoices. An update was given based on the information that is available. Ms. Pinard advised that by mid-August final numbers should be available.

Old Business

Status of Free Cash Certification

Ms. Pinard provided an update on the free cash certification. There is one remaining issue with the statement of indebtedness that is being worked on with the consultant. Once this is rectified FY25 numbers will be finalized and then FY26 can be submitted. Mr. Mostoller stated there has been no impact on operations at this time but added the warrant articles may be updated as we should have the additional FY26 funds.

Future Objectives

Mr. Guthlein spelled out the future projects that the finance committee may want to consider with approval from the board.

- a. 3-year budget, looking more at the revenue side.
- b. Changes to the annual meeting presentation, add more information to the warrant articles.
- c. Resiliency stress testing, look at rate structure as it relates to revenue and financial stability. Mr. Guthlein proposed reducing cash on hand to lower water rates. Mr. Parenti questioned how this study would be done and what the calculations would look like. He suggested a white paper could be useful to summarize any findings. Mr. Mostoller added that with the PFAS water use restrictions a mid-year rate increase was required a couple of years ago. He added that the surplus funds are needed for emergencies and capital investment planning. Mr. Groher asked if the well rehab is considered a capital investment. Mr. Mostoller explained that typically it is, but it was a part of the maintenance and operations budget last year due to the negative free cash in FY24. If such a study is undertaken, industry norms should be evaluated and taken into consideration.
- d. Status of the District rate study, Mr. Parenti provided a presentation he made with data from approximately 4 years ago. A discussion commenced on an independent rate study and if it could determine how much of a water rate increase would be needed to impact water use. Also discussed if the debt service fee should be volume based and the correlation between low income and low water use. Mr. Parenti stated that he does not feel that any changes will result from a study so his opinion is it should not be done and the rate payers should be made aware of this. Mr. Groher questioned what could be gained by a rate study. Mr. Guthlein agrees that the Board and Finance Committee should be

upfront with the rate payers on the status of the study, but he still argues that it should be done. Discussion about rates. In the end it was decided the Finance Committee will not take any steps regarding the rate study and will leave it with the Board.

Items to address next meeting

Review investment policy and add to next meeting's agenda.

Mr. Mostoller and Mrs. Pinard will provide Mr. Guthlein with a budget timeline.

Will look for a next meeting after Labor Day.

Mr. Guthlein motioned to adjourn the meeting at 11:48 AM. Mr. Parenti seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved.

All documents (if applicable) referred to in the minutes are available for inspection at the Acton Water District Office,
693 Massachusetts Avenue Acton, MA 978.263.9107