

WLMAC MEETING NOTES OF MARCH 18, 2010

Present: John Cipar, Chuck Olmstead, Barry Rosen. Invited Guest: Matt Mostoller, AWD Environmental Manager.

Chairperson/Recorder: Barry Rosen

Call To Order: 8:15 PM EDT on March 18, 2010 at AWD HQ.

Old Business:

1. The minutes of February 25, 2010 were presented. Motion to accept the minutes made and seconded. A motion to accept the minutes as submitted was passed unanimously.
2. John Cipar suggested that because we have an invited guest, we might be able to quickly move to the Q & A portion of the new business. There was agreement on this so other old business items were skipped and the committee moved them to the next WLMAC meeting (4/15/2010).

New Business:

The committee unanimously agreed to spend the remainder of the meeting in informal discussion with Matt Mostoller on various water related topics.

1. Salt was a topic in which all WLMAC members were concerned.
 - a) Matt confirmed that a number of our wells are at or over the “action level” where the AWD is required to notify the public. While it is believed that the level is safe to drink for most people, those with some health issues may need to be concerned. *[Recorder’s Note: High blood pressure, some pulmonary conditions and congestive heart failure are some of the conditions where a very low sodium or a no sodium diet is prescribed by physicians.]*
 - b) Route 111 (Massachusetts Avenue) and Route 27 (Main Street) both pass through the Zone 1 areas of some of our wells (some of which are over sodium chloride action level for notification).
 - c) After reading the research and discussing it at some length, all present agreed that one can not know for certain the source of the sodium in the wells. Without knowing the underlying geology in great detail, one can’t be sure if there is a natural cause (from a rock source) that is a contributor and/or if road salt is a major factor.
 - d) The Committee discussed (with Matt) the persistence of salt in our well water. There was not clear conclusion to this question as it is believed that the water is constantly changing within the well and may even contain different salt concentrations each year or even seasonally. AWD tests for salt as required (yearly) and therefore can not supply the statistical granularity. Matt expected the newest test results would be available during June.
 - e) There was considerable discussion as to whether limiting the amount of salt utilized in winter road treatment could impact the salt level of some of the wells

where the road salt runoff would be within a Zone 1. Again, there did not seem to be a way to know this in advance.

- i) Matt was asked if Concord limited road salt use. He said that they did not. The Town tried limiting the application of salt but did not have limited salt application by MA DOT for Route 2 and 2A.
- ii) Barry stated that he did notice that Lincoln had signs posted that indicated limited road salt was used on some sections of road and wondered if they had noted any differences. Matt noted that the salt restriction in Lincoln is for the Cambridge water supply reservoirs. Barry also noted that Lincoln had one of the highest water rates in Middlesex County possibly due to the use of surface water. Paul also mentioned that they probably also have one of the smallest customer bases of a public water supplier.
- iii) The difficulty of getting the MA DOT to cooperate and the amount of work that must be done to request them to lower the amount of road salting in selected areas was discussed. It sounded to all that there are a number of hurdles that must be successfully navigated to get them to consider an application for reduced salting.
- iv) Barry raised the possibility that perhaps the Conant 1 zone 1 and the Kennedy-Marshall Zone 1's may be on sections of Route 27 that are maintained by the Town of Acton and perhaps we would not have to deal with the MA DOT as we would for Route 111.
- f) The WLMAC decided that we would take no action at this time but would wait until Matt had received the latest test results from the wells which he expected would be during June, 2010. After receiving the test reports for each of the wells, the WLMAC would again consider whether we would recommend that the AWD take an action to work with the town to reduce the amount of road salt applied within these Zone 1 areas. [The WLMAC would have to determine if the Town does, in fact, perform the snow removal for those areas of Route 27.]

2. Possible Additional Wells for Acton?

- a) Christofferson Well: Results were still not as favorable for this well as we had hoped. The yield and water quality had not improved with the additional test drillings. Some additional tests will be performed around the site but things did not look promising at the moment. The original plan will need to be revisited for the well configuration to be viable.
- b) Bedrock Wells: They may be a possibility but extensive study has not been conducted at this point.
- c) Matt and the WLMAC discussed the Flannery-O'Toole land that was believed to have been a donation. Matt believes that the site is suitable for a well location; however water quality and yield may be issues.
- d) The Committee discussed the former Travers well which was near the border with Stow. That well had been abandoned a number of years ago because the Stow

residents near the site (who were utilizing private wells) said that the operation of the Acton well was causing a drop in the water level of their private wells.

3. Authorized Pumping Limit

- a) Matt explained that our authorized limit had gone up a little bit once again.
- b) Chuck Olmstead explained that when he was speaking with the MA DEP, no one there was able to clearly explain to him how the state had arrived at the average daily pumping limit for the town. He wondered if Matt had any more information on this. Matt explained that the DEP relied on historical data supplied by the water district on the district's maximum daily pumping averages. From the 80's onward, the DEP permitted well pumping volumes. They then melded the historical information with the new permitted well volumes to arrive at an average maximum daily pumping volume.

Next WLMAC meeting date: April 15, 2010 at 8:00 PM at AWD HQ

Adjournment:

Chuck Olmstead made a motion to adjourn. Seconded by John Cipar. Motion to adjourn was passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned on March 18, 2010 at 9:45 PM ET.

Respectfully submitted,

Barry R. Rosen