

**WATER RESOURCES COMMISSION**  
**MEETING MINUTES**

**Full text of public comments can be found starting on page 5**  
**Wednesday, October 28, 2020**  
**7:00 PM**

Topic

**Call to order – 7:08**

**Attendees**

Becky Malamut  
Jacqueline Bohn  
Joanne Wyckoff  
Kevin Finney  
Bruce Arbonies

Mark Cloud, Water Dept  
Emily Simmer  
Freya Schlegel  
Peter Noyes  
Paul Bartkiewicz  
Lincoln Heineman  
Martha Cook

**Water system updates**

Mark Cloud report

- Reservoir -70" = 30% full
- Still in Severe Drought
- Started flushing today, will keep moving as long as reservoir and weather allow us to
  - o May still do streamflow releases, if we have enough water
  - o We used 5mg for flushing last year
- Installed mixers in water tanks to help with THM treatment, will test again first week of November – Becky suggested sharing the result when the report is available to us

Water rate increase – Mark Cloud

- 11% increase, effective now
- Created 4<sup>th</sup> tier for high water users
- These increases will cover funding and debt-relief for the next year
- Rates and fees posted on town website.

Reservoir Project Update – Becky Malamut

- Call with EEA to review MVP app and why we didn't receive the funding
- Funding for the next round will be on the Nov town meeting warrant
- Do we want to get in front of comments re: DEP variance issues?
  - o Bruce and Joanne think we should ask Jim to mention it in his TA update

Membership update – Becky Malamut

- 4 interviews, Shirley resigned early so we have 2 openings
- Need to ID new Secretary – Jacqueline to handle it this month, will assign new roles when

we have new members

Kevin asked about brown water complaints – Mark said there have been a few, more around flushing

Mark – handheld water ban until reservoir gets up to 40%, no tickets issued this week but there were several last week, giving out \$100 tickets exclusively now

#### MODERATED Q&A

Peter Noyes – is increase retroactive? Mark's response - It will be in all bills submitted since BOS. Humarock and Scituate pay same amt. Also asked if the Federal base pay the same rate

Martha asked if all water restriction fines are \$100 or if they increase for repeated events. Also asked if we considered upping those rates.

Do those who paid the most – ie. one paid \$2,800 – will they be part of the Tier 4

Peter – 2024 Capitals Humarock Water Main Replacement

Freya – Timeline for Dolan Wells – Mark, still running pump tests, close to 5 years before online

Jacqueline – what was result of blowing smoke through sewer lines?

Peter - Has we ever considered asking for a PILOT \$\$\$ from Hanscom AFB for the infrastructure and public safety cost to serve the 4th Cliff Recreation Facility? Payment in lieu of Taxes (PILOT) to help with the 2024 planned Humarock Water Main Replacement. The main collapsed into the mouth due to the failure to maintain the revetment! - Not that Mark is aware of – good question for Sean M or Kevin C, Mark and/or Becky to follow-up

#### **Water conservation outreach strategy**

Anything we want to focus on this fall? Updated water use numbers for analysis. Everything else can wait until March

MODERATED Q&A - None

#### **Private well policy proposal – Becky Malamut**

Town Counsel thinks new Bylaw is the safest bet but we'll have to wait until Spring Town Meeting

- Right now, policy lives in a number of places – WMA Act, DPW request from Water Commissioners
- Could be good opportunity to increase fees and strengthen policy
- Could be an uphill battle because other towns with these bylaws have had some DEP involvement

BOH is not off the table but not exactly on the table either....

- Becky spoke to Drew Scheele, Dir of BOH. They are getting ready to swear in a new BOH member, he hopes to get us on their agenda once that happens

- Per Town Counsel comments, the other towns that have this policy it's recommendation but not required.

Becky looked at wells registered online - 144 wells, 51 are irrigation

- 11 new irrigation since 2015
- 10 new irrigation since 2016
- .7% of houses on wells
- Is it worth it to continue this policy rec?

Bruce – it's not necessarily the number, it's the volume of water – Toll Brothers has a well

- Bylaw is more difficult but he likes the broader exposure

Kevin – advantage of going through Town Meeting is a broader voice. If the only reason to go through BOH is easy then that's not a good enough reason

Mark – doesn't think wells propose that much of a threat because most of the water goes back into groundwater, he does think there's a benefit to having a bylaw for the entire restriction

#### MODERATED Q&A

Paul B – Question about why we would implement this policy, someone goes through expense of installing a well, they should be able to use it. If we don't have any evidence that there's adverse impact to Town water. He's concerned about liability to town to approve something then take it away.

Mark – Water Dept does not "approve" private wells to be sure that there's enough capacity for it

Freya asked if Old Stockbridge Dump is source of contamination for Well 20. Mark has been out to location, it was abandoned, not sure of any intention to reactivate the well

Emily Simmer made a great point that all irrigation water goes back into groundwater, so why are wells any different than irrigation from public water supply

Another comment from Peter - Have there been investigation regarding better control of drainage to recharge the reservoir rather than discharge to the Rivers (Ocean)? Often new sewer mains can drain groundwater in the pipe trench because "dams" re left out in the pipe bedding. This situation occurred in Rockland when the sewer was extended on Hingham Street.

Becky made motion for the WRC to continue our research into an effective outdoor water use restriction that would include private wells, Jacqueline seconded, all in favor via roll call

#### **Water offset policy proposal**

Mitigation – Bruce was going to dig into mitigations / offsets for new builds and renovations

- Bruce reviewed Acton's plan
  - o They have a separate "debt charge" for water related charges, \$45 per month for all users
  - o He didn't see people getting credit for mitigation measures – they use less so ongoing billing will be lower, he didn't see that the fee would be lower
  - o Things like natural lawn would go into the impact statement to figure out what

- the charge would be
- Bruce will come up with a list for us for next meeting

Becky reported that she asked Andrew Goodrich to naildown a timeline on Water Master Plan, which could provide some basis for our offset rec. No response yet

What's left:

- Threshold – “any new demand / new bedrooms” or “110 gpd, which is what the Sewer Dept uses to size septic systems?”
- How to handle commercial entities

MODERATED Q&A - None

### **Approve September minutes**

Joanne moved, Jacqueline seconded , allin favor, roll call

### **Recent correspondence**

Lincoln Heineman, 673 First Parish

- Interested in selling 15 acres of land to the town – he owns a chunk and his neighbor's own the rest. It directly abuts conservation land owned by the Town
- He's seen a document that envisions building a reservoir on the property he's proposing to sell to the town
- He spoke to Kevin Cafferty, who expressed some interest, it could also be an appropriate site for a future well, he'll look at the Geodata and take a look at the property
- Also spoke with Frank Snow and will go before ConComm for their support as well
- Jacqueline asked if he has a price in mind – Lincoln let us know that Town won't pay higher than appraised price. Builders have approached them but he doesn't want to go that route
- Bruce had lots of good questions about siting a well on the property
- Scheduled for Nov 9 CPC meeting
- Becky made motion to write a letter of support to the CPC – Joanne seconded, Bruce voted no until we have a better sense of whether or not it is a viable water resource, Jacqueline voted yes to support but need to find more about it, Kevin echoed Jacqueline's response

Becky read email from John Boehmke, encouraging WRC to lead an effort to identify and evaluate alternative sources of water for the town....Alternatives that you may want to consider might include: working with Cohasset, working with Hingham, joining the MWRA, and salt water desalination

### **Open discussion**

Next meeting – Wed, Nov 18 at 7pm

MODERATED Q&A - None

**Adjourn – 9pm**

**Becky to Everyone**

Chat here

7:25 PM

**Martha Cook to Everyone**

could peter type his question? I can't understand him.

7:26 PM

**Peter Noyes to Everyone**

Does Humarock pay the same rate as Scituate?

7:26 PM

**Peter Noyes to Everyone**

And, does the Federal base pay the same rate?

7:26 PM

**Martha Cook to Everyone**

are all water restriction violation fines \$100 or do they increase for repeated events?

7:26 PM

**Peter Noyes to Everyone**

What is on the Special Town Meeting Warrant?

7:27 PM

**Martha Cook to Everyone**

any consideration given to further increases for subsequent fines? 50, 100, 150, 200, etc?

7:28 PM

**Martha Cook to Everyone**

i think that is 5,001 cubic feet... not per day

7:30 PM

**Peter Noyes to Everyone**

What is the status of the Humarock Water Main Replacement?

7:30 PM

**Freya Schlegel to Everyone**

what is the timeline for the Dolan well please? getting it online

7:31 PM

**Jacqueline Bohn to Everyone**

What was the result of the blowing smoke thru the sewer lines?

7:32 PM

**Freya Schlegel to Everyone**

so 5 yrs until we can use thta water?

7:32 PM

**Peter Noyes to Everyone**

Has we ever considered asking for a PILOT \$\$\$ from Hanscom AFB for the infrastructure and public safety cost to serve the 4th Cliff Recreation Facility?

7:33 PM

**Peter Noyes to Everyone**

Payment in lieu of Taxes (PILOT) to help with the 2024 planned Humarock Water Main Replacement. The main collapsed into the mouth due to the failure to maintain the revetment!

7:35 PM

**Peter Noyes to Everyone**

[peternoyes73@gmail.com](mailto:peternoyes73@gmail.com)

7:38 PM

**Paul Bartkiewicz to Everyone**

could you tell us what th proposed private well policy is?

7:40 PM

**Peter Noyes to Everyone**

Are their contamination issues associated due to past Federal goverment activities in Scituate (storage of munitions etc. at the "proving grounds")?

7:42 PM

**Freya Schlegel to Everyone**

or well #20 by stockbridge dump?

7:42 PM

**Freya Schlegel to Everyone**

STOCKBRIDGE- sorry fat fingers!

7:44 PM

**Martha Cook to Everyone**

Just so I can be clear.... we would only regulate the irrigation from a well, seems like 93 use it for household use.

7:45 PM

**Martha Cook to Everyone**

in the last 5 years 11 new wells were granted.... does that count Toll Brothers? How many more were applied for but denied?

7:46 PM

**H2O to Everyone**

Toll Bros recently requested to drill more wells outside of permit.

7:46 PM

**Martha Cook to Everyone**

even with a new member, we know that BoH weren't keen to touch this in the past.

7:47 PM

**Paul Bartkiewicz to Everyone**

Could you explain what problem you are trying to solve to prevent the use of a very few irrigation wells for the intended purpose? Who is being harmed by the use of these wells?

7:48 PM

**Martha Cook to Everyone**

having it all under one umbrella by law makes sense

7:50 PM

**Freya Schlegel to Everyone**

fitz mill dump well then

7:52 PM

**Emily Simmer to Everyone**

I'm not understanding what Mark said about private well use - why would that water be any more likely to go back into the aquifer as opposed to someone using town water?

7:53 PM

**Martha Cook to Everyone**

my understanding is that it isn't just 'equality' it is the theory that all our water mingles together underground. A private well 'takes it away' from the overall town source.

7:53 PM

**Emily Simmer to Everyone**

which he said would more likely go into the ocean

7:53 PM

**Martha Cook to Everyone**

I think a well sign is required and technically a fine could be levied if a well owner doesn't have a sign.

7:55 PM

**Brooks, Cara (Converse) to Everyone**

I agree with Paul

7:55 PM

**Martha Cook to Everyone**

In some watershed areas, hydrologists have said that a private well pulls away water from the town aquifer

7:56 PM

**Brooks, Cara (Converse) to Everyone**

I think you need more data in order to make this decision.

7:59 PM

**Martha Cook to Everyone**

they also have different soil, different reservoir and fresh water pond situations.

8:05 PM

**Paul Bartkiewicz to Everyone**

The claim was that the private well water would reduce the town supply. As Mark said, private wells do not draw much net supply from the aquifer.

8:06 PM

**Jack to Everyone**

There is irrigation water lost to evaporation that does not go back to the aquifer. There is also a question as to how long water that returns to the lawn takes to reach the aquifer. It's not immediate.

8:08 PM

**Martha Cook to Everyone**

I think the big concern is for future droughts... if we allowed hundreds of new wells for a home, business, or sport fields then 1,000s of gallons of water would be removed from many different sections of under ground around town aquifers.

8:10 PM

**Peter Noyes to Everyone**

Have there been investigation regarding better control of drainage to recharge the reservoir rather than discharge to the Rivers (Ocean)? Often new sewer mains can drain groundwater in the pipe trench because "dams" re left out in the pipe bedding. This situation occurred in Rockland when the sewer was extended on Hingham Street.

8:12 PM

**H2O to Everyone**

Has a desalination plant been considered?

8:14 PM

**Jack to Everyone**

Could caller 03 please mute their mic? Thanks!

8:41 PM

**Martha Cook to Everyone**

Have they already tested in that area in the last 20-30 years though?