

WATER RESOURCES COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Location: Town Hall, Select Board Hearing Room

Date: November 14, 2023, 6:30 PM



Call to order

Members present:

1. Bruce Arbonies, Chair
2. Emily Simmer, Secretary
3. Kristen Jamski
4. Peter Weafer
5. Jacqueline Bohn – a few minutes late
6. Joanne Wyckoff – a few minutes late

Members absent:

Freya Schlegel has resigned from WRC since our last meeting.

Others present:

Kevin Cafferty, Scituate DPW Director

1. Call to order

2. Water System Updates

a. Water Department update

Paving on 3A is going well despite a few hiccups. Thursday's ZBA meeting will include a discussion of the height of the WTP. The same issue will be discussed at a Planning Board meeting the same night. With Freya's resignation we need a new Planning Board Liaison, and especially someone to cover this week's meeting since Bruce will be at ZBA. Kristen said she can make it work if Joanne (who hadn't yet arrived) can't. Town is prepping plans to replace the water line on Jericho Road – will go to bid in Jan or Feb which is the best time of year to bid. Also going to bid is work on water lines by Old Forge Rd – to replace existing water lines and add piping from nearby wells to the site of the new WTP in case we need that capability in the future due to ongoing issues and changing regulations for PFAS.

Town met with Tighe and Bond re: well 17's discolored water issues. Kat and Eric are doing testing and trying ph adjustments.

Reservoir expansion project is still moving along, despite thin staffing. Freya called in to present the results of her water experiment. She collected several samples of her tap water and let them sit, and all look clear. Kevin confirmed that yes it is generally easy to produce clear water when demand is close to 1 MGD/day; but when demand is twice that it's far more challenging.

The state is coming out with a new map that shows all bedrock in the southeast which can help identify which sites are drillable for wells sources.

Water Dept is still down one operator. Applications for rebates for residence swapping out old appliances for water saving models continue to come in. 60% of the money allotted for this program has now been distributed. Perhaps the WRC can find a way to replenish the coffers and keep the program going with grants or some other funding source.

3. Desalination Subcommittee Update

Bob was not able to attend tonight's meeting but had shared an update with Bruce. Bruce has connected with an MIT professor regarding a desalination technology he had been working on that is much less energy intensive than traditional methods. It sounds like a lot of communities around the country have been reaching out this prof. Bruce and some of the desal committee people will try to set up a meeting with him in the coming weeks.

4. 2024 Planning Discussion

Rain barrels: Bruce will reach out to GARB in December to confirm April 6 is our distribution date.

Emily shared the timeline she drafted regarding annual planning for this group. One item was to send a follow up email to the residents who purchase rain barrels, which we can hopefully implement this spring.

We discussed several of the items that had been on the priorities list – water meters/smart meters, high water users, condo hookups, irrigation systems, etc. Joanne and Jackie seem willing to go door to door this summer to remind people about the water ban.

5. Liaison Updates & Planning Board Liaison Update

Regarding this week's double meetings – Joanne had been planning to attend ZBA this week already so she will address the water-related items there, freeing up Bruce to cover PB.

- a. BOH – Jackie – no update
- b. Planning – Bruce attended last week due to Freya's resignation – no updates.
- c. Zoning – Bruce – no updates from the past month but there are water-related items on this week's agenda.
- d. Con Com – Joanne – there was a report about the vegetation and wetlands around the site of the new WTP. Abutters are concerned about the steep slope in terms of drainage.
- e. SBC – Pete – at last meeting they discussed mechanical systems – no water updates.
- f. EDC – Kristen is now their liaison – she went to the meeting last night and made the connection – they are glad to know they can reach out to us if they need advice/assistance on water issues.

We set our next meeting for Dec 12 at 6:30pm – we'll find a place in town hall (assuming the small conf room is still being used by water dept staff). Jackie has a conflict this night but may be able to come late.

6. Approve minutes

October minutes approved unanimously

7. Open Discussion

None

8. Adjourn