

CAMBRIDGE WATER BOARD

MEETING MINUTES

June 13, 2017

This meeting was called to order at 5:05 p.m. at 250 Fresh Pond Parkway, in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Those in attendance were:

Cambridge Water Board (CWB): Richard Johnson, Kathleen Kelly, Ann Roosevelt and Jason Marshall
Cambridge Water Department (CWD): Sam Corda, Fred Centanni, Tim MacDonald, Mark Gallagher and Linda Vierboom

A. MINUTES OF APRIL 11, 2017 MEETING

Ms. Kelly moved and Mr. Johnson seconded the motion to approve the April 11, 2017 minutes as written. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

A. SUMMARY OF MAY 2, 2017 MEETING

Ms. Kelly moved and Mr. Marshall seconded the motion to approve the May 2, 2017 minutes as amended. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

B. MANAGING DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Water Conservation: The water department continues to strongly urge water conservation practices through the CWD website, social media and bill inserts. CWD continues water conservation planning and will make recommendations at the end of the process. A survey to garner baseline water usage was sent to some City Departments, Cambridge Housing Authority and the Mount Auburn Hospital. Once the completed surveys are returned, water department staff will participate in a workshop with CDM Smith to quantify the survey results and to recommend future water conservation actions.

Irrigation system “weather stations”, like the one on our irrigation system at Fresh Pond Reservation, are reliable, reasonably priced and can reduce water consumption by at least 20%. Similar irrigation control systems will be retrofitted throughout City playing fields and parks over the next several years.

The increasing block rate water/sewer billing structure was implemented in 1980 and is an excellent water saving incentive for all users. The less you use, the lower the block rate you pay. Mr. Marshall brought up the possibility of rate structures specifically for outdoor watering and will ask for more info on this from Janice Beecher, of Michigan State University. Mr. MacDonald said that alternative water billing rates will be looked at within the water conservation planning process. Because of the drought Ms. Kelly asked if we will be moving forward with more plantings on the reservation. Mr. MacDonald said we are protecting our “plant” investments and are not planning to modify our future planting plans.

Drought: The DEP Drought Task Management Force and all related entities have formally declared that the drought was over in mid-May. MWRA water was last used December 12th. The severity of the 2015/2016/2017 drought has not yet been studied to determine if it will be considered the drought of record. The 1965/66 drought has been the drought of record. Our reservoirs are close to being full. Storage issues are not anticipated if at least average rainfall continues. Will very likely start to discharge from Hobbs Brook Reservoir in July. The original long range prediction for above average rainfall this summer has now been changed to a neutral rainfall prediction.

DCR Greenway: The Community Development Department (CDD) has hired two “experts” to review draft lighting design and to assess the environmental impacts of lighting the bike path. Once completed the environmental reports will be made available. The City Manager is scheduling future meetings to discuss the results of the lighting study and their recommendations. The DCR is open to lighting the greenway.

FY18 Capital and Operating Budget Overview: Copies of the FY18 Capitol and Operations Budget were discussed and the FY18 Budget Book summaries were handed out for reference. The budget was approved by City Council. Staffing has stayed consistent, with the number of employees for the past five years at 55. Capitol funds were appropriated for the ‘drainage and community garden project’ (D&CG). The railroad tracks, ties, trees and invasive plants have been removed. \$250,000 from Community Preservation Act will be used to fund most of the community garden portion of the work. Assisting to meet the City renewable energy goals, the Hydroelectric Electric Renewable Energy project design is planned to begin in FY19 and continue through FY21. Mr. Marshall mentioned it may be worth looking into renewable energy credits.

Customer Access to Water Usage Data: We are close to setting up a kick off meeting now that there is a signed contract with the vendor. It is anticipated there will be a 5-month implementation period.

C. OPERATIONS

Transmission and Distribution:

Potential Pipe Replacement to and from Payson Park: To assist in determining what, if anything, will need to be done with the 40” force and supply line to Payson Park, Mr. Corda will speak with the City Manager regarding initiating an investigation/assessment into the current condition of these transmission mains to determine the need and type of rehabilitation (i.e. no need, cement lining or replacement). Ms. Roosevelt was told by the City Manager that there would be a process regarding the pipe material when this project needs to be initiated. The weight of the evidence is that we will install the same material that has always been installed, i.e. ductile iron cement lined pipe.

Water Operations:

Annual Water Quality Report: The Report will be mailed out by the end of this month (June). A bolder type was requested to make for easier reading.

Water Supply Summary Report: The National Weather Service projection is for normal rainfall.

Watershed:

Mill Complex Appeal/104 Boston Post Road: The petitioner is reapplying through the Town of Weston concurrent with an appeal of the denial of the original Mill Complex approach by DEP. CWD, with the assistance of the law department, is continuing intense involvement with this development in our watershed to ensure that our water supply is protected.

Business:

Billed Water Consumption by Month: It was noted that some billing cycles yield higher numbers than others because, of the 6 regional billing cycles, some are more industrial or commercial than others.

Engineering:

No Comments

D. ACTION ITEMS

None

E. MISCELLANEOUS CORRESPONDENCE AND ITEMS OF INTEREST

No comments

F. NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Marshall requested a discussion of the reporting practices for the Board. Mr. Corda commented that they have morphed over the years and considers the annual tour of the watershed and monthly manager reports to suffice. Mr. Corda commented that the budget book defines the previous and upcoming year's work. The annual report is posted on the City website after the close of each fiscal year. The Water Board has not put forward annual reports to the City Manager for at least 25 years. Mr. Corda is open to suggestion. Mr. Marshall suggested a cover letter which he would draft; with the City annual report as an attachment. Ms. Roosevelt suggested the board take a look at it next year in July 2018.

G. NEXT MEETING DATES/TOPICS

- September 12, 2017: Approved/DCR Greenway, Water Irrigation Systems/Reservation Outdoor Seating
- October 10, 2017: Approved/TBD
- November 14, 2017: Approved/TBD

Ms. Kelly moved and Mr. Johnson seconded the motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:25 p.m. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

Minutes approved by vote of the Board.

Signed: _____
Ann C. Roosevelt, President

Date: _____