

CAMBRIDGE WATER BOARD

**MEETING MINUTES**

June 13, 2023

*This meeting is available virtually on Zoom. This meeting is being recorded.*

This meeting was called to order at 5:04 p.m., those in attendance via Zoom were:

**Cambridge Water Board (CWB):** Ann Roosevelt, James Burruss, Kathleen Kelly, and Mike McNeley.

**Cambridge Water Department (CWD):** Mark Gallagher, Fred Centanni, Krystyna McNally Julie Greenwood-Torelli, Dave Kaplan and Linda Vierboom.

**A. MINUTES OF MAY 9, 2023, MEETING**

Mr. McNeley moved, and Mr. Burruss seconded the motion to approve the May 9, 2023, minutes as written. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

**B. MANAGING DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Fresh Pond Day: After a 4-year hiatus, Fresh Pond Day was back this year; showcasing all the good work we do here. It was a rousing success.

PFAS Update: Today the company "Waters" began assembling our new PFAS testing equipment. They will be back in a few weeks to conduct training. We expect to conduct our PFAS first trial testing-runs in the watershed the second week of July.

Our most recent PFAS sample came back as a non-detect. Per DEP, non-detectable amounts qualify for reduced sampling times for State compliance and sampling is required only once per quarter. Since the new carbon filters were installed, our PFAS levels have consistently come in under 10PPT. Our next official samples will be taken in July, but we will continue to take non regulatory samples from the tap (before the finished water). We are keeping these/non regulatory sample results in house for our own knowledge.

Sanitary Survey: Every three years DEP conducts an extensive two -day sanitary survey/inspection. After their inspection, DEP stated everything was excellent, so much so that DEP would like to bring other DEP personnel to the plant to show them how we do things and use us as a training facility for their benefit. We are the Gold Standard.

Consumer Confidence Report (CCR): We sent the final proof of the consumer confidence report to the printers. We are required by the DEP to put this out once a year by July 1<sup>st</sup>. The report includes information on the treatment process, water quality, water shed, conservation, links for useful information when plumbing, PFAS and GAC carbon info. The CCR is mailed to every resident and user in the city and is also available on our website.

Questions/Comments: Cyber security will be a new component of the sanitary survey going forward and we will be allocating money for this in future years. We are already ahead of the curve and have been working on this.

*FY24 Budget Presentation:* Mr. Centanni discussed the FY24 Water Department Operating and Capital Budgets. To view the budget, visit the City Web Page with the link below:

[https://www.cambridgema.gov/-/media/Files/waterdepartment/adminforms/wb\\_budget\\_presentation\\_61323.pdf](https://www.cambridgema.gov/-/media/Files/waterdepartment/adminforms/wb_budget_presentation_61323.pdf)

The Cambridge Water Department (CWD) is a municipally owned and operated water utility servicing approximately 119,000 residents and operating under the general direction of the City Manager. CWD operates financially as an Enterprise Fund. This means that all operating and capital expenditures are funded through our water rates.

The top priorities for FY24 will be as follows: Monitoring PFAS6 levels to ensure that the new GAC filter media consistently provides levels superior to state standards, continuing to understand and improve the drought management of the City water system as well as informing customers on water conservation techniques via social media, web page, and bill inserts; continuing implementation of the department's Water Main Rehabilitation Program; continuing to finalize the design of the Hydroelectric Renewable Energy Project; continuing the upgrade of the treatment plant's Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) system; initiation and completion of the Hobbs Brook Dam and Gatehouse repairs; and preparation to implement the proposed new DEP lead and copper rule.

*Questions/Comments:* Mr. McNeley reiterated that costs are going up for everyone. Could we give some relief on the rate hike? Perhaps undercharge, using a portion of the fund balance to keep the rate hike low.

Mr. Centanni said when there aren't that many big fund balance projects, then we can think of doing that again.

*Questions/Comments:* Re: Salaries and Wages. Why did Salaries and wages go down in FY23? Mr. Centanni said "Projected" is based on positions we have filled. We have several (10) vacancies, leaving money on the table. When budgeting, we budget as if they are filled for the whole year. We are actively looking to fill the vacant positions.

*Comments:* GAC filter future replacement costs/timeline to be determined after we finish fine tuning our system.

*Questions/Comments:* Ms. Roosevelt is concerned about our water system security and asked if we should be studying that?

Mr. Gallagher said we have been. Our SCADA system is not connected to the outside world in anyway.

## C. OPERATIONS

### **Transmission and Distribution:**

*Questions/Comments:* Ms. Roosevelt asked how many lead services were left in the City. Approximately 2,000 are left. On average we replace two lead services every week.

**Watershed:**

*Questions/Comments:* Ms. Roosevelt asked what ESPR was. Mr. Kaplan said the “Environmental Status and Planning Report” referred to DOT’s de-icing plan over a 4- or 5-year cycle.

*Questions/Comments:* Re: Winter St gatehouse repairs:  
Mr. Kaplan said we’ve applied for a grant with the DEP. We are waiting to hear back.

*Questions/Comments:* Ms. Roosevelt commented on the large number of projects in our watershed and her concerns about developments.

*Questions/Comments:* Re: Solar Field: We have filed an appeal with the town of Lexington through our law department in hopes of slowing down that process to give us more time to work on other avenues.

**Water Operations:**

*Questions/Comments:* None

**Engineering:**

*Questions/Comments:* None

**Business:**

*Questions/Comments:* None

**D. ACTION ITEMS**

Ms. Kelly would like to serve as a liaison between the Water Board and History Cambridge.

Ms. Roosevelt moved, and all approved the motion to approve Ms. Kelly as liaison between the Water Board and History Cambridge.

**E. MISCELLANEOUS CORRESPONDENCE AND ITEMS OF INTEREST**

None

**F. NEW BUSINESS**

Ms. Kelly said the historical society/commission of Cambridge has changed its name to History Cambridge. They are trying to create a resource page about indigenous people of Cambridge. Fresh Pond is identified as a site where indigenous people camped. Supposedly, there’s a site near Neville Place that’s never been excavated. History Cambridge has an artifact found in 1913 during excavation work at the pond where a rolling pestle was found. Ms. Kelly asked if the board would be interested in exploring and making available to visitors something about the history of indigenous people connected to the pond. We have a role to play in making that history more available to visitors. Ms. Roosevelt and Mr. McNeley think that’s a great idea. Ms. Kelly would like to serve as a liaison between the water board and History Cambridge to see if we might coordinate something.

This is Mr. McNeley’s last meeting with the Cambridge Water Board. Ms. Roosevelt thanked Mr. McNeley for his great input over the years. “You’ve been a great board member,” Ms. Roosevelt said, “and it’s been a pleasure working with you.”

**G. NEXT MEETING DATES/AGENDA – Meetings via Zoom**

- September 12, 2023: TBA/TBD
- October 10, 2023: TBA/TBD

Ms. Burruss moved, and Ms. Roosevelt seconded the motion to adjourn the Zoom meeting at 6: 22pm. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.