

CAMBRIDGE WATER BOARD

MEETING MINUTES

November 15, 2023

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

This meeting was called to order at 5:09 p.m., those in attendance via *Zoom* were:

Cambridge Water Board (CWB): Ann Roosevelt, Kathleen Kelly, and Benjamas Lendorff.

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

A. MINUTES OF OCTOBER 10, 2023, MEETING

Ms. Lendorff moved, and Ms. Roosevelt seconded the motion to approve the October 10, 2023, minutes as written. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

B. MANAGING DIRECTOR’S REPORT

PFAS Update: We remain at status quo and continue to monitor individual filters. The 3rd round of individual filter results are in; providing us with data to support the in-house filter change out schedule. PFAS results for filters 5 & 6 are between 6 and 7ppt. All combined filters tested at 3.8ppt. The results show that the filters are loading in the order of which we changed them out. The data is pointing in the direction that CDM said it would. Calgon is interested in looking at the pilot study. Now is the perfect time to start changing out those filters which were installed 13 months ago. We are aiming for February to start our first two filter change outs. We will try to get all 6 filters done before the start of summer because we can’t do the change outs when there is high demand. We must spend our ARPA funds before December 2024. Our filter media will be sent out and re-activated. We are looking at operating the plant in different flows and paying close attention to how we are loading the filters with PFAS.

We monitor for quarterly compliance, and we collect combined filter effluent samples for our own in-house sampling. We are aiming to be 3 or 4ppt. We want 4ppt to be our comfort level because this standard will be coming in 2025/2026. Ms. Greenwood-Torelli said she would be happy to do a presentation for the board to demonstrate how we are making decisions going forward.

Now that we have our PFAS testing instrument up and running, we are doing split sampling. Outside labs are very busy because they are testing regular compliance and UCMR5 samples. The turnaround time for outside lab results is taking about a month. We are lucky we have the waiver, and it helps take some of the pressure off. We will share the next compliance sample results with the board and post them online.

Questions/Comments: Once the GAC filter media is regenerated, does it change the molecular structure?

“Regenerated carbon is more efficient than virgin carbon,” said Ms. Greenwood-Torelli. She said there is an open invitation for board members to come and view the filters.

Key Topics: Up Country Watershed Presentation, PFAS

Questions/Comments: Why is carbon more efficient once it is regenerated?
GAC carbon, when new, has some dust in the porous material. After initial use, the heat from the regeneration process removes impurities and opens up the pores further.

Questions/Comments: Do our filters remove cyanotoxins?
Ozone and our filters take care of removing toxins. Aeration lines run 24/7 at Fresh Pond.

Questions/Comments: Are PFAS branches being studied?
The technology to see branches is relatively new and we believe they will eventually develop and set up standards in the future. Right now, they are counted the same.

For our own in-house records, we continue monthly monitoring using combined effluent samples. We are also looking at each individual filter and sample at each one.

Up Country Watershed Presentation- CWD /Source Water Protection Program Updates:

Presented in slide show format by Jamie O'Connell. Topics covered were:
Water Quality Monitor, Site Monitoring and Dam Management, Hazmat and Emergency Response, Natural Resources Restoration and Partnership Development.

The presentation may be viewed at: <https://www.cambridgema.gov/-/media/Files/waterdepartment/waterboardminutes/watershedwaterboardupdate11152023.pdf>

Watershed Technical Supervisor position is a new position. We are in the process of hiring a new watershed management assistant.

C. OPERATIONS

Transmission and Distribution:

Questions/Comments: Re: City Park Irrigation and Community Gardens. It was asked if we have meters at city parks.

Mr. Gallagher said we have a meter, backflow (if needed) and meter transmitting unit (MTU) on every single source where we use water in the city. We are required to account for all water that leaves the plant. DEP recommends the "unaccounted for" water target range as 10% or less. We are at 10.8% of unaccounted water this year as reported on our Sanitary Survey. We were in the 20% range over 10 years ago. Meters are put back in April (The process takes about a month to take them out and put back in).

Watershed:

Questions/Comments: It was asked for a short version of what the Pine Forest, Phase 1 project entails:

Per the Fresh Pond Master Plan, the majority of pine stands on the slope near Huron Avenue will be restored for native plant communities, accessibility, and formalization of some pathways (and removal of others) so that its less impactful in the area. CDM is presenting to the Fresh Pond Advisory Board tomorrow night. Mr. Kaplan will get the Fresh Pond Advisory Board presentation to the waterboard.

Key Topics: Up Country Watershed Presentation, PFAS

Questions/Comments: Little Fresh Pond Shoreline Reconstruction to start in the spring, 2024. It's been about two years since we presented the concept to the board. We had a slog getting through the permitting and had an unsuccessful bid to try to get the work done for the fall. For details, we have a "project page" on our website. (See -Fresh Pond Reservation Projects) Mr. Kaplan will email the link to all board members.

Questions/Comments: Is there concern about the solar array and the potential of metals leeching out?

Mr. Kaplan has not seen research identifying a concern about metal run-off. Mr. Kaplan does not feel it's any more impactful than anything else that we manage in the watershed. Our main objection is their proposed storm water infrastructure in the Zone "A" and the whole site is on a steep slope abutting our land, making it a sensitive area for development. The project is still under review and going through the different aspects of the legal process. No decision has been made.

Questions/Comments Re: Sewage overflow near 80 Hayden Avenue, Lexington- Lexington is making improvements to one of their water pump stations and something happened during their construction causing an overflow for 20 minutes. No sewage reached any of the water resources.

Questions/Comments: Water supply capacity summary: No drought. Hobbs Brook storage went down because we released water. We are building capacity for the wettest time of the year. We have an operating range based on the nature of the weather.

Questions/Comments: Ms. Roosevelt commented positively on the water supply summary graphs.

Questions/Comments: A dead goose was found by a board member by Little Fresh Pond on Veteran's day. With concerns of predation/cause of death, the board member called the main office to report this. The office was closed, and the call was answered by the answering service. The service did not know how to respond to the call. Do we have any protocol in place for such things?

Mr. Kaplan said those calls normally go either to the ranger or animal control. There is a phone number directly for the ranger posted near the ranger station and around the reservation. Mr. Kaplan said if it's a public health hazard, people are encouraged to call animal control but in general calling the Ranger phone (508-562-7605) is the way to go.

Water Operations:

Questions/Comments: The "monthly" average for October was 12.97 MGD. The "daily" maximum was 15.94 MGD. The allowable limit for the average of the "year" is 16.1 MGD.

Engineering:

Questions/Comments: River St. Streetscape Project- This large project involves reconstructing River Street - Digging, adjusting all the utilities, sewer separation and changing the grade of the street to help manage the storm water. River Street is one of the areas in the City that is most at risk from storm surge. A City contractor will be performing a lot of water main work since the street will be opened up. Eversource is also involved. They have been under court order to upgrade their systems and replace their citywide gas mains.

Business:

Questions/Comments: The water fund balance at the October meeting was \$8.7 million dollars. This month/November it is \$5.08 million dollars. What did we spend it on?
Mr. Centanni said the money was previously allocated and was spent on the Scada Project.

D. ACTION ITEMS

None

E. MISCELLANEOUS CORRESPONDENCE AND ITEMS OF INTEREST

None

F. NEW BUSINESS

None

G. NEXT MEETING DATES/AGENDA – Meetings via Zoom

Ms. Roosevelt asked if we could at some point meet in person for a waterboard meeting in the spring. Mr. Gallagher said we could meet in person or a hybrid meeting version thereof. Maybe we could have an in-person meeting once the new board member is elected. We could give them, and any board members' present, a tour. Ms. Roosevelt suggests we aim for March.

- January 2024: TBA/TBD

Ms. Roosevelt moved, and Ms. Lendorff seconded to adjourn the meeting at 6:25 pm. All were in favor of the motion.