

Key Topics: Fresh Pond Reservation Eco-Counter Report, Drought/Water Conservation Update, PFAS Update, and COVID-19 Update

CAMBRIDGE WATER BOARD

MEETING MINUTES

October 12, 2021

As a result of the Walter J. Sullivan Water Purification Facility being closed to the public due to COVID-19, this meeting is available virtually on Zoom. This meeting is being recorded.

This meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m. at 250 Fresh Pond Parkway, in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Those in attendance via *Zoom* were:

Cambridge Water Board (CWB): Ann Roosevelt, Jim Burruss, Kathleen Kelly, Mike McNeley and Jason Marshall

Cambridge Water Department (CWD): Sam Corda, Dave Kaplan, Jamie O'Connell, Anna Van Dreser, Fred Centanni, Krystina McNally, Ed Dowling and Mark Gallagher

A. MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 14, 2020 MEETING

Mr. McNeley moved, and Mr. Burruss seconded the motion to approve the September 14, 2021 minutes as written. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

B. MANAGING DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Covid-19 Update: We are following City protocols; continuing to wear masks in the building and the numbers are dropping slightly.

PFAS6 Update: The pilot study report is completed and has been sent to DEP. We are waiting for their approval on the specific granular activated carbon (GAC) recommended. Bid specifications for the GAC are being worked on with purchasing so that we can procure and install the specific carbon approved by DEP.

Drought /Water Conservation Update: 15" above average to date. Reservoirs are full. No issues noted.

Questions/Comments: Ms. Roosevelt asked if there was a vaccination mandate in the City. Mr. Corda said the City is looking into this.

2020 Fresh Pond Reservation/Eco-Counter Report: Presented by Jamie O'Connell: Please see the link below to see the presentation slides.

https://www.cambridgema.gov/-/media/Files/waterdepartment/waterboardminutes/fpr_census_program_1021.pdf

Eco Counters are set up at all 4 entrances to the reservation as well as two sensors on the perimeter path of Fresh Pond. One additional sensor is located on the bike path. The two sensors at the treatment plant and bike path can differentiate between walkers and bikers. Ms. O'Connell's presentation focused on the bike path and perimeter road sensors; both sensors illustrated a jump in walkers and bikers starting in March 2020. (See graphs) We also have a survey program to compliment the census count and get more refined information on "type of users". Walkers are the largest users, seconded by runners. The eco counters cannot count dogs

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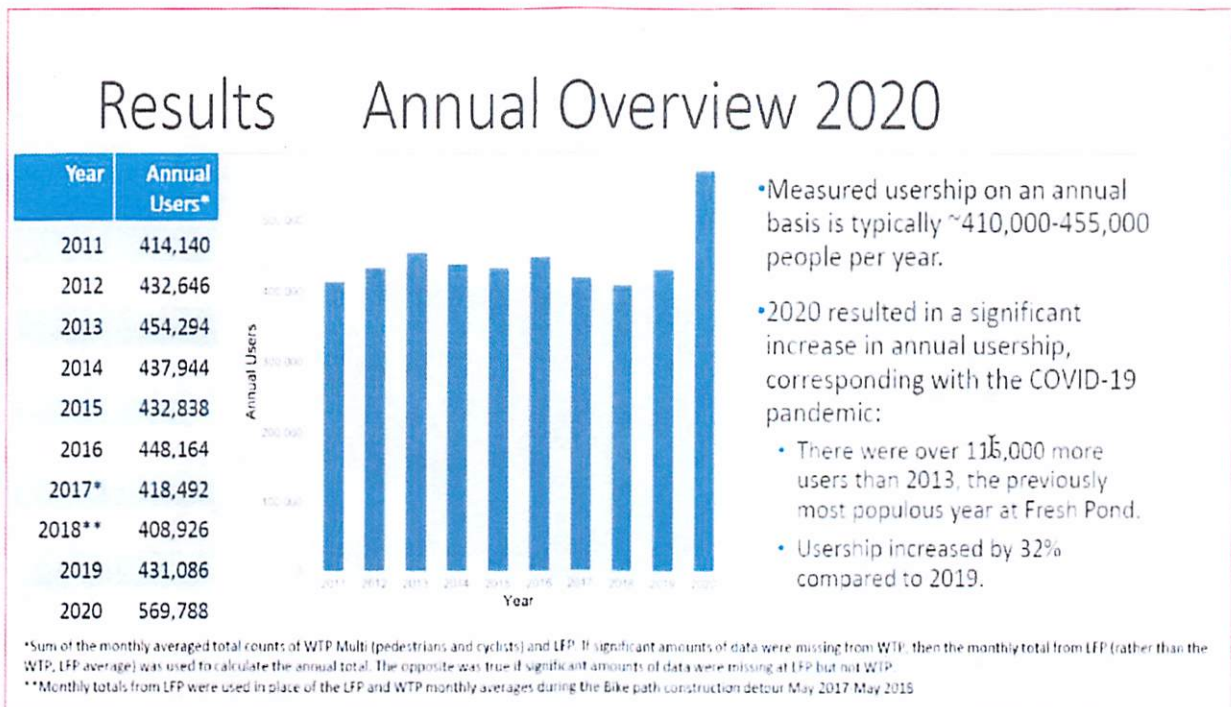
but we have done visual observation/counting/surveys to calibrate how many dogs, people and bicycles there are.

Questions/Comments: Ms. O'Connell said they are going to discontinue the visual data surveys. She noted they are very time consuming, and they haven't seen many variations over the years. Occasional surveys are/will be done to make sure the eco counter sensors are working correctly.

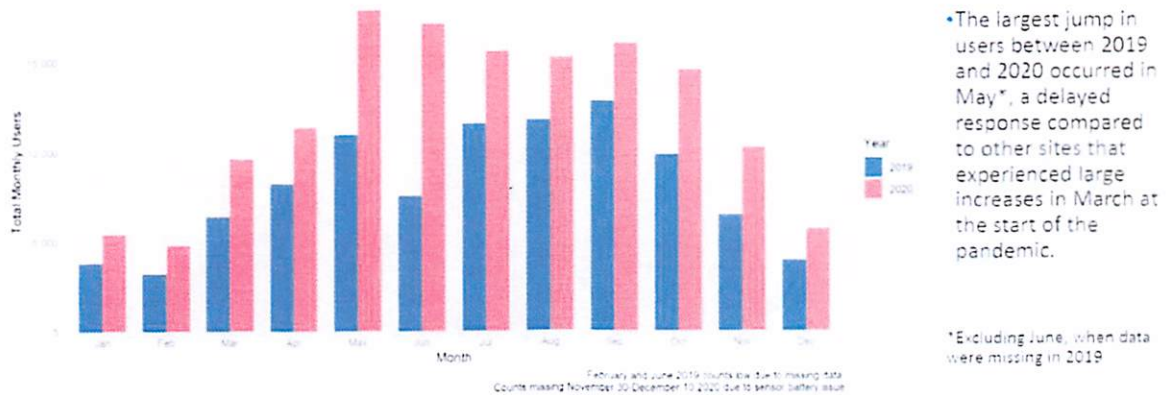
Ms. Roosevelt questioned if there were more dogs noted, and if there was more conflict with pedestrians and cyclists on the bike path. Mr. Kaplan said because of COVID-19 people were competing for more space. Unidirectional signs were put up. We had management strategies to keep the peace. Ms. Roosevelt thinks the unidirectionality on the perimeter road was a good idea. We returned to business as usual in June of 2021.

Mr. Marshall asked if past data/reports have led to specific recommendations. Ms. O'Connell responded that, in theory, the data is there if we ever need it but have not made any management recommendations based on what we found in eco counter survey data, with the exception of some of our day-to-day operations such as when permit applications are requested. Everything we see in our sensors align with what the Rangers tell us.

The board thanked Ms. O'Connell for the thorough report and look forward to a follow-up next year.



Results Bike Path Total Monthly Users 2019 - 2020



C. OPERATIONS

Transmission and Distribution:

Questions/Comments: No Comments

Watershed:

Questions/Comments: Mr. Marshall asked for clarification of the “Notice for Special Investigations”. Mr. Kaplan said we are partnering with the US Geological Survey and Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources (MassDAR) to look at Glyphosate (i.e., Roundup) /breakdown/by products in the source water. We are testing source water to see what, if any, we have. One survey is being conducted at Stoney Brook, (near a railroad with a vegetation management plan) and one at Summer Street that drains from a golf course. There is no real scientific consensus yet at the severity of this chemical. Mr. Dowling said the State has given a lot of the water suppliers waivers for Glyphosate and are not required to test for it. Ms. Roosevelt asked if we are required to test for other pesticides. Mr. Dowling replied that we are. She also asked if the levels in our water from other pesticides are ever over acceptable limits, to which Mr. Dowling replied “No”.

This baseline assessment will show, what, if any, Glyphosate is in the water supply. Mr. Marshall appreciated the proactive efforts on such an important topic and commented that regular reporting back to the board would be helpful. USGS will post results and Mr. Kaplan will pull out these results to highlight at future meetings. The website link is highlighted on the watershed report.

Cycle to the Source: Our Watershed bike tour “Cycle to the Source” was held for the 8th time on October 2, 2021. The tour began at Fresh Pond and ended at the watershed with several informative stops along the way. The tour maximum of 40 riders was easily met. Mr. Kaplan said, “It’s a great program and we were happy to do it again this year.” Ms. Roosevelt said it’s great that you do things like that and suggests the event photos along with a press release be sent to the Cambridge Chronicle. Mr. Kaplan thinks that’s something they could work on at the next event.

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Twin Pond Land Acquisition: We now have the contract with the State and can go ahead and close on the property and start the reimbursement process. We were awarded a \$205,000 grant to purchase the property. Ms. Roosevelt asked if other tracts are on the list to purchase. "Not at this point." replied Mr. Kaplan.

Water Operations:

Questions/Comments: Ms. Roosevelt is interested in long term water usage. She asked why September water production dropped in comparison to August production.

Mr. Corda surmised a partial explanation is, in general, the more rain we get the less water we use. We continue to have above average rainfall. August typically has the highest water use of all months.

Engineering:

Comments: Ms. Roosevelt asked what our 2 new hire interns do. Mr. Dowling replied that we've had two interns consistently for two decades (co-op students from Northeastern University on a rotating 6-month basis). They take a lot of our field data, relating to water mains, hydrants, valves and water services and put it onto our GIS mapping system, update our records and sketches, etc.

Business/Billing:

Comments: Ms. Roosevelt remarked that the Water Fund balance is a little lower but still looks good.

D. ACTION ITEMS

None

E. MISCELLANEOUS CORRESPONDENCE AND ITEMS OF INTEREST

No Comments

F. NEW BUSINESS

None

G. NEXT MEETING DATES/AGENDA – Meetings via Zoom

- November 16, 2021: Approved/PFAS6/Filter Media
- December 14, 2021: TBA/Election of the President
- January 11, 2022: TBA/TBD
- February 8, 2022: TBA/TBD
- March 8, 2022: TBA/TBD

Ms. Kelly moved, and Mr. Burruss seconded the motion to adjourn the Zoom meeting at 6:10pm. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

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