

CAMBRIDGE WATER BOARD

**MEETING MINUTES**

November 10, 2020

*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 5:07 p.m. at 250 Fresh Pond Parkway, in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Those in attendance via *Zoom* were:

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

**Cambridge Water Department (CWD):** Sam Corda, Fred Centanni, Ed Dowling, Dave Kaplan, Mark Gallagher, and Linda Vierboom

**Guests:** Sue Reinert (Cambridge Day)

**A. MINUTES OF OCTOBER 13, 2020 MEETING**

(The October 13, 2020 minutes vote was postponed until the December 15, 2020 meeting.)

**B. MANAGING DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

*Drought/Water Conservation Update:* Six inches of rain in October put Cambridge 1.5 inches above the average. The Secretary of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) reduced the drought conditions from a Level 3 to a Level 1. The CWD web page was updated today based on that information. The City has been using less water since the beginning of the pandemic. FY20 was down, and we continue to see a 3% to 4% reduction in consumption. Mr. Corda sent the City Manager the drought status, which improved significantly, and this information was also sent to Councilor Nolan. I also reaffirmed our commitment to continue our water conservation efforts.

*PFAS Update:* PFAS pilot testing began last week and will last at least fourteen weeks. We sent out 300 gallons to the lab in Washington State. They verified our numbers and started testing last week. The test results are averaging 17ppt (parts per trillion), for the total of the 6 PFAS compounds. Effective in January 2021, test results exceeding 20 ppt of the combination of the 6 compounds will result in action required to be taken by DEP. Results of 10 ppt/or below is our goal. We will be ready to meet the DEP requirements. Based on the granular activated carbon (GAC) pilot testing we will select the best carbon that meets and hopefully exceeds our PFAS goals. Our timetable is to complete the GAC pilot testing ideally in February 2021; submit the results to DEP and obtain approval; put the GAC Replacement Project out to bid and initiate the installation of the carbon by the end of the fiscal Year (June 30, 2021).

*Questions/Comments:* Ms. Roosevelt asked if there was any other mitigation we could do (referencing heavy fire-retardant foam concentrates as a result of fire department trainings at Fresh Pond many years ago.) Mr. Dowling said all of our reservoirs have similar PFAS numbers and the samples around Fresh Pond are very close, with little or no difference. It was noted that PFAS chemicals above 20ppt for Massachusetts, which are found in many household items, are a risk to infants; pregnant and breast-feeding women.

Ms. Roosevelt asked why the PFAS levels in the Quabbin Reservoir were so low. Mr. Dowling said the Quabbin is located in a remote area that is 1,000 times the size of our reservoir.

Mr. McNeley asked what the EPA PFAS recommendations were. Mr. Dowling said Massachusetts is one of the leaders, setting a limit of 20 ppt while the EPA level is set at 70 ppt. Mr. McNeley asked if CWD would meet the 10ppt limit we have set. Mr. Dowling said it will depend on the effectiveness of the granular activated carbon (GAC) that we are now testing. Previous data has shown that GAC can remove between 50% and 90% of the PFAS compounds we are looking to remove.

Mr. Marshall appreciates that the City has a stricter PFAS target and he appreciates CWD's proactive efforts to attempt to reach below the 10ppt level. Mr. Marshall also asked that if we got our levels down to below 10 ppt would we continue to mitigate further below that level. Mr. Corda answered that no further action would be required. It should be noted that PFAS will adsorb onto the carbon and will need to be replaced when the carbon is exhausted - it will adsorb other compounds as well. To maintain the appropriate levels will depend on the results of the pilot testing. We are estimating a two to three-year time at a cost of about \$1.4 million to replace the GAC each time. Replacement approach will be based on the results of the pilot testing data.

*Fresh Pond Reservation Rules and Regulations:* Mr. Kaplan reviewed the latest draft which reflected previous discussions and input. Upon approval, the draft will go to the law department for review.

Mr. Marshall suggested running the "Ice skating on Little Fresh Pond" provision by the Fire Department, as it is pertinent to "rescue". Mr. Marshall also suggested clarification regarding overnight parking restrictions.

Mr. Marshall moved, and Mr. McNeley seconded the motion to approve the amended Fresh Pond Reservation Rules and Regulations as amended for submission to the City solicitor. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

## C. OPERATIONS

### **Transmission and Distribution:**

Comments: Ms. Roosevelt asked if CIPP was being used in any of the water mains currently being rehabilitated. Mr. Gallagher said there was not and will not be.

### **Watershed:**

*Little Fresh Pond Upgrade:* Mr. Burress asked for clarification of the Little Fresh Pond upgrade. Mr. Kaplan said the "Beach" engineered shoreline is failing due to wave action and current design is insufficient. There is some failing of the flexi-pave surface between the logs. Some holes have opened up and there is some movement in the cedar log steps. Mr. Kaplan will be meeting with Fresh Pond Advisory Board to discuss options that will meet the Master Plan requirements. Mr. Kaplan will present these options to the waterboard.

*Water supply summary:* Since the last waterboard meeting the drought level has been updated to level one.

*104 Boston Post Road:* The Housing Appeals Committee (HAC) hearing is scheduled for November 6- 13. The proposed building would be located within 400 feet of the Stony Brook Reservoir. Proposed is a wastewater treatment facility in the basement. The proponents say it is a

contained system and argue that regulations do not apply. CWD contends the project would include an unregulated wastewater treatment facility within our Zone A. Although the treatment facility would not have discharge it has all the same risks associated with a wastewater treatment facility. DEP Zone A Regulations prohibits the installation of a wastewater treatment plant. In representation of the City and water department Mr. Corda will be testifying at the hearing. The HAC outcome will determine whether this project will move forward (40B request). The town of Weston has denied the building. Mr. Corda will ask the law department if there are other steps to take should the HAC agree with the proponent.

*Watershed Letter/Correspondence:* Letter to the Waltham Conservation Commission regarding Request for Determination of Applicability by Floor & Décor for Redevelopment of the Former Coca Cola Bottling Plant at 80 Second Avenue was discussed. Mr. Kaplan said stormwater standards and caution with salt were advised

#### **ENGINEERING:**

*Ms. Roosevelt asked if we had a projection of water use into the future in regard to development.* Mr. Corda said CDM did a water demand projection about 5 years ago. Prior to that there was one done in the early 1990's. Our consumption has dropped since the early 1980's and the trend continues downward. Mr. Corda will share the study with Ms. Roosevelt and will get back to her with a firm answer. This can be discussed at the next water board meeting.

*After the Manager and Operations Reports, the meeting was opened to comments from the public. There were no comments.*

#### **D. ACTION ITEMS**

Mr. Marshall moved, and Mr. McNeley seconded the motion to approve the amended Fresh Pond Reservation Rules and Regulations as amended, for submission to the City solicitor. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

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

No Comments

#### **F. NEW BUSINESS**

None

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

- ~~December 8, 2020:~~ (changed to 12/15) Approved/Election of the President
- January 12, 2021: Approved/TBD (Ms. Watkins, DPW, will attend)
- February 9, 2021: TBA/TBD
- March 9, 2021: TBA/TBD

Mr. Marshall moved, and Ms. Roosevelt seconded the motion to approve the meeting dates through January 2021. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

Mr. McNeley moved, and Ms. Roosevelt seconded the motion to adjourn the Zoom meeting at 6:31 pm. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.