

CAMBRIDGE WATER BOARD

MEETING MINUTES

November 12, 2024

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

This meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m. Those in attendance via *Zoom* were:

Cambridge Water Board (CWB): Ann Roosevelt, Benjamis Lendorff, James Burruss, Tahir Kapoor and Kathleen Kelly.

Cambridge Water Department (CWD): Mark Gallagher, Fred Centanni, Dave Kaplan, Jamie O'Connell, Emily Maynard, Rich Lagerholm and Linda Vierboom.

A. MINUTES OF OCTOBER 8, 2024, MEETING

Mr. Kapoor moved, and Ms. Roosevelt seconded the motion to approve October 8, 2024, minutes as written. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

B. MANAGING DIRECTOR'S REPORT

PFAS Update: Fourth quarter PFAS6 sample results came in as expected at 4ppt. We've scheduled the next carbon change out for January 2025. (Changing two filters in January, two in February and two in March.) This timing will bring us right up to our second quarterly sampling in April, which is where we typically start back at non-detects.

Questions/Comments: The PFAS is 4ppt now. How high do we anticipate the PFAS will go? We expect the numbers to be similar to last year when they were consistent in staying at 4ppt, increasing in smaller increments and never above 6ppt. We've never been to 10ppt which allows us to stay at the quarterly monitoring schedule. Results are consistent, and the carbon is working the way we had anticipated.

Questions/Comments: Do we know where PFAS is coming from? Can we look at the access points? Can we sample from up country reservoirs?

That's our goal and the reason for buying the PFAS analyzer. It will help us to do those investigations. We want to pinpoint where PFAS might be originating from, or where concentrations are higher and see if we can mitigate it somewhere at the source. This will take some time. We are not state certified, but we will get there. The state labs are all backed up and it's expensive for them to test.

Questions/Comments: How far are we from the PFAS testing equipment certification?

The employee in our lab who was heading this up just left and we're short staffed. It will take perhaps half a year until two rounds of performance testing are done. Onsite inspection must be done, and we are working towards 6-8 months after this. In the interim we do have the instrument, and although we can't use those results from a regulatory compliance standpoint, we are using it as a check.

Questions/Comments: The test method is reproduceable, verified and validated.

The State certified lab and Mass DEP does QAQC on it for validation purposes. In addition to our regulatory sampling, we continue to take monthly non-regulatory samples from the combined filter effluent. We monitor all the time even though we are required to do only quarterly monitoring.

We are part of a nationwide class action suit against companies that produced/manufactured PFAS chemicals. That litigation is in process. These things can take quite a long time.

Drought: We had been in a mild Level 1 drought since October 11th. Currently we are in level 3/Critical. That triggers some responses from us. We must follow the state drought level and water restrictions regulating outdoor water usage. All non-essential outdoor water usage is banned for levels 3 and 4. This information is on our website. Some of our largest water consumers such as the colleges have been personally notified

The Water Management Program regulations, effective January 20, 2023, define nonessential outdoor water use as every use that is not required for essential purposes (310 CMR 36.02).

NONESSENTIAL OUTDOOR WATER USE RESTRICTIONS

State Drought Plan	Nonessential Outdoor Water-Use Restrictions
Level 1-Mild	1 day per week watering, before 9 a.m. or after 5 p.m.
Level 2-Significant	Hand-held hoses or watering cans only, before 9 a.m. or after 5 p.m.
Level 3-Critical	Ban on all nonessential outdoor water use
Level 4- Emergency	Ban on all nonessential outdoor water use

Fortunately, our water demand is dropping off and most irrigation systems are not in use due to freezing nighttime temperatures. This time of year, we average approximately 10MGPD (million gallons per day) and by January we typically average below 9MGPD. We are still well below our water withdrawal registration limit which is 16.2MGPD (average).

Questions/Comments: Construction sites are exempt from restrictions but are asked to be vigilant and check for water waste.

The Water Demand Study is done. It goes out to the year 2050. Results will be presented to the board in January or February. The board will receive a full copy of the demand study ahead of time.

Questions/Comments: Ms. Roosevelt thinks the waterboard has to be involved with this (drought) and suggests thinking about what the board could do. She said we should keep an eye on it right now and if the drought becomes an emergency situation we should reconvene. Ms. Lendorff feels it's the responsibility of the board to alert the City. Ms. Kelly feels we should acknowledge the change to the water restriction regulations.

Mr. Gallagher said we emailed the city council early last week to alert of the mild drought and alerted that if we didn't get significant rain in the next 30-days we may have to supplement our water with MWRA water.

The EPA guidelines set a goal for residential daily water use at 65 gallons per person per capita per day. Cambridge, for more than a decade, has been below 45 daily gallons per person per capita per day. We are doing a good job of being waterwise in Cambridge. Since the 1970's our average daily usage has gone down and has started to bottom out.

New 2029 Federal Regulations: The new EPA Federal PFAS Standard regulations were passed. These won't take full effect until 2029. If these regulations were passed and currently in place, we would be in full compliance.

Lead Service Replacement: EPA Lead and Copper Rule Revisions (LCRR) initiated by the EPA and the federal government.

Municipalities nationwide have until 2027 to have a lead service replacement plan in place. The federal government will give until 2037 to get all lead services out of distribution systems to be in full compliance with federal law. In addition, Mass DEP has required all Massachusetts municipalities to have their service line inventory complete and know where all their lead services are by October 16, 2024, and mail notifications to every property that has lead, galvanized needing replacement or unknown service by November 16th. As a result, we are receiving many inquiries from residents. Most of our galvanized service lines are lead lined. This prevented them from rusting and was considered the gold standard back in the day. If unknown they are given instructions on how to contact the water department so we can identify the material type of the unknowns.

Cambridge is fortunate that we have our own State certified lab and we offer free lead testing to all Cambridge residents. Lead sample kits are kept in the foyer of the front lobby. We can deliver sample kits if necessary. Results usually take 2-3 weeks.

Questions/Comments: What are landlords supposed to do, particularly if children live there? Fortunately, Cambridge has had a lead service replacement plan in place since the 1990's. There are approximately 2,100 lead services now (80% complete) from the original 11,000 lead services. Mr. Gallagher said we are preparing for responses and are prepared to schedule replacements.

Per City ordinance, property owners own the water service from the meter all the way out to the water main. They are responsible for installing, maintaining and repairing their service at their expense. In the 1990's the water department opted to expedite the removal of lead and opted to start replacing the lead service portion in the public right of way at our expense and splitting the cost with the property owner. Typically, we absorb about 80% of a lead service renewal cost. Replacement turnaround time can be two weeks for motivated homeowners.

The lead doesn't come from the water and often comes from the internal plumbing more so than from the water service. Water coming out of the plant has a PH of 9.2 which prevents lead and copper from leaching out of the pipe. Cambridge is well below what the future federal regulation will require.

If we are doing a watermain replacement project scheduled through DPW chapter 90 or from our internal list of mains that need to be replaced, the water department will cover the complete cost of replacing it all the way to the meter. We have a list of main replacement addresses and timelines which property owners may coordinate with.

We have submitted applications and asked for 6.2 million in SRF (State Revolving Fund) funding. This equates to 1,600 lead replacements. SRF are zero percent interest loans and, sometimes based on the number of applicants, there is partial and even full loan forgiveness in the form of a grant. Cambridge is unique in that property owners own the service all the way to the watermain. We are not responsible for replacing them. We are responsible to "identify lead" and work with property owners in helping by any means we can to reduce the costs to help get the lead services out. If we do the outside work replacing the water line within the public right of way from the water main to the property line, and if the homeowners replace the section from the property line to the meter at the same time, typically their contractor only needs to break the existing service line free from the foundation wall/disconnect it and connect copper tubing to the old line as it is pulled out by the water department.

Questions/Comments: Ms. Lendorff asked for an Enbridge/Algonquin summary.

Mr. Kaplan said they first proposed taking a large portion of our land. In the end, they scaled down their proposal to a smaller portion. We worked with them to minimize their impact and to restore the land after construction. A settlement was reached, and construction has begun. They will be paying for restoration. More information is available on the CWD website.

Questions/Comments: Re: Phosphorus Control Plan (Waltham). Where does phosphorous originate from?

There is no single source/non-point source. It comes from development and organic matter.

C. OPERATIONS

Transmission and Distribution:

No comments

Watershed:

Questions/Comments: Re: 604B Grant opportunity for Chloride Pollution at Hobbs Brook.

Mr. Kaplan said we applied through the State/DEP to develop a watershed plan to reduce chloride and develop strategies that includes commercial lands and not just state and municipal roadways.

Questions/Comments: 104 Boston Post Road (Weston) Housing Appeals Committee (HAC) hearings concluded in April 2021. The HAC issued a decision on June 22, 2023, to overturn the Weston Zoning Board of Appeals denial of a comprehensive permit. CWD is supporting the Law Department as the case moves through litigation. No updates.

Questions/Comments: Re: 254 Cambridge Turnpike, Lincoln. Dumping on CWD property. A neighbor, without a wetlands permit, was encroaching on our land while doing some clearing.

Water Operations:

No comments

Engineering:

No comments

Business:

Questions/Comments: The water fund balance is \$6.2 million.

Questions/Comments: Water billing amounts may fluctuate due to quarterly sewer abatement accounts.

D. ACTION ITEMS

None

E. MISCELLANEOUS CORRESPONDENCE AND ITEMS OF INTEREST

None

F. NEW BUSINESS

None

G. NEXT MEETING DATES/AGENDA – Meetings via Zoom

- December 10, 2024: Approved/TBD- Election of the Water Board President

Ms. Kelly moved, and Ms. Lendorff seconded the motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:26 pm. All were in favor of the motion.