

CAMBRIDGE WATER BOARD

**MEETING MINUTES**  
March 11, 2015

This meeting was called to order at 5:01 p.m. at 250 Fresh Pond Parkway in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Those in attendance were:

**Cambridge Water Board (CWB):** James Tanner, James Burruss, Richard Johnson and Phil Weinberg (phone)

**Cambridge Water Department (CWD):** Sam Corda, Tim MacDonald, Fred Centanni, Mark Gallagher and Linda Vierboom

**A. MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 11, 2015 MEETING**

Mr. Burruss moved and Mr. Tanner seconded the motion to approve the February 11, 2015 minutes as written. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

**B. MANAGING DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

*Snow/Leak Update:* Mr. Gallagher reported that the winter season has been a very difficult one because of record snowfalls and extreme cold temperatures. This is exacerbated by having a majority of the snow fall within a very short period of time. The result is having no place to put the snow – we now are hauling the snow to Allston since all of the “snow storage” spaces in Cambridge are full.

Mr. Gallagher distributed a “Yearly Leak Comparison by Month” chart to the Water Board members. The comparison included the years since he began working here, from 2009 until present, and indicated that January has always been the busiest month for leaks. Change in temperature is a common reason for failure/cracks in cast iron pipe. In recent years the increase in the number of leaks can be attributed to major construction and sewer separation projects. Over the years, the number of leaks is following a downward trend. The plan has been to increase funding in the capital budget for pipe replacement, so that troubled areas can have older cast iron pipe replaced. The sewer separation project has significantly helped with upgrading old cast iron pipes and renewing old “lead” water services. A list of priority areas for water main replacement are matched with DPW projects since it makes sense to replace pipes when the road is open for the sewer separation, chapter 90 and other road reconstruction projects.

*General Questions from the Board:* Mr. Johnson asked if all pipe failures are the result of cracks. Mr. Gallagher explained that contractors sometimes mistakenly “hit” a water service or main in error, while other times valves have failed. In summary nine out of ten times, however, the failure is related to a cast iron pipe cracking due to a temperature excursion stressing the pipe.

*Water System Security:* Water Board members met in the control room where Mr. Centanni gave a demonstration of the upgraded security system. The upgrade includes new software and cameras. The idea to upgrade security cameras came as a result of the theft of exterior copper gutters a few years ago. The new exterior cameras have better “night vision” and the capability to record 360 degree views versus camera panning. Cameras can be viewed live and all is recorded. Cameras have also been installed at some of our remote sites such as Payson Park, Watershed Barn and Stony Brook and Hobbs Brook Reservoir gatehouses. The benefits of cameras at our remote sites is that they allow us to verify alarms and observe outside conditions.

*After viewing the security camera feeds, Water Board members reconvened in the conference room. Mr. Corda continued the security briefing.* In the 2002/2003 time frame, the Water Department received a Vulnerability Assessment grant from the EPA. Based on priorities established in the assessment Payson Park, the Treatment Plant and other key facilities were hardened with the intent of deterring potential criminal activity. Multiple layers of security take time to breach and this will allow time to call the police for assistance. Every exterior glass window on the main facility has blast film which is designed to protect employees. The pump room, chemical feed area and stock room have opaque blast film. Security gates have been installed to prevent access to the vehicle storage area and back entry to the treatment facility during off hours. The standoff distance for parked cars has also been increased. More entry card readers have been installed to limit access to secure areas of the plant. There is a man-down alarm used to protect operators that may have been hurt on the job – the alarm notifies the fire department for search and rescue. The Fire Department has trained in the facility to enter and find a stranded operator.

The vulnerability assessment concluded that there is a lot of flexibility to address many different scenarios within the Cambridge Water System. The treatment facility is robust in terms of handling many different types of water borne contaminants and we have multiple connections to the MWRA water supply system. Finally, it is extremely difficult if not impossible to contaminate a reservoir and we have many detection systems in place for continuous water quality monitoring of both our raw and finished water.

We conduct annual emergency response training in conjunction with the MWRA. We also perform our own training and update our emergency response plans and we are required to have security threat action plans in place.

*General Questions from the Board:* It was asked how the SCADA system is connected to the outside. Mr. Centanni stated that there are no external connections to the SCADA system.

Mr. Burruss asked what the cost was for the blast and opaque films. Mr. Corda said the cost was about \$75,000 and we were able to obtain a grant through the Fire Department for this work.

## C. OPERATIONS

### **Transmission and Distribution:**

The Trowbridge Street work is being put on hold because of other project priorities.

### **Water Operations:**

No Comments

### **Watershed:**

*New Hire:* A new watershed supervisor has been hired from a large pool of outstanding candidates. Ms. Jamie O'Connell will work part time until she finishes her graduate degree from the Yale School of Forestry in June.

*Sewer Leak Event:* A manhole overflowed on Trapelo Road in Waltham yesterday about one thousand feet from the Hobbs Brook Reservoir. Mr. Kaplan was on the scene almost immediately. The overflow, caused by blockage in the line, was intermittently disinfected during the overflow duration and was repaired by 4 pm. The City of Waltham was responsible for cleanup with assistance from MWRA. Today's follow-up site visit showed the area to be clean. The standard water quality testing at Hobbs will be performed this week. The event was handled and addressed properly and there is no need for further action.

**Business:**

When asked by Mr. Tanner about the trend in water consumption, Mr. Corda said that consumption has been gradually decreasing over the past several years and our consultant is completing the demand projection in the very near future which will reflect that decrease.

**Engineering Division:**

No comments

**D. ACTION ITEMS**

29<sup>th</sup> Annual City Run: Mr. Johnson moved and Mr. Tanner seconded the motion to approve the application for the 29<sup>th</sup> Annual City Run. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

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

*In response to the February 19, 2015 Memo: Corda to Department Staff, Significant Efforts – Above and Beyond the Call of Duty.* The Water Board would like it on record that they also add their thanks.

**F. NEW BUSINESS**

None

Mr. Burruss moved and Mr. Johnson seconded the motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:23 p.m. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

**G. NEXT MEETING DATES /TOPICS**

- April 8, 2015- Approved/Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment
- May 13, 2015 – Approved/Fresh Pond Reservation walkabout
- June 10, 2015 – TBA/FY2016 Water Department Budget
- September 9, 2015 – TBA/TBD
- October 14, 2015 – TBA/TBD

Minutes approved by vote of the Board.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Ann C. Roosevelt, President

Date: \_\_\_\_\_