



COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

Town of Southwick

454 COLLEGE HIGHWAY SOUTHWICK, MA 01077

Department of Public Works- Water Division

Telephone (413) 569-6772 Fax (413) 569-5001

Water Commissioners Meeting Minutes

Southwick Town Hall- Conference Room 2 – Hybrid Meeting

Thursday February 2, 2023 at 6:00 pm

Members in Attendance: Edward Johnson, Chairman

Dave Meczywor, Commissioner

John Cain, Commissioner (Present at 6:01pm)

Others Present:

Randy Brown, DPW Director

Christie Myette, DPW Office Manager

Keven Soper, Water Foreman

Guests:

Spiros Zanolliadis, 1 Partridge Lane

John Whalley, 38 Foster Road

Mike Sheil, 33 Ranch Club Road

Diane Gale, 5 Point Grove Road*

*= Remote Attendance

The meeting was recorded.

The meeting of the Board of Water Commissioners was called to order at 6:00pm.

Public Comments: NONE

Review of the December 15, 2022 Water Commissioners Meeting Minutes.

*A **MOTION** was made by Dave Meczywor to accept the December 15, 2022 Meeting Minutes. This was seconded by Edward Johnson.*

MOTION PASSED

Roll Call Vote:

Edward Johnson: Yes

Dave Meczywor: Yes

John Cain: - Was not yet present for

vote.

Five Elderly Rate Applications were presented to the Water Commissioners. These applicants met all the necessary requirements.

*A **MOTION** was made by Dave Meczywor to accept the Elderly Rate Application for the five applicants who meet all necessary requirements. This was seconded by John Cain.*

MOTION PASSED

Roll Call Vote:

Edward Johnson: Yes

Dave Meczywor: Yes

John Cain: Yes

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

1. MassDEP and DCR continued developing a Water Needs Survey to identify the Town's water needs over the next 10 years. Randy and Jon Goddard (Town Planner) had a conference call with DCR staff on 1/19 to continue the discussions of potential growth over the next few years. This discussion is ongoing.
2. MassDEP revised the Water Management Act regulations which became effecting 1/20. For the time being, there will be no impacts to Southwick. However, all registered water system will be required to implement water use restrictions during periods of drought declarations.
3. The latest PFAS samples were collected on 1/17 for Well 1. The results were No Detect. Southwick Water will continue to sample for PFAS at both Wells 1 and 2 on a yearly basis. Sample results are posted on the Town website.
4. On 1/27, Water Department crews repaired water leaks on Sam West Road and Berkshire Avenue.
5. Noah Lydiard reached to DPW as a representative of the Hankin Property at 49 Foster Road. The family is interested in selling the land and asked whether the Water Department is interested in purchasing the property as it is near the well field.
6. There is a commercial subdivision proposed for 686 College Highway with access off Tannery Road. The Planning Board will open a hearing for a Special Permit later in February. DPW provided comments relative to the proposed water connections.
7. Randy developed the blurb for the 2022 Annual Town Report.
8. Emil Pustea of Sigma Water Systems continues to perform inspections at backflow devices.

A Work Order Summary was provided to the Water Commissioners.

APPOINTMENTS

6:07pm 581 College Highway Abatement

This abatement was discussed at the last meeting but the applicant was not present to discuss the abatement with the Commissioners. At that time the abatement application was tabled until the next meeting. Spiros Zantouliadis was present to discuss the abatement with the board. The abatement is being requested as this was an intermittent leak in a toilet at a rental property. The property owner was not aware of the leak until the bill was issued. The approximate amount leaked was calculated at 28,970 gallons. A short discussion and the following motion took place.

A **MOTION** was made by John Cain to abate \$197.00 from the water portion of the bill. This was seconded by Dave Meczywor.

MOTION PASSED

Roll Call Vote:

Edward Johnson: Yes

Dave Meczywor: Yes

John Cain: Yes

OLD BUSINESS

NONE

NEW BUSINESS CONTINUED

WHALLEY PARK-SPRAY PARK

John Whalley & Mike Sheil from Park and Rec were present for this discussion with the Water Commissioners about a proposed spray park to be located at Whalley Park. Randy Brown gave a brief overview that an application for CPC funding for this spray park was brought to the CPC Committee. There was no communication about this to Randy Brown or anyone else in the Water Department prior to Cindy Sullivan, Director of Park & Rec seeking information for the CPC application. Portions of the CPC application were provided to the Board for review. The proposed water use for this spray park is estimated at 63 gallons per minute, estimating it would run for 5 hours per day for a total of 18,900 gallons per day. The spray park would be open for 92 days of the year totaling about 1.74 million gallons per year. With these numbers the spray park would be one of it not the largest water user in Town. Commissioner John Cain asked if the spray park would be exempt from the water restrictions. Randy Brown had communicated with DEP about this and yes it would be exempt from any water restrictions.

John Whalley addressed the estimated water use that was on the CPC application saying that you can't tell what the usage is going to be because if there is a problem the system is programmable. If no one is there no water will be used. The 63 gallons per minute it with all the pieces running at the same time. This can be controlled with programming. John Whalley continued that Park and Rec feeling is that if you go to the park and it 92 degrees out there is not a soul at the park. They feel that this would add to the value and usage of the park. John Whalley said if the Water Department gives an amount of water that can be used this can be controlled to not go over that given amount and if there is a restriction and it gets too bad it can be shut off. Commissioner John Cain and Ed Johnson had concerns with telling residents they cannot water their lawns but that a spray park that is funded with tax payer money is allowed to run. Mike Sheil of Park and Rec said that a water restriction is not guaranteed each year and last year it was an anomaly the year prior we had plenty of water. The spray park would be beneficial to those who have children home during the summer and those looking to do something that would not cost them anything. Park and Rec is willing to work with the Water Department when it comes to water restrictions. Since 2016 we have implemented water restrictions every year except one.

Commissioner John Cain asked if there was any option for a well. There is a well on the property but for health and safety reasons they cannot put unchlorinated water into the spray park.

John Whalley then asked if the pipeline that runs from Westfield to Tannery Road has been completed. Randy Brown responded stating that yes it has been completed and has been in use. The issue was not supplying the water to the park it would be taking the water from the permit away from the existing customers.

Chairman Edward Johnson asked why this was not brought to the Water Commissioners prior to the CPC application this was the first time the Board of Water Commissioners have heard about this project. John Whalley responded with they are here now to discuss. While wrapping up the discussion Randy Brown asked what the plan was moving forward and some concrete numbers in usage for the spray park and how the chlorinated water will be managed once it goes through the spray park. John Whalley said that there are three possibilities one is a big septic system but won't know how much water the park will use until it's up and running. John Whalley said that

Agawam has 2 and Westfield has 3 spray parks. Randy Brown asked if John Whalley knew how much water the park in Westfield uses. He did not. Randy Brown has spoken with Westfield and their biggest spray park in Westfield uses 10 million gallons of water per year which is four times the amount that was included in the application. The proposed spray park at Whalley Park is bigger than that one. The Water Commissioners are concerned that 1 to 10 million gallons is a lot to pass on to our rate payers who we just had to raise rates who are subject to these restrictions and now to use 10 million gallons of water for a spray park.

Randy Brown asked if Park and Rec has spoken with the Board of Health or any other state agency about how to manage the water after it goes through the spray park. John Whalley said that Rob Levesque has been in contact with them about the septic system and if the water has to be treated or if it can be collected and used for alternate means such as irrigation. Randy Brown also asked if the water has to be dechlorinated before such uses. John Whalley said no a sign would have to be posted stating that this is reused water. Keven Soper said that when we flush hydrants we need to dechlorinate the water that is discharged when flushing per regulations. Randy Brown has spoken with Board of Health who has reached out to the Department of Public Health (DPH) and suggested the Park and Rec speak with both of those entities in regards to the regulations sooner than later. Mass DPH had a regulation if you are discharging more than 10,000 gallons per day then you need to go through a Ground Water Discharge Permit process and with the numbers provided you will exceed that. With that process it would be required to dechlorinate the water before you use it or discharge it into the ground which would impact your budget for the project. Randy Brown went on to state that per the regulations a backflow device would be required where the water come out of the system to a meter in a meter pit through a backflow then through the spray park then dechlorinate it then to either a groundwater injection system or use. That would be the process that water would have to follow per DPH regulations which was not accounted for in the estimate that we have seen.

Commissioner Dave Meczywor said that the spray park would be of value to the town and we should be in discussions as we go further possibly coming up with a trigger such as a level 2 drought to shut down the spray park or limit the days a policy can be put into place.

Water Foreman Keven Soper asked if the spray park has already been designed. John Whalley responded by saying yes it is. Keven Soper then said that if it's designed there should be numbers provided on the gallons per minute. John Whalley said that it should be a quarter of the numbers provided if the spray park is programmed properly.

The conversation was wrapped up by Randy Brown asking John Whalley and Mike Sheil what their next steps are. They are going to work to find out what to do with the water once it goes through the spray park because at this time they don't have a plan for that. Park and Rec will come back to the Water Commissioners with a plan as the project progresses.

HANKIN PROPERTY

This is a property that has come before the Board about 7 years ago. This piece of land with an address of 49 Foster Road which is located behind Lexington Circle was owned by George Hankin who passed away about 10 years ago. His three children inherited this property and are now looking to sell it. A map of the slightly less than 42 acre parcel was provided to the Commissioners. The question to the Water Commissioners is are they interested in purchasing this property which back the Town land that the wells are on. A short discussion took place about funding options such as possible grants and uses for the land. It was also suggested by Dave Meczywor that the

owners get a market evaluation so we know what the property is worth. It won't cost them anything and will give us a better idea.

FY2024 BUDGET

A packet of the proposed budget was given to the Board for review. Randy Brown did not make many changes from last year. The changes are as follows:

- Advertisements increase from \$1,050 to \$1,300 due to increase in CCR publishing.
- City of Springfield increase \$50,000 to \$65,000 due to rate increase from SWSC.
- Printing Bills increase from \$3,000 to \$4,500 due to HAA5 notification printing.
- Leak Detection increase from \$0 to \$8,000 for Leak Detection which is done every 3 years.
- Hydrant Replacements increase from \$0 to \$20,000 this was cut last year but needs to be put back in.
- SCADA Improvements kept the same from last year at \$10,000.
- New request of \$35,000 to refurbish Well # 2.

The budget meetings are set to occur in March.

Vote to approve FY2024 budget was taken later on in the meeting.

METER CHARGES

Recently the cost of the meter has been going up and we need to adjust our meter charge to account for the cost of a meter over its usable life. Two charts were provided to the Water Commissioners showing the old cost of a meter, new cost of a meter and the percentage of the increase and another showing the current meter charge which is billed twice a year as a meter rental fee and the proposed new charge. The new proposed charge was determined by dividing the cost of the meter yearly over its proposed usable life and divided in half which is billed twice a year.

A MOTION was made by Dave Meczywor to increase the meter charges as outlined in the "Proposed Charge" portion of the handout. Handout reads as follows:

Meter Charge		
	Current Charge	Proposed Charge
5/8" x 3/4"	4.00	5.00
3/4"	4.00	5.00
1"	5.50	7.00
1 1/2"	35.00	40.00
2"	40.00	46.00
3"	50.00	58.00
4"	87.00	93.00
6"	152.00	282.00

This was seconded by John Cain.

MOTION PASSED

Roll Call Vote:

Edward Johnson: Yes

Dave Meczywor: Yes

John Cain: Yes

VOTE FOR THE FY2024 BUDGET

A **MOTION** was made by John Cain to recommend the FY2024 Budget. This was seconded by Dave Meczywor.

MOTION PASSED

Roll Call Vote:

Edward Johnson: Yes

Dave Meczywor: Yes

John Cain: Yes

Dave Meczywor made a **MOTION TO ADJOURN** this was seconded by John Cain the meeting was adjourned at 7:06 pm.

Roll Call Vote:

Edward Johnson: Yes

Dave Meczywor: Yes

John Cain: Yes

MEETING ADJOURNED

Respectfully Submitted By,

Christie Myette
DPW Office Manager

Ed Johnson, Chairman

David Meczywor

John Cain