

CAMBRIDGE WATER BOARD

MEETING MINUTES

November 15, 2022

Due to COVID-19, this meeting is available virtually on Zoom. This meeting is being recorded.

This meeting was called to order at 5:04 p.m., those in attendance via *Zoom* were:

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

Cambridge Water Department (CWD): Sam Corda, Krystyna McNally, Fred Centanni, Julie Greenwood-Torelli, Jamie O'Connell, Dave Kaplan and Mark Gallagher

Guests: Sam Zimmerman and Rachel H.

A. MINUTES OF OCTOBER 11, 2022, MEETING

Ms. Kelly moved, and Mr. McNeley seconded the motion to approve the October 11, 2022, minutes as amended. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

B. MANAGING DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Proposal to Allow Parking Pass for Cambridge Residents Who Don't Own a Vehicle: Rachel H. appeared before the Board. She is a Cambridge resident who enjoys spending time at Fresh Pond Reservation. Because she does not own a car; she began renting short term cars such as Zip Cars during the COVID pandemic. Without a City resident parking sticker on the short-term rentals, she could not legally park at Fresh Pond and had to park in other areas. Rachel is hoping the board will consider those Cambridge residents who don't own cars but still want to access parking and enjoy Fresh Pond.

The Board acknowledges the modality of transportation has changed over the years. Ms. Roosevelt said there is a discussion about cars on the Cambridge city website where it's noted that Car share cars, if specified on the vehicle as Zip car and other short term car company, should not be given a ticket in places like Fresh Pond.

Mr. Corda proposes that we do a one-year pilot and see how it goes. Residents of Cambridge who can prove with two pieces of information that they are residents would receive a "hang tag" or "parking pass" to legally park at Fresh Pond Reservation. After a year we would re-evaluate the parking pilot program and report back to the Water Board. Mr. Kaplan is curious how this won't lead to passing of tags to non-residents and also about enforcement. Ms. Roosevelt thinks the idea of the pilot program is a good one. Mr. Corda said we could put together an agreement where the person pledges/signs to use it for themselves and their family only. Ms. Kelly suggested there might be a way to streamline using electronic online approval, possibly with expiration dates on the tag, thus giving a bit more control.

Ms. Roosevelt is interested in how many requests we get and feels the volume will focus what our position will be at the end of the pilot program. Mr. McNeley asked if we would consider a one per household permit. The board agrees they want to accommodate Rachel and residents like her. As a user, Rachel offered to provide feedback. Mr. Kaplan will try to have more information at the next meeting.

Key Topics: Distribution System, Drought, PFAS6 & Filter Media Updates

Ms. Roosevelt moved, and Mr. McNeley seconded the motion to approve the water department's developing a parking permit pilot program at Fresh Pond Reservation for residents who do not own cars. This draft program would be brought to the Water Board for review and approval before implementation. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

Ms. Roosevelt would like Mr. Kaplan to communicate ideas with the board as his department moves along with the process. After Mr. Kaplan has his staff meeting, she would like to meet with Mr. Kaplan and his team at a sub-committee before the next board meeting when a vote will be made. Ms. Roosevelt and Mr. McNeley have agreed to be on the sub-committee. Mr. Corda agrees with this approach.

Drought /Water Conservation Update: Good news. Yesterday, MassDEP reduced the drought level from level two to a level one. We have about 60% storage capacity in our reservoirs. We are at a little under 6" of rain deficit for the calendar year.

Questions/Comments: None

PFAS6 and Filter Media Update: Water Operations Director, Julie Greenwood-Torelli said we had a successful changeout of the carbon filter media on the first two filters (#5 and 6). Although the filter removal process was uniquely challenging, the removals went as expected. The innovative changeout was truly a team effort. PFAS collection samples were taken. The new carbon in filters 5 and 6 each tested at "not detected" levels for PFAS6. With the two new carbon media filters, and four old filters, the PFAS6 level was 2.92 ppt which is comparable to the MWRA PFAS levels. MassDEP would consider these levels (2.92 PPT) officially as "not-detected" – below the Minimum Detection Limit (MDL) from a regulatory perspective.

The next filter media removals, for filters #1 and 2 are scheduled for November 28th with the installation of the new filter media the week of December 5th. We are discussing going back online this week, Thursday, November 17th. We are working on messaging and FAQs to get information out to residents.

Questions/Comments: Working with city manager's office. The news release draft has been reviewed and we are working on a new set of FAQs which we expect to be completed tomorrow. DEP is very happy with what we have done and can't wait until we get back online and verify how well the new filter media works for removing PFAS. We will be the first water department to replace filter media in an existing facility to strictly deal with PFAS issues. With the new Granular Activated Carbon (GAC), there are other benefits of adsorption; we will be removing other materials as well. MassDEP and the City have been extremely supportive. Ms. Greenwood-Torelli said the treatment plant system was designed to be resilient with redundancy and flexibility. We have lab staff that are ready to take samples at a moment's notice. We have excellent, high-quality water.

Mr. Gallagher said other cities and towns are reaching out to us because they are having PFAS difficulties. We've set a gold standard. MassDEP is happy because we are responding to these issues and showing that PFAS can be successfully removed.

Key Topics: Distribution System, Drought, PFAS6 & Filter Media Updates

Questions/Comments: Ms. Roosevelt thanked the team. She would love for Ms. Greenwood-Torelli to brief the city councilors. Mr. Corda met with the Acting Deputy City Manager and the City Communications Director for public outreach. CWD might do some cable videos.

Questions/Comments: Mr. Burruss asked what the MWRA PFAS levels were when we were on their water. Ms. Greenwood-Torelli said MWRA water tested at 3.52 ppt which is also considered “not detected” by MassDEP Regulation.

C. OPERATIONS

Cambridge Water Quality: In Slide Format as presented by Julie Greenwood-Torelli. You may view this presentation at:

<https://www.cambridgema.gov/Water/wateroperationsdivision/waterchemistryinformation/presentationhealthenvironmentcommittee10122022>

PFAS is a water repellent used in many everyday products such as stain & water resistance treatments, nonstick cookware, waterproof apparel, cleaning products, firefighting foams, takeout food containers, carpets and textiles. A lot of cosmetics such as waterproof makeup and mascara have PFAS in them. There are over 12,000 PFAS compounds. In other countries they aren't regulated. This is truly a global issue.

The PFAS detection limit set by Mass DEP is two (2) parts per trillion (ppt). One part per trillion is the equivalent to one single drop of water in twenty Olympic size swimming pools. At this time, the ability/instruments to test down at “parts per quadrillion” is not there.

Questions/Comments: Ms. Roosevelt mentioned the old tower where firefighters would train many years ago near Fresh Pond. Mr. Gallagher said there were different types of foam that were used back then, and they may have been used at Fresh Pond. The worst foams were used at airstrips. Fresh Pond was tested for PFAS at 3 different locations with no elevated PFAS levels found.

Future MassDEP Regulations may include treatment techniques. We are pursuing purchasing an instrument for “in house” PFAS testing. If approved this will allow us to test for PFAS in our reservoirs to possibly determine the source/sources of PFAS and in process control to understand the removal of PFAS.

Hot Water Systems: Water has a fingerprint. Need to design your hot water system based on water chemistry. Pay attention to manufacturers recommendations for systems in your house. Clean your hot water heater at least annually.

Transmission and Distribution:

Questions/Comments: None

Watershed:

Questions/Comments: It was commented that the online Source Quality Water Report Live Dashboard looks great.

Key Topics: Distribution System, Drought, PFAS6 & Filter Media Updates

Questions/Comments: Re: Hazmat at 153 Waltham Avenue, Waltham- Small spill of about 16 gallons of hydraulic fluid at an office building parking lot. Reported quickly through a downstream monitoring site and the trucking company. We don't think it migrated very far. Clean Harbors came out to clean up. Not an ongoing concern. Mr. Kaplan said our new reservoir caretakers are able to be our eyes and are able to follow up, monitor and advocate to make sure the responders are cleaning up properly and there are no long-term issues.

Water Operations:

Questions/Comments: Daily usage has gone up some recently. Possibly due to extremely dry summer and more facilities opened up since Covid Pandemic began. The demand study will help with projections/demand. The withdrawal limit is 16.16 MGD (Average Daily)

Engineering:

Questions/Comments: No Comments

Business/Billing:

Questions/Comments: No Comments

D. ACTION ITEMS

None

E. MISCELLANEOUS CORRESPONDENCE AND ITEMS OF INTEREST

F. NEW BUSINESS

None

G. NEXT MEETING DATES/AGENDA – Meetings via Zoom

- December 13, 2022: Approved/Election of the President
- January 10, 2023: Approved/TBD
- February 14, 2023: TBA/TBD
- March 14, 2023: TBA/TBD

Mr. McNeley moved, and Mr. Burruss seconded the motion to adjourn the Zoom meeting at 6:48 pm. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.