

CAMBRIDGE WATER BOARD

**MEETING MINUTES**

February 13, 2024

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

This meeting was called to order at 5:03 p.m. Those in attendance via Zoom were:

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

**Cambridge Water Department (CWD):** Mark Gallagher, Fred Centanni, Julie Greenwood-Torelli, Dave Kaplan, Emily Maynard, Jamie O'Connell, and Linda Vierboom.

**A. MINUTES OF JANUARY 9, 2023, MEETING**

Ms. Kelly moved, and Ms. Lendorff seconded the motion to approve the January 9, 2023, minutes as amended. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

**B. MANAGING DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

PFAS Update: Quarter One 2024 Results: January PFAS results were 6.9ppt.

We started carbon replacement of the first two filters this week. That load of carbon will be sent to Calgon for reactivation. Once it's reactivated and returned to us, the next two filters will be replaced and returned for reactivation and the same procedure for the last two. We fully anticipate by the time of our next quarterly sampling in April that we will have all new carbon in the filters. We anticipate we will see non detect PFAS sampling.

24" Backwash Piping Support Structural Beam Failure: A link to this presentation may be found at:<https://www.cambridgema.gov//media/Files/waterdepartment/waterboardminutes/filterpipegallery/presentation224.pdf>

At approximately 4pm on January 18<sup>th</sup>, 2024, an "I" beam that was part of the pipe support system for the backwash piping system broke free from the pipe gallery wall. Due to this event, the plant was shut down and switched to MWRA water.

CWD Response: CWD operators shut down the plant and drained the backwash piping. CWD managers were notified and arrived to access the situation. The on-call mechanical contractor secured the failed beam and constructed temporary pipe supports. CWD switched to MWRA water with a seamless transition. CDM structural engineers began emergency structural analysis for beam support system integrity. A temporary metal support was put into place. The pipe was assessed for leak/other structural issues. CWD found and repaired a small leak on the 24" backwash. On January 22<sup>nd</sup>, CWD staff conducted a successful backwash of the plant and began flushing of the system. After the system was successfully flushed, the lab took water quality and bacteria samples to ensure full water regulatory water standards were met. The lab confirmed that all water quality parameters were good and confirmed we could turn the plant back on. We were back on the city water supply 4 1/2 days after the event began.

We are working with CDM on a permanent resolution. At their cost, they will perform a structural assessment and will bring in a third party to help with development. A theory for the failure is that the anchor bolts were not long enough. This is currently in discussion with CDM. There are only two of these type bolts in the filter gallery and the other one has cracked.

RH White Engineering is suggesting a permanent repair using a method which we could apply to all beams, eliminating any future failures of this kind.

*Questions/Comments:* Can we go back to the company that installed the failed bolts?  
Owen O’Riordan, Mr. Gallagher and Ms. Greenwood-Torelli met with the law department to discuss options. We’ve had 24 years of beneficial use of the system. There is little legal recourse for going back.

*Questions/Comments:* This may not impact our budget because MWRA water, repairs and engineering services may be eligible for federal ARPA funds.

*Questions/Comments:* Is there more PFAS in the winter?  
Yes. We don’t have enough data yet, but our numbers do seem to go up in the winter and what we are surmising is that snowmelt is picking up PFAS which isn’t normally picked up during average storms in warmer months.

## C. OPERATIONS

### **Transmission and Distribution:**

*Questions/Comments:* The Huron Avenue project should be completed in the Spring of 2024. We have only one little piece left (crossing Fresh Pond Parkway) and DCR won’t let us get out there until after winter. This work will happen at night.

### **Watershed:**

*Questions/Comments:* Little Fresh Pond Shoreline/Old Field Birch Grove Seating Area Reconstruction. Bid documents are being finalized. Bids are due in a few weeks. We plan to start work in late April or early May.

*Questions/Comments:* Glyphosate Monitoring: Glyphosate was not detected. Mr. Kaplan said the golf course does not cause a very big risk to the Fresh Pond Water Supply because of the hydraulic gradient. We keep Fresh Pond higher than the surrounding water table. Mr. Kaplan said there is no direct connection from the golf course to the reservoir. Water is intercepted by Little Fresh Pond, then goes into the stormwater system.

Based on the number of questions asked pertaining to how Fresh Pond is protected hydraulically from the golf course, it was decided that CWD should give a presentation on the subject, explaining in detail how the process works, for the benefit of newer board members and staff that have not seen this information. Ms. Kelly asked for an updated report on the use of pesticides at the golf course. It was suggested that the board should write an email to City Hall requesting an update on the use of pesticides on the Golf Course. Ms. Kelly suggested an email be sent to the Fresh Pond Advisory board first. The Water board agreed to table the discussion until they spoke with the Advisory Board. Ms. Kelly would like the minutes to show that the board is in the process of asking for a report.

*Questions/Comments:* Fresh Pond Stewardship Award(s)  
Ms. Roosevelt made a motion on behalf of the waterboard to congratulate Sam Corda and Lisa Pederson for their well-deserved stewardship awards and thanked them for being such great

caretakers of Fresh Pond for so many years. Ms. Kelly seconded the motion. All were in favor of the motion.

*Questions/Comments:* The site monitoring tool (SDE Data Base) is close to functioning but not 100% yet. This tool will help us to track our projects. When fully operational it will allow us to integrate our spatial and non-spatial data for monitoring development projects in the watershed. It will allow us to have access in the field to data that we previously could only see in the office.

*Questions/Comments:* Re: Enbridge request to cut 55 trees on CWD land for utility work. The city is unreceptive to the idea. We met with the utility and explained the waterboard's stance. We asked them to put together some additional information to give us a clear understanding illustrating why this is the only way they can accomplish the work that they need to do. We will be meeting in a couple of weeks to put eyes on the site and talk through some of their challenges.

*Questions/Comments:* There was a repair made at the Waltham pump station on Wimbledon Circle. Heavy equipment on site caused the fill around the PVC pipe to break the pipe, releasing <500 gallons of sewage on the ground surface. The site was excavated, contained, disinfected and repaired. No sewerage made its way to the wetland source or flowing source.

*Questions/Comments; Re:* 104 Boston Post Road, Weston, Housing Appeals Committee hearings concluded. They issued a decision to overturn the Weston Zoning Board of Appeals denial of a comprehensive permit. The city of Cambridge plans to challenge the decision in Superior Court. The site is on top of a ledge adjacent to the Stoney Brook Reservoir. This is a large development. The septic is located in zone "A". They are proposing to evaporate their discharge water to avoid the discharge in the Zone "A" regulations. Storm water management system is required and that would introduce more volume of discharge down the slope. There is a strong chance the storm water discharge would eventually impact our site.

#### **Water Operations:**

*Questions/Comments:* Ms. Roosevelt commented positively on the water usage figures/graphs and real-time data which is available on the web.

*Questions/Comments:* Mr. Gallagher said the daily January minimum usage of 6.27MG on January 23rd was because of MWRA usage.

#### **Engineering:**

*Questions/Comments:* River Street Streetscape Project: Watermain costs will come out of the DPW sewer separation funds because they are going to have to move utilities to accommodate the new storm water management system. This is a full-depth DPW street restoration project which will address some of the climate change flooding predictions. 8,000 linear feet of watermain will be replaced as part of the project. CWD will provide oversight only.

#### **Business:**

*Questions/Comments:* The water fund balance is at 5.08 million dollars. Part of the fund was taken for the unanticipated skyrocketing costs of materials and for the SCADA Project.

**D. ACTION ITEMS**

None

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

None

**F. NEW BUSINESS**

None

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

- March 12, 2024: Approved/TBD
- April 9, 2024: TBA/TBD

Mr. Kelly moved, and Ms. Lendorff seconded to adjourn the meeting at 6:19 pm. All were in favor of the motion.