

CAMBRIDGE WATER BOARD

MEETING MINUTES

March 11, 2025

This meeting is available virtually on Zoom and in person. This meeting is being recorded.
This meeting was called to order at 5:01 p.m. Those in attendance via Zoom were:

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

Cambridge Water Department (CWD): Mark Gallagher, Dave Kaplan, Julie Greenwood-Torelli, Fred Centanni, Rich Lagerholm, Rich Holly and Linda Vierboom.

A. MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 11, 2025, MEETING

Mr. Burruss moved, and Ms. Kelly seconded the motion to approve February 11, 2025, minutes as written. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

B. MANAGING DIRECTOR'S REPORT

PFAS Update: 4 out of the 6 GAC filters have been changed. We are expecting the last two carbon change outs to be completed in time for our April sampling and anticipate our Q2 April PFAS sampling will be back at non-detect.

Questions/Comments: What were our last quarter PFAS test results?
Our 4th quarter sampling results were 6ppt. ~ It's of note that we hadn't done any GAC replacements within the last year.

Questions/Comments: Is there follow up to atline/inline testing which was brought up by Mr. Kapoor at the last meeting?

Mr. Gallagher and Ms. Greenwood-Torelli said at this time we have no capacity to be able to follow up with something like that. As stated at the last meeting, monthly monitoring is as frequent as we can do based on manpower and funds. "We do a lot of monitoring (daily, hourly, every 15 minutes, constant turbidity readings) that we don't have to do", said Ms. Greenwood-Torelli. "We do have inline meters, and we check them for compliance". We are not certified yet with our PFAS instruments and are working towards this.

Questions/Comments: Mr. Kapoor asked if a feasibility study has been conducted?
Ms. Greenwood-Torelli said we are doing what is required in the pilot study. Ms. Greenwood-Torelli said she has been out for the past 8 months, and we are trying to catch up and get things current to where they need to be for the day-to-day operations. She will look into it.

Drought Status Update: As of March 7th, the Northeast Region continues to be at Level 3 Critical Drought Status. The NOAA outlook predicts an equal chance of above and below precipitation. Thanks to a good amount of rain, Hobbs Brook Reservoir has gained, and we are trending upwards at about 48% capacity. Stony Brook is full. We keep Fresh Pond full all the time because it prevents ground water from intruding in (from industry and things like that and we wouldn't want that coming into Fresh Pond). If we see a storm coming, we try to let some out of Fresh Pond and bring some more down from Stony Brook.

Key Topics: PFAS, Drought Status, Potential Land Acquisition Opportunity in Lincoln, MA/The Farrington Properties (Presentation)

Mr. Gallagher said unless we have some significant rain, we will work with the fire department to cancel spring hydrant flushing and re-schedule for the fall, weather permitting. We may have to delay putting on City irrigation systems. Service leaks at properties will need to be addressed immediately by owners. We will continue to update our website and put out periodic news. Ms. Roosevelt suggests telling the city council and posting to social media; sending info out with our water bill. Mr. Gallagher said we plan on doing all of those things, just as we had done for the previous drought.

Presentation: Potential Land Acquisition Opportunity in Lincoln, MA- The Farrington Properties- Presented in PowerPoint by Dave Kaplan. Our watershed is fairly developed. Because of the type and amount of land use and development in our watershed, the DEP considers our watershed as having a high susceptibility to contamination. As the watershed manager, Mr. Kaplan feels the best way to avoid that risk is to try to keep that land from being developed in the first place, either through land acquisition or supporting conservation restrictions or other ways to keep land out of development. Since 2005 the department has been proactive in purchasing land. We are looking to close in the fall on The Farrington Property. CWD is pursuing a \$350,000 State Grant. If the purchase proceeds, but the grant doesn't come through, we would use the Water Fund directly. We will be asking the waterboard to vote on an appropriation (\$800,00) from the water fund for the land purchase.

Land Acquisition Program:

Total Watershed Area ~ 15,000 Acres= 24 square miles

Total Cambridge Ownership ~ 1,500 Acres= 2.4 square miles

~10% of Land Area Owned/Controlled by the City of Cambridge

Including Cambridge land, ~25% of the watershed is protected open space in perpetuity

"Recent" Acquisitions:

~221 Acres Protected Since 2005

- Harrington Property (2005) ~ 16 Acres acquired + surrounding conservation restrictions (54 Acres total protected)
- DeNormandie + Flint (2012) ~ 74 Acres
- Rando/Stankard (Jerodel) Parcel (2015) ~ 54 Acres
- Twin Pond Lane Parcels (2022) ~ 8 Acres
- Tracer Lane (2024) ~ 31 Acres

Farrington/Panetta Conservation "Proposal":

~ 51 Acres for Cambridge Ownership, Water Supply Protection Purposes

- East Parcel ~ 15 Acres
- West Parcel ~ 36 Acres
- \$800,000 Total Cost to City of Cambridge
- CWD Pursuing a \$350,000 State Grant

~28 Acres to be protected by Conservation Restriction (Granted by Farrington to TOL)

~ 6 Acres of SFH to be developed into 40Y Housing (affordable).

Key Topics: PFAS, Drought Status, Potential Land Acquisition Opportunity in Lincoln, MA/The Farrington Properties (Presentation)

Benefits of Acquisition:

- Zone “A” – 52% of the parcel is within 200’ of a water supply tributary
- Expands the protected, undeveloped buffer to Hobbs Brook and the Hobbs Brook Reservoir
- Low purchase cost and low cost of ownership
- Additional Benefits: ~ 28 Acres protected from CR’s, Supports Nature Linc nature programming for Cambridge youth, Supports appropriate low-impact development-starter homes, Existing trail network made public for passive use, Maintain critical ecosystem services

C. OPERATIONS

Transmission and Distribution:

Questions/Comments: Dana Street is replacing 10” unlined cast iron using 8” cement lined ductile iron (CLDI). We don’t use 10” anymore. Using a hydraulic model, we looked at values. Flow rate actually goes up with 8” CLDI compared to old 10” unlined cast iron pipe.

Questions/Comments: RE: DPW Mass Avenue 4 Phase 1 infrastructure upgrades. Ms. Roosevelt commented that traffic is tough there at rush hour and asked how will you be able to do this? Mr. Gallagher said it’s taken 5 years just to get to phase 1. The project has started. The cost of the water portion alone is 9M. The project was not originally budgeted for water infrastructure. From Cambridge Common to the Arlington line, CWD will be doing water work upgrades in critical locations. Floating bus stops will be created about 10 feet out from the curb. Because they are located 10 feet out, these often land over utilities, so those utilities will have to be moved. All intersections will have good valving and good piping, enabling them to be isolated if needed. All old 6” cast iron will be upgraded with 8” CLDI; removing any lead services along Mass Ave.

Watershed:

Questions/Comments: Ms. Roosevelt announced that Fresh Pond Day is Saturday, June 14th. We always love to have board members come and talk with people.

Questions/Comments: Conant Road, Weston: Proposed Septic System. Is that for a complex or single family?

It’s for a single-family home. We are involved because there were some Zone “A” implications.

Questions/Comments: Re: Waltham Costco loading dock saddle tank truck incident.

Diesel release made its way into a catch basin. No material entered tributary/wetland system. No issues noted. Our caretakers did an excellent job liaising at the site and putting out booms in case they were needed.

Water Operations:

Questions/Comments: The Demand Study takes growth predictions and population projections and applies these projections to our capacity to provide water and stay within our withdrawal limits. Since the study began, there are new zoning changes, and we may need to request a change order to include those changes in the study. It will be presented to the board in a PowerPoint presentation when it’s ready.

Key Topics: PFAS, Drought Status, Potential Land Acquisition Opportunity in Lincoln, MA/The Farrington Properties (Presentation)

The board welcomed new water quality supervisor Anna Van Dresser.

Engineering:

Questions/Comments: Maple Avenue watermain work is done. Contractor (Newport Construction) has some ongoing utility work and follow up to be done before closeout.

Business:

Questions/Comments: None

D. ACTION ITEMS

Board Vote- Authorizing potential purchase of ~52 acres of Watershed Protection land in Lincoln, MA in conjunction with the Lincoln Rural Land Foundation

Mr. Kapoor moved, and Ms. Lendorff seconded the motion to take a vote authorizing potential purchase of ~52 acres of Watershed Protection land in Lincoln, MA in conjunction with the Lincoln Rural Land Foundation. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

Mr. Burruss moved, and Mr. Kapoor seconded the motion authorizing the water department to appropriate \$800,00 from the water fund for the potential land purchase. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

Board Vote- Revocable License Agreement with ARE 500 Arsenal St., LLC
Ms. Roosevelt saw a typo on the contract (D-4, under 6- indemnification) and asked Mr. Gallagher to point it out to the law department (remove “can” and replace with “and”).

Mr. Burruss moved, and Ms. Lendorff seconded the motion to accept the Revocable License Agreement with ARE 500 Arsenal St., LLC. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

E. MISCELLANEOUS CORRESPONDENCE AND ITEMS OF INTEREST

Letter to Lincoln Conservation Commission, RE: Notice of Intent Submitted by the Town of Lincoln for the Lincoln Community Center at 6 Ballfield Road, Lincoln, dated February 10, 2025, from Jamie O’Connell

Questions/Comments: Mr. Kaplan said we had some reservations about how the applicant was interpreting the riverfront area obligations. As of today, the applicant has satisfied our concerns.

F. NEW BUSINESS

None

G. NEXT MEETING DATES/AGENDA – Meetings via Zoom

- April 15, 2025: Approved/TBD

Ms. Kelly moved, and Mr. Burruss seconded the motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:15 pm. All were in favor of the motion.