

CAMBRIDGE WATER BOARD

MEETING MINUTES

June 11, 2024

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

This meeting was called to order at 5:01 p.m. Those in attendance in person or via *Zoom* were:

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

Cambridge Water Department (CWD): Mark Gallagher, Fred Centanni, Dave Kaplan, Jamie O’Connell, Emily Maynard, Rich Lagerholm and Linda Vierboom.

A. MINUTES OF MAY 14, 2024, MEETING

Mr. Burruss moved, and Ms. Lendorff seconded the motion to approve the May 14, 2024, minutes as written. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

B. MANAGING DIRECTOR’S REPORT

Mr. Gallagher introduced interim lab manager Rich Lagerholm. The previous manager retired.

PFAS Update: Second quarter (April) PFAS6 results were non-detects. “Non-Detects” measure less than 2ppt and are below the reading range of the instruments. At the time of the sampling, four out of the six filters had been changed. Quarter three samples will be taken in July. We are using re-activated carbon with a swing load in reserve at Calgon for whenever we are ready for it. As we’ve been told by Calgon, some water departments have reported that re-activated carbon performs better at PFAS removal and removes PFAS longer than virgin carbon because of the increased surface area on the carbon. After the carbon has been backwashed and re-activated it gets rid of a lot of fines that can plug the pores and stick to the surface area.

Enbridge/Algonquin Gas Update: Re: Federal suit for temporary land taking and tree removal on CWD Watershed land for staging at a meter station improvement project. Mr. Gallagher and Mr. Kaplan were at Federal court in Boston today with counsel and the Town of Lincoln’s counsel. In early April their (the utility) response to our request for a work proposal and timeline was what they deemed a “Final” offer packet, offering \$10,000 to use the land (timber value of the trees) and stated that if we didn’t agree they would file an injunction against us in federal court under the Natural Gas Act. Our request for an extension was declined by the utility. We declined to accept their “final offer”, and they immediately filed an injunction against us in court.

(Temporary land taking for an easement for construction purposes.)

Our council went to federal court today. The judge said she understood the utility has the right under the Natural Gas Act to work on their infrastructure but would not issue a federal order. She said CWD requests are reasonable and commonsensical, and the utility should work with the City and come up with an approach that is amendable and reasonable to protect the interests of the citizens of Cambridge. Suddenly they found all the information we were looking for and are starting to provide us with this. We were very close to coming to an agreement. We went to a second court date. The judge was sympathetic to us and said the water was more important and asked them to work with us. The town of Lincoln has a conservation restriction on the property and technically we couldn’t tell the utility it was okay to cut down the trees without the Town of

Key Topics: PFAS, Algonquin Gas Update, FY25 Budget Presentation

Lincoln reviewing the plan. Their (Enbridge) counsel continued to say they had the right. Today the utility was amenable and wanted to work with us. We are working on some of the language and specific details, and we will be getting the best deal we can.

FY25 Budget Presentation: Mr. Centanni discussed the FY25 Water Department Operating and Capital Budgets. To view the budget, visit the City Web Page with the link below:

<https://www.cambridgema.gov/-/media/Files/waterdepartment/waterboardminutes/fy25budgetwb.pdf>

The Cambridge Water Department (CWD) is a municipally owned and operated water utility servicing approximately 119,000 residents and operating under the general direction of the City Manager. CWD operates financially as an Enterprise Fund. All operating and capital expenditures are funded through our water rates. Water rates were raised 6.8% for the FY25 year.

Questions/Comments: Sixteen electric car charging stations for (10) municipal and (6) *public use (*using credit cards as payment) are in the process of being installed near the front entrance to the treatment plant.

This year since we are bonding, we won't be taking any money out of the Water Fund for budget purposes. Water Fund money is always anticipated ahead of time for projects. In FY25 we will have to take approximately one million dollars for the LIMS Acquisition if it goes through. The Water Fund will be replenished with any excess revenues, vacancies in the department, and chemical and energy rate savings.

Questions/Comments: On April 10th the EPA released their new Federal PFAS Standard, which has lower numbers than the Mass DEP PFAS 20ppt standard. The EPA standard numbers are lower for Perfluorooctanesulfonic Acid (PFOS) and Perfluorooctanoic Acid (PFOA). These numbers can't go above 4ppt on a running "annual" average. Because it's an "annual" average, if Mass DEP sticks with the EPA regulation, we feel we will stay in compliance longer and get more life out of our carbon beds before change outs are needed. If DEP makes the standard stricter, such as results based on actual "quarterly" results, we may have to change out the carbon sooner - 10 months versus the 14 months we change out now. Fortunately, because MASS DEP has been so strict and they started before the EPA did, we would already be in 100% compliance if it took place today. We will need to wait and see what Mass DEP decides to do with the new EPA standard.

Questions/Comments: Re Health Index- Using four compounds, each individual compound is divided by a number that is associated with its health effects. The total of these compounds must be less than one (unit list number). Above one is out of compliance. There is a formula for running the annual average for these 4 other PFAS compounds (2 new compounds and 2 old - PFOA and PFOS.) Mr. Gallagher averaged our numbers, and our number came out to be .00134 which is well below the standard of one.

C. OPERATIONS

Transmission and Distribution: *Questions/Comments:* The Mass Avenue bike lane project was not in our capital plan for water main replacement. There will be watermain replacements from Harvard Square to Arlington line addressing critical points for upgrades, including replacing lead services.

Watershed:

Questions/Comments: CWD submitted a grant application to Mass DEP for funding (\$80,000 to \$90,000) to develop a Watershed Based Plan to reduce chloride pollution in the watershed. This is the first time we've applied for this grant, and we feel we meet the criteria.

Questions/Comments: Cambridge has an Open Data program which is an initiative to make data products that a municipality develops accessible to the public. The Fresh Pond Census data report will be added to the Open Data Portal.

Questions/Comments: The Lexington planning board approved the Tracer Lane solar field on land abutting the Cambridge Reservoir with conditions. This restricts what can be done to regulate the activity. We filed an appeal in Superior Court. We have been asked to work with them to come to an agreement prior to getting into Superior Court.

Questions/Comments: Are there "Green Burials" in our water shed? Wouldn't that be pollution for our watershed?

The Safe Water Act addresses green burials and addresses restrictions such as 200' setbacks. Green Burials are proposed in the upland area of the Lincoln Cemetery. It's in the early stages and hasn't been cleared yet.

Questions/Comments: We are doing well with water storage.

Water Operations:

Questions/Comments: No Comments

Engineering:

Questions/Comments: What do utility design engineers do?

In the past, there was no system in place for review of existing utilities, and this led sometimes to no access to our water main due to other utilities. Utility design engineers review plans to make sure there is no encroachment.

Business:

Questions/Comments: No Comments

D. ACTION ITEMS

None

E. MISCELLANEOUS CORRESPONDENCE AND ITEMS OF INTEREST

None

F. NEW BUSINESS

None

G. NEXT MEETING DATES/AGENDA – Meetings via Zoom

- September 10, 2024: TBA/TBD

Key Topics: PFAS, Algonquin Gas Update, FY25 Budget Presentation

Ms. Roosevelt moved, and Ms. Lendorff seconded the motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:07 pm.
All were in favor of the motion.