



BOARD OF WATER COMMISSIONERS

Cotuit Fire District
Water Department

4300 FALMOUTH ROAD, P. O. BOX 451
COTUIT, MASS. 02635

02/24/2021

The monthly meeting of the Board of Water Commissioners was held via a public Zoom Video at 5:45 p.m. Chairman Scott Horsley, Commissioner Tom Hoppensteadt, Commissioner Mark Robinson, Superintendent Chris Wiseman and Jennifer Nash were present. Also in attendance is Water Resource Specialist and Hydrogeologist, Mr. Tom Cambareri, from Sole Source Consulting, LLC.

The meeting was called to order at 5:45 p.m. and was opened to public comment.

Mrs. Zais asked for clarification regarding the discussion at the Prudential Committee meeting involving private irrigation wells and the aquifer which supplies all of Cape Cod. Commissioner Horsley indicated that the impacts of a private well are very different from pumping at the main wellfield. Individual private wells distribute the stress on the aquifer and away from the Little River and wetlands. Secondly, the individual irrigation wells can serve to recapture nitrogen in the groundwater and recycle it on to lawns as a partial replacement for the addition of new fertilizers.

Ms. Kates asked for clarification of the open position, the plan to fill this position and the reason that the employee left the department. The commissioners noted that this would be addressed in the Superintendents Report.

The commissioners voted to approve the meeting minutes for the 01/20/2021 meetings with the correction of one typographical error.

The Superintendent gave the water quality report noting that there were no total coliform detections. The Sodium test for the blended water supply were conducted as directed at the January meeting, results are pending.

The Superintendent report was given for the prior month.

Monthly Pumpage Results is as follows:

	<u>2021</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>+/-</u>
January	8,096,000	6,524,000	+1,572,000

Stats:

Replacement Services = 0; New Services = 2; Leaks = 0.

Project Updates:

- Security/SCADA system - Discussions continue with GHD regarding security enhancements to the SCADA system to protect against potential cyber-attacks. These enhancements will include a separate firewall and two-factor authentication for accessing the treatment system electronically. This will be funded as part of the FY19 appropriation and is estimated to cost approximately \$8,000.
- Leak Detection continues.
- Employee evaluations were completed, all employees received a rating of exceeding expectations. This has been an especially challenging year with the COVID pandemic, and the staff has responded and adapted well to provide quality water service to the district residents while operating under an extreme set of protocols.
- The Assistant Superintendent submitted his letter of resignation and gave a two-week notice. February 24th was his last day and parted on good terms with the department and staff. The Superintendent continues to evaluate replacement options with the Chairman which includes timing, candidates, and salary requirements. The commissioners expressed concerns about enduring the summer with staffing levels down by 20% and they will continue this discussion at a special meeting to be held on March 11th at 5:45pm via zoom.

Moving forward with the old business, Chairman Horsley turned the discussion over to Tom Cambareri who gave a project update on the hydrogeological review for the district. He has done some extensive research and modeling with the help of the Superintendent to evaluate pump tests/data, drawdown curves, recovery curves, distance drawdown charts and steady state pumping rates going back to the 1970's. He will continue his evaluation of Little River including characteristics and morphology and estimates that he is around task 5 of 9 to complete the review.

Commissioner Hoppensteadt gave an update from the Cotuit Elementary subcommittee and noted that much of the meeting was conducted in Executive Sessions as it involved negotiation details that would harm their bargaining position if conducted in open meeting. The committee recommended a three-member subcommittee to be appointed by the Prudential Committee to conduct negotiations on behalf of the district. He also noted that the subcommittee does not have authority to commit or purchase the property on behalf of the district. This can only be done by a vote of the residents at the annual or special district meeting. Commissioner Hoppensteadt showed a PowerPoint presentation that he is composing to show the wellfield, Zone I and Zone II in relation to the school property. As clearly shown in the overlay map, the impervious surfaces, recreational fields and surrounding forests clearly lie within Zone II. It was also noted that the District does not currently own all the property within Zone I which makes the protection of Zone II property even more important. This wellfield is the oldest active well in the village and is permitted to pump up to 400 gpm. More importantly, the location of this well offers a diversity of options in supplying water to the village due to its spatial separation from the other wellfields.

The commissioners then reviewed three requests for leak adjustment relief. Comments were heard from two of the homeowners, and the board voted to provide

relief in one of these cases, with provisional approval on the second case. Further discussion regarding the parameters of the policy needs to be review and they have continued the third request to the March meeting. The commissioners directed that due dates and penalties related to this billing cycle be suspended until the situation is resolved.

Commissioner Robinson noted that the Bylaw committee met this month and reviewed the existing bylaws. There were a few minor edits noted and the committee will meet again before sending recommendations to the Prudential Committee to be included in the Annual District Meeting Articles.

Commissioner Hoppensteadt noted that the Policy Advisory Board met and re-reviewed the Capital Improvement Policy that was proposed in the prior fiscal year. He asked for the feedback from the Commissioners as it is the intent of the Policy Advisory members to move this forward to the Prudential Committee for adoption at the annual district meeting. More time is needed for review and the District Treasurer also wishes to clarify the language in the document to adhere to Municipal Accounting Guidelines. This item has been continued.

Commissioner Robinson reviewed the draft of the Hardship Relief policy and raised some questions regarding guidelines, qualifications, and mitigation measures for discussion by the group. They would like to solicit comments from the public on this policy, review again at the March meeting and move to adopt a finalized policy at the April regular meeting. There is one pending request for hardship relief which the Commissioners do not want to act on until the policy is finalized. Mrs. Nash will notify the homeowner of the continuance and suspend any penalties or due dates related to this billing cycle until the matter is resolved.

The Commissioners began the review of the FY22 Operating, Maintenance and Payroll budget and have scheduled a special meeting on March 11th at 5:45 p.m. to continue this discussion, as well as complete the Superintendent's review. All of the commissioners are planning to attend the March 15th Prudential Committee meeting to present the budget, and Mrs. Nash will post the meeting agenda as deliberation may occur.

The next regular meeting of the Board of Water Commissioners will take place on Wednesday, March 24th at 5:45p online via zoom. The meeting adjourned at 8:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Scott Horsley, Chairman