



# TOWN OF LINCOLN

## WATER DEPARTMENT

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TOWN OF LINCOLN  
WATER DEPARTMENT  
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### WATER COMMISSIONERS' MEETING

January 13, 2016

5:00 PM

Pumping Station – 77 Sandy Pond Road

Attendees: Packy Lawler, Chair  
Ruth Ann Hendrickson, Water Commissioner  
Bob Antia, Water Commissioner  
Gregory Woods, Water Superintendent  
Brian Turnbaugh – Good Roots Farm  
Jim Hutchinson – Resident, FinComm

The Commission reviewed and approved the minutes from the December 9, 2015 meeting, as amended.

Superintendent Woods summarized the agricultural exemption request from Mr. Brian Turnbaugh, a farmer who is growing produce at 153 Lexington Road. Mr. Woods provided an overview of the water use history at the site stating that the rental house on the property had used minimal amounts of water in the years prior to late 2013, after which the water use increased as a result of the farming activities. Mr. Woods stated that Mr. Turnbaugh had sent a picture of the used water meter that Mr. Woods had provided to the property owner in 2013 to monitor the amount of water used for farming. The used water meter had registered 216,420 gallons of new use since the meter was taken out of service by the Department. Mr. Turnbaugh stated that he used approximately 98,000 gallons during the last growing season due to the lack of rainfall. Mr. Woods explained to Mr. Turnbaugh that the Department is exceeding its current Water Management Act (WMA) permit allocation and that previous requests for use of municipal water to irrigate crops had been denied by the Commissioners. Commissioner Hendrickson stated that the Board needs to develop a formal policy on how it will handle these requests in the future since the Town's Right-to-Farm bylaw would likely increase the number of similar requests. Commissioners Lawler and Antia both questioned the cost breakpoint at which the installation of groundwater well would more economical than using municipal water. The Commissioners agreed that the use of drip irrigation at the property was preferable to sprinkler heads that lose a significantly higher percentage of water to evaporation but more research would be needed to determine the typical water needs for farmers cultivating one or more acres of land. Mr. Woods stated that he would start investigating how other towns address agricultural demands and would report back to the Board. Commissioner Hendrickson informed Mr. Turnbaugh that the Board would be working over the next several months to develop a policy and that they would likely hold another public meeting to collect input from interested parties. The topic was tabled.

Next, Mr. Woods provided a revised copy of the utility easement that Town Council had been working on for the Sandy Pond dam project. Commissioner Hendrickson noticed that the reference to removing any temporary roadways constructed by the Department was not in the most recent version. Commissioner Hendrickson thought that this was an important omission since the property owner has stated that they would like it removed after the current project is completed. The Board briefly discussed the document's reference to eminent domain and whether that might of concern to the property owner. Mr. Woods stated that he would compare the current version of the easement to the edited version that he had previously sent to the lawyers and would send the recommended changes back to Council for review.

Mr. Woods then provided a summary of the 20-year Capital Plan and expenses that were earmarked for completion in FY17. Mr. Woods said that the Town is requesting a preliminary list of warrant articles to be included in this year's Town Meeting. He stated that the Tower Road well roof started leaking several weeks ago and that he thought a new sloped roof should be installed to replace the existing flat roof. Mr. Woods provided cost estimates for several different repair options. The Commissioners reviewed the Capital Plan and began a discussion on how it should be updated to reflect past expenses and anticipated future capital improvements. It was agreed that the Capital Plan should be revised at another meeting but several items on the current plan should be submitted as warrant articles at Town Meeting. The Commissioners unanimously agreed to support a \$25,000 warrant article for the purchase and replacement of fire hydrants, and a \$50,000 warrant article for the combined replacement of the Tower Road well roof and exterior repairs to the treatment plant.

Next the Board reviewed the draft copy of the Department's submission for the annual Town Report. The Commissioners suggested several revisions, including the rewording of the paragraph related to the Department's WMA permit. The Commissioners voted unanimously to approve the report, as amended, and further authorized Mr. Woods to work independently with Commissioners Hendrickson and Lawler to revamp the previously mentioned paragraph.

The Commissioners then discussed the Town's request that the Department increase its Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB) contribution for the FY17 budget. Mr. Woods stated that the Department currently has a \$20,000 line item in its operating budget to fund OPEB liabilities, however the Town had conducted a more recent audit this past fall and the Department's liability is now \$29,575. The Board asked Mr. Jim Hutchinson of the Financial Commission a number of questions regarding the audit and the Department's obligations going forward. The Commissioners unanimously agreed to increase the FY17 OPEB funding to \$30,000 and worked with Mr. Woods to adjust the budget line items so the overall FY17 budget increase matched the Town's recommended 2.5% increase. The Board voted unanimously to approve the modified FY17 budget.

The Commissioners tabled the IT Security, Tower Road well capacity, and Action Item List agenda items due to time constraints.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:40 PM. The next meeting of the Water Commissioners is scheduled for February 10, 2016 at 5:00 PM at the Pumping Station.

Respectfully submitted,

Gregory Woods  
Superintendent