



TOWN OF LINCOLN

WATER DEPARTMENT

TOWN OF LINCOLN
WATER DEPARTMENT
16 Lincoln Road
Lincoln, MA 01773
Phone: 781-259-8997
Fax: 781-259-3592

WATER COMMISSIONERS' MEETING

August 18, 2016

9:30 AM

Pumping Station – 77 Sandy Pond Road

Attendees: Packy Lawler, Chair
Ruth Ann Hendrickson, Water Commissioner
Bob Antia, Water Commissioner (via conference call)
Gregory Woods, Superintendent

The Commission met to review the state of the water supply and to discuss the recent upgrade by the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) of the drought conditions across the State. Mr. Woods presented an August 16th map from the U.S. Drought Monitor that depicted most of Middlesex (including Lincoln) and Essex counties under an “Extreme Drought” condition. A similar DCR map from August 1st shows the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection’s (DEP) northeast drought region in a Drought Warning. An August 15th letter from the DEP outlined the drought levels and the recommended outdoor water restrictions for each level. The DEP recommends all outdoor water use should be banned during a “Drought Warning”.

Mr. Woods then presented information from Weston & Sampson Engineers, as well as the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), that calculated the safe yield (firm yield) of Sandy Pond. The 2004 report from Weston & Sampson estimated the safe yield of the pond at 0.568 million gallons per day (MGD), while the 2012 USGS report stated the safe yield as 0.5 MGD. Mr. Woods stated that due to current water demands, the treatment plant has pumped up to 1.1 MGD and that the pond elevation has decreased one foot per month the last two months. Mr. Woods stated that the pond started the year approximately 20-inches below full capacity and is currently more than four feet below maximum capacity. Mr. Woods presented a “Sandy Pond Capacity & Area” table from a 1950 Metcalf & Eddy Engineer report and the Board discussed the current capacity of the pond that is available above the intake screen, which is located 10 feet below maximum pond elevation. Commissioner Lawler pointed out that while there is still 60% of the height above the intake screen available; there is only 50% of the 404 million gallon capacity currently available. The Board reviewed a pond elevation graph from 1964-1967 that plotted pond levels during that multiple year drought. Commissioner Antia pointed out the similarities of 1964-65 pond levels to those of 2015-16. He highlighted the fact that the pond didn’t completely recover until spring of 1967 and the current drought situation could also extend for multiple years.

Mr. Woods recommended that the Board consider implementing either a one-day per week water restriction or a complete water ban. Mr. Woods stated that as of August 10th, a total of 53 communities in the State had limited outdoor watering to one-day per week or less. The

Board discussed the possible financial implications of a complete water ban. Commissioner Hendrickson recommended that Superintendent hold off on some of the bigger expenses he had planned for this fiscal year until the results of the 3rd quarter meter reading are completed and the potential loss of revenue is calculated. Mr. Woods said that he would contact the Town Accountant on Monday to discuss the Board's options should there be a significant shortfall of revenue.

The Board agreed that additional water restrictions are warranted and discussed whether to limit outdoor watering to once a week or a total ban. After further discussion, the Board voted unanimously to adopt a mandatory outdoor water ban. The Board discussed which activities would be prohibited and agreed that all lawn watering via in-ground and above-ground irrigation systems would be prohibited. Soaker hoses, filling of swimming pools more than 2-inches and recreational activities that require a constant stream of water would also be prohibited. Watering of shrubs and gardens would be permitted between the hours of 6:00 PM and 9:00 AM by use of any hand-held device.

Mr. Woods stated that he would draft public notifications for the Town's website, a Reverse-911 phone call, news articles, and announcements through the Police Department's Facebook, Twitter and Instagram accounts.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:30 AM. The next meeting of the Water Commissioners is scheduled for September 7th, 2016 at 4:30 PM at the Pumping Station.

Respectfully submitted,

Gregory Woods
Superintendent