



TOWN OF LINCOLN

WATER DEPARTMENT

MIDDLESEX COUNTY
MASSACHUSETTS

TOWN OF LINCOLN
WATER DEPARTMENT
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Water Commissioners Zoom Meeting

May 5, 2020, 9:00 AM

Virtual Meeting Pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law

Pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §18, and the Governor's March 15, 2020 Order imposing strict limitation on the number of people that may gather in one place, this meeting of the Lincoln Board of Water Commissioners was conducted via remote participation to the greatest extent possible. Specific information and the general guidelines for remote participation by members of the public and/or parties with a right and/or requirement to attend this meeting can be found on the www.lincolntown.org.

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Meeting ID: 912 2174 1486

Dial by your location: 646- 558- 8656 (New York) or 312- 626- 6799 (Chicago)

Attendees:

Ruth Ann Hendrickson, Chairman
Jennifer Glass, Commissioner
Michelle Barnes, Commissioner
Colleen Wilkins, Finance Director
Jim Hutchinson, Finance Committee
Tom Sander, Finance Committee
Ryan Neyland, Tata & Howard
MaryBeth Wisner, Water Superintendent
Monica Kacprzyk, Administrative Assistant

Chairman Hendrickson called the meeting to order at 9:01 AM.

1. Approve the minutes of April 7, 2020 – vote expected

MOTION: Commissioner Glass made a motion to approve the April 7, 2020 minutes as amended. Commissioner Barnes seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Glass, Aye; Barnes, Aye; Hendrickson, Aye.

2. Based on the water level in Flint's Pond and the required summer water restrictions required by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), maintain the water restriction at Level 2 – vote expected

Ms. Hendrickson shared that the Lincoln Water Department (LWD) has Water Management Act permit restrictions as part of its Drought Management Plan. She said that starting in May of each year, the Water Commissioners must decide on the level of action needed based on the severity of a water shortage or drought. She added that the pond is at its normal level and recommended keeping the drought management restrictions that are currently in place.

MOTION: Commissioner Glass made a motion to maintain the water restriction at Level 2 based on the water level in Flint's Pond. Commissioner Barnes seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Hendrickson, Aye; Glass, Aye; Barnes, Aye.

3. Discuss Agriculture Applications for AG water rates – vote expected

Ms. Hendrickson noted that the LWD has only received a few applications for agricultural rates. The Department sent second request letter to prompt more responses and gave an additional one-month grace period. She added that the cost of putting in a new meter is high, so it likely does not pay off for smaller farmers to apply for the agricultural rate if they do not already have a separate agricultural meter. Ms. Hendrickson noted that the biggest agricultural rate users are Drumlin Farm, Mr. Kanner, and Codman Community Farm, so we should make sure we receive applications from each of them. Ms. Barnes asked if the farms are aware that they need to apply for each water account. Ms. Wisner said that applications are reviewed to ensure that there is one account per application.

4. Flint’s Pond WTP Residuals Handling Evaluation Agreement for Engineering Services Tata & Howard (T&H) No. 6337. Funds appropriated in FY20 – vote expected

Mr. Neyland asked for approval of the Flint’s Pond Water Treatment Plant (WTP) Residuals Handling Evaluation Agreement for Engineering Services. He said the coagulant project was in the capital plan, and this agreement is a new contract under that project. He added that the residuals handling evaluation will help determine the long-term plan for handling residuals throughout the coagulant pilot study. Ms. Glass asked if funds were appropriated for this component of the project in FY20. Mr. Neyland responded that this evaluation was not part of any prior appropriation. Mr. Hutchinson shared the spreadsheet for the short-term capital plan for FY20 to FY24 and pointed out \$25,000 in FY20 for the WTP residuals handling evaluation. Mr. Hutchinson said that he is not sure which items were funded on the short-term capital plan spreadsheet. Commissioner Glass suggested creating a spreadsheet that lists all the capital projects and the date in which they were approved and funded at town meeting.

Commissioner Glass shared that the Annual Town Meeting was moved to June 13, 2020 at the earliest. Ms. Wilkins shared a spreadsheet with approved retained earnings projects with individual budgets, and she concluded that the evaluation project was not on this list. She added that this spreadsheet did not include projects funded as part of the operating budget. She said that under bonding projects, there is a pilot testing budget of \$330,000. Mr. Neyland commented that the \$330,000 budget for the project does not include the residuals handling evaluation.

Ms. Barnes and Ms. Hendrickson asked if this project was funded by a line item in the operating budget for FY20. Ms. Wilkins said that considering the current budget deficit, the project funds cannot come out of the 2020 operating budget. Ms. Glass commented that we do not have the funding to vote on this agreement, so it will have to wait until Town Meeting.

Mr. Hutchinson asked if this project was funded under the FY21 operating budget under engineering services. He added that there is \$127,000 allocated for engineering services in FY21. Mr. Neyland commented that in the FY21 they have allocated funds for a long-term water supply evaluation, AWWA risk assessment, and water distribution system mapping, which totals to \$113,600. He added that if the total engineering services allocation is \$127,000, then there is \$13,400 unaccounted for. Mr. Hutchinson asked for an itemization of outside services and engineering services in the FY21 operating budget. Ms. Wisner agreed to work on this and report back at the next meeting.

MOTION: Commissioner Glass made a motion to table the discussion of the Flint’s Pond WTP Residuals Handling Evaluation Agreement for Engineering Services T&H No. 6337 to the next meeting at which time there will be a decision as to whether to request an appropriation for this project at Town Meeting. Commissioner Barnes seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Hendrickson, Aye; Glass, Aye; Barnes, Aye.

5. Engineering Agreement – Amendment No. 1 FY2020 On-Call Engineering Services T&H No. 6234 – vote expected

Superintendent Wisner shared that the LWD is overbudget on FY2020 On-Call Engineering Services T&H No. 6234. She requested an amendment to the engineering agreement and asked if the Water Commissioners would like Mr. Neyland to work on anything else for the LWD for the rest of the fiscal year. She said the engineering agreement was originally

\$44,000, and the amendment would be an additional \$15,000 for the outstanding balance. Ms. Wisner added that there is \$40,000 left in the reserve fund for FY20.

MOTION: Chairman Hendrickson made a motion to table Amendment No. 1 FY2020 On-Call Engineering Services T&H No. 6234 to the next meeting in June. Commissioner Glass seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Hendrickson, Aye; Glass, Aye; Barnes, Aye.

6. T&H Project Timeline Update

Mr. Neyland provided a timeline update on the T&H projects for the LWD and displayed the list of current capital and engineering projects. He stated that the LWD is trying to get additional funds at Town Meeting for the clean in place (CIP) upgrades at the water treatment plan (WTP). He said that the cost estimate was \$545,600, but the bid came in at \$625,000 and additional funding will need to be requested at Town Meeting to execute the contract. Mr. Neyland noted that he will incorporate Ms. Glass's recommendations to add columns for when funds were appropriated, how much was appropriated, and project results.

Next, Mr. Neyland shared that T&H submitted 50% drawings to Ms. Wisner and WTP manager, Gary Tuck, for the Tower Road Well (TRW) pump station upgrades. He added they will work on incorporating their recommendations, and then work with an HVAC consultant to get 90% complete drawings for approval by the MassDEP.

Mr. Neyland said that the filter access platforms were installed, and they will be tweaking the platforms based on feedback from the operators. He said that they are waiting for additional components to be installed that will make certain sections of the platform completely removable for easier filter access. For the filter evaluation and NPDES permit, Mr. Neyland said that T&H needs to finalize the report and send it to Ms. Wisner for review.

For the potassium hydroxide release assistance, T&H needs to submit a permanent solution report to MassDEP in the next month, which will be an additional cost for the LWD. Mr. Neyland continued that the WTP bench testing for coagulant treatment is complete, and the pilot study project is ongoing.

For the WTP filter membrane replacement, Mr. Neyland said that T&H is 99% complete with the specifications, and they plan to submit them to Ms. Wisner by the end of the week. He added that they plan to go out to bid for installation in July 2020. Mr. Hutchinson requested a copy of the specifications. Ms. Wisner said she will forward the specifications to Mr. Hutchinson.

Mr. Hutchinson suggested having the Box as a repository for all documents sent to the Water Commissioners for purposes of discussion. He also suggested keeping the original format of documents. Ms. Hendrickson suggested that Ms. Wisner send links to documents in the Box instead of sending out meeting packets. Mr. Hutchinson also asked if T&H could red-line contracts that have been changed or edited, so the changes are clear and easier to read.

Mr. Neyland continued with his project timeline update and said that for FY20 on-call engineering, there is an amendment awaiting approval from the Water Commissioners for a \$15,000 outstanding balance, as mentioned before. Next, he said that they have completed four out of six trials for the Flint's Pond WTP Coagulant Addition. He added that the upcoming fifth trial is the longest trial and lasts about four weeks. He noted that once the pilot study is complete, they will have a better idea of whether there will be remaining funds to cover the residuals evaluation project.

Mr. Neyland displayed four project schedules. The first project timeline was for the CIP upgrades at the WTP and Mr. Neyland shared that the construction start date was pushed out to the second week in June due to the town meeting being postponed. He added that T&H will need to reach out to contractors to see if they are willing to hold their bid prices. Next, he showed the project timeline for the coagulant pilot study. He said that they are in the middle of pilot testing, and then need to prepare a pilot study report for DEP approval. Once that is complete, they will move onto designing a full-scale coagulant system to be installed at pump station. Mr. Neyland showed a project timeline for the membrane replacement project. He said that T&H is working on drafting the specifications for Ms. Wisner's review. Once the specifications are approved, they will be ready to go out to bid and award the project in early July.

Lastly, Mr. Neyland shared that T&H submitted 50% design for TRW pump station upgrades. He added that they need to add in electrical HVAC components to get to 90% design and submit the design to DEP for permit approval. The project bidding will start this summer, and construction will start in the fall.

7. Jim Hutchinson to Discuss the SCADA system – vote expected

Mr. Hutchinson shared an update on the lower cost option for the SCADA project and started a discussion about how much we would like to allocate to reprogramming tasks. He said that the total software engineering cost was estimated to be \$34,000 (\$20,000 for R.E. Erickson to fix some SCADA programming, and \$14,000 for T&H and Dupont to provide consulting help). Ms. Barnes asked about the priority tasks in this project and how the items will be funded. Mr. Hutchinson said that Matt Palardy from R.E. Erickson will be able to fix some SCADA programming as he is doing the CIP project, such as addressing the fragile approach for controlling pH, but the other issues would need to be addressed in the SCADA project, including problematic turbidity readings, inconsistent alarm handling, and insufficient documentation on what the alarms mean. He emphasized that creating more consistency with the handling of alarms should be the primary goal of the funding appropriation. Mr. Hutchinson mentioned that work on the SCADA program for the Tower Road Well (TRW) does not need to be included in the SCADA project, since that task can be handled in the TRW upgrades project.

Mr. Hutchinson suggested asking for a \$45,000 amendment at Town Meeting to cover the costs of the SCADA hardware and software project. Ms. Wisner recommended asking for \$100,000 at Town Meeting so the LWD has contingency funds for the project. Mr. Hutchinson noted that he prefers to have contingency funds in one place in the budget. Ms. Hendrickson asked if we could transfer operating budget contingency to this project if we needed it. Ms. Wilkins responded that the reserve fund can be used for extraordinary and unforeseen circumstances, and she recommended keeping contingency in individual projects that are not part of the operating budget. She added that we need Town Meeting approval for a reserve fund transfer. Ms. Wisner asked for her operating budget to not be used as a back-up fund for additional projects. She said that she will have to postpone certain upgrades and services if the Water Commissioners choose to use her budget for unaccounted projects. Mr. Hutchinson presented a quotation for a minimum set of hardware in case we have a failure of one or more PLCs and recommended a fixed budget for software work. The list of software updates will be prioritized and as much will be done as possible under the fixed budget.

MOTION: Commissioner Barnes made a motion to ask Town Meeting to allocate \$45,000 to the SCADA hardware and software project and to bond the funds, if allowed by bond council, or transfer from reserves if necessary. Commissioner Glass seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Hendrickson, Aye; Glass, Aye; Barnes, Aye.

Ms. Wilkins requested detailed information on what we are proposing at Town Meeting and a price breakdown. Mr. Hutchinson said he would reach out to Mr. Palardy for a written quote for the software portion of the project.

8. Close out the Articles for completed projects that have a balance and return \$78,547 to retained earnings - vote expected

- FY20 WTR INVSTG GROUNDWATER - \$1,185.00**
- FY20 WATER REPLC VEHICLES - \$1,800.00**
- FY20 WTR BEDFORD RD PAVING - \$5,441.00**
- FY19 WTR TOWER RD WELL CLEAN - \$176.00**
- FY19 WTR TREATMENT PLANT ROOF - \$50,000.00**
- FY18 WTR MIXR BEDRD STOR TANK - \$19,740.00**
- FY14 WATER NEW METERS & VALVES - \$205.00**

MOTION: Commissioner Glass made a motion to close out the articles for completed projects that have a balance and return \$78,547 to retained earnings. Commissioner Barnes seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Hendrickson, Aye; Glass, Aye; Barnes, Aye.

9. Discuss complaints from Andy Cole, former Water Commissioner, regarding security lights, new signs to remind people to stay out of the pond, newest truck acquisition, and fencing at the Pump Station

Ms. Glass asked if we went through the Planning Board process for the security lights, and if there is an OSHA exception for public utilities. Ms. Wisner responded that she was not aware of any bylaws when the security lights were installed but she is working towards making the lights dark skies compliant. Ms. Wisner added that she is in conversations with the building inspector and they are looking at whether there are exceptions for public safety.

10. Michelle Barnes – Discuss Watershed Protection at Flint's Pond

Ms. Barnes shared an update on her discussions with the Conservation Commission (ConCom). She said that the ConComm and LWD had rangers in the past to enforce regulations around trails and Flint's Pond. She added that currently neither the LWD nor the ConCom have the budget capacity to hire seasonal rangers.

Ms. Barnes suggested a neighborhood watch-type approach. She spoke with Officer Kennedy from the Lincoln Police Department about his attitudes towards neighborhood watch groups and he was okay with the idea. Ms. Barnes said that designated representatives could wear ConCom or LWD logo t-shirts, patrol the trails, and inform other trail walkers of the rules. She added that ConCom recommended asking the police to tag and tow vehicles that are parked on the side of the roads. She suggested that we rely on residents to inform the LWD of violators.

Mr. Hutchinson asked if we shared any articles online regarding watershed protection at Flint's Pond. Ms. Hendrickson responded that she shared an article on LincolnTalk. Ms. Barnes noted that many of the violators are from out of Town and therefore hard to educate. Ms. Hendrickson noted that the neighborhood watch is not ideal in the current COVID-19 climate. And that the best method of awareness is for citizens to inform the police of violators.

Ms. Glass shared that the Town ordinance does not have laws against parking on sides of streets, so tag and tow of parked vehicles is not appropriate. She asked if the Water Commissioners would want to open a conversation with the Roadside and Traffic Committee and with ConCom to create regulations for roadways surrounding Flint's Pond. Ms. Hendrickson and Ms. Barnes were in favor of this idea. The Water Commissioners agreed to reach out to the chairs of Roadside and Traffic Committee and ConComm for further discussion on this topic after Town Meeting.

11. Other Business

Ms. Barnes asked if residents are paying their water bills. Ms. Wisner shared that the most recent bills were mailed on May 1 and she will have a better idea on the revenue status at the next meeting. Ms. Glass asked if there have been any water usage changes since COVID-19. Ms. Wisner said that she will get this information from the plant manager for the next meeting. Ms. Wisner shared that other water systems, such as Springfield Water & Sewer, are reporting drops in revenue, and a few are responding by increasing water rates. Ms. Hendrickson recommended gathering more data before evaluating any plan of action and noted that all towns have different demographics and challenges.

Ms. Hendrickson shared that there are two documents that were added to the LWD website and commended Superintendent Wisner for creating these documents. The first document was a COVID-19 update and the second document detailed how to flush lines in homes that were not in use for an extended period. Ms. Hendrickson added that she will be sharing these documents on LincolnTalk and LincolnSquirrel. Ms. Wisner said that the flushing document was shared with the Town Administrator, and he will pass it along to the Town's Facilities Manager.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:30 AM. Motion made by Commissioner Glass, seconded by Commissioner Barnes. Roll call vote: Hendrickson, Aye; Glass, Aye; Barnes, Aye.

The next meeting of the Water Commissioners is scheduled for June 2, 2020 at 9:00 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Monica Kacprzyk, Administrative Assistant