



TOWN OF LINCOLN

WATER DEPARTMENT

MIDDLESEX COUNTY

MASSACHUSETTS

TOWN OF LINCOLN
WATER DEPARTMENT
16 Lincoln Road
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Phone: 781-259-2669

Water Commissioners Zoom Meeting

May 26, 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.

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://zoom.us/j/95115528465?pwd=bVhMYVBtUkNmZWNiSXlBVk1MT204dz09>

Meeting ID: 951 1552 8465

Dial by your location: +1 646 876 9923 US (New York)

Attendees:

Ruth Ann Hendrickson, Chair

Jennifer Glass, Commissioner

Michelle Barnes, Commissioner

Colleen Wilkins, Finance Director

Jim Hutchinson, Finance Committee

Tom Sander, Finance Committee

MaryBeth Wisner, Water Superintendent

Monica Kacprzyk, Administrative Assistant

Chair Hendrickson called the meeting to order at 9:06 AM.

1. Approve the minutes of April 14, 2020 and May 5, 2020 – vote expected

Mr. Hutchinson recommended changing the sentence, "Ms. Wisner added that there is \$40,000 left in engineering services under the operating budget for FY20," to "Ms. Wisner added that there is \$40,000 left in the reserve fund for FY20."

MOTION: Commissioner Glass made a motion to approve the May 5, 2020 minutes as amended. Commissioner Barnes seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Hendrickson, Aye; Glass, Aye; Barnes, Aye.

MOTION: Commissioner Barnes made a motion to approve the April 14, 2020 minutes as amended. Commissioner Glass seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Hendrickson, Aye, Glass, Aye; Barnes, Aye.

2. Discuss and vote to transfer \$40,000 from the emergency and unforeseen to the FY20 Operating Budget – vote expected

Mr. Hutchinson suggested that the Chair arrange the agenda so Ms. Wilkins' attendance is not needed for the whole meeting. Ms. Hendrickson and Ms. Wisner agreed to take this into consideration for future meeting agendas.

Ms. Wisner stated that the Lincoln Water Department (LWD) is over budget for FY20 and the department needs a fund transfer to get through rest of the fiscal year. Ms. Wisner added that the department has faced a few unexpected water treatment plant (WTP) issues and setbacks, such as a recent compressor issue and a main break at the beginning of March 2020. Ms. Barnes suggested itemizing the list of unexpected expenses. Ms. Glass asked how much is left in the Reserve Fund line item in the FY20 operating budget. Ms. Wisner responded that there is \$40,000 left.

Ms. Wisner listed more unexpected expenses including, but not limited to, online turbidity meter issues, \$6,000 hit fire hydrant, \$15,000 water main break in March 2020, \$5,000 water main break in July 2019, \$4,000 Tower Road Well expenses, lightning strike incident at the WTP, leased vehicle for the WTP manager, new weekend operator, personal protective equipment for COVID-19, SCADA concerns, valve issues, billing assistance for MUNIS, broken main check valve at the raw water pump station, several thousand dollars in advertising for vacant positions, temporary part-time staff to meet DEP requirements for staffing, and additional admin support from the Lincoln Department of Public Works.

Ms. Glass commented that it would be helpful to receive quarterly updates on each operating budget line item, so the Water Commissioners know how much has been spent, how much is encumbered, and how remains available. Ms. Wisner responded that she monitors the budget regularly and moving forward she can provide a quarterly budget update to the Water Commissioners. Ms. Wilkins noted that she can download a spending report from MUNIS, which can be used alongside Ms. Wisner's budget tracking spreadsheet.

Mr. Hutchinson asked Ms. Wisner for a budget projection for the end of the year, and he asked how much she anticipates that the department will be over budget at the end of June 2020. Ms. Wisner responded that the department will be \$36,000 over budget even after the \$40,000 transfer. She added that this projection does not include any payments to Tata & Howard for their engineering agreement. Ms. Wisner noted that the LWD is likely more over budget than her projections.

Ms. Wilkins stated that there may be a case in which the revenue received is higher than the revenue projected. She added that if that occurs, the increased revenue could cover the losses. However, the state must certify the use of retained earnings before they are available for appropriation.

Ms. Wisner agreed to compile a list of unexpected expenses in FY20 and send it to the Water Commissioners.

MOTION: Commissioner Barnes made a motion to transfer \$40,000 from Retained Earnings to the FY20 operating budget. Commissioner Glass seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Hendrickson, Aye; Glass, Aye; Barnes, Aye.

3. Sign the Engineering Agreement – Amendment No. 1 Flint's Pond Water Treatment Plant Coagulant Pilot Study T&H No. 6242 – vote expected

Ms. Hendrickson summarized that the engineering agreement needs \$7,500 for additional required testing. She added that the funds are coming out of the original appropriation for the project, and there should be funds available in the project budget since one phase of the project is being skipped.

MOTION: Commissioner Glass made a motion to sign the Engineering Agreement Amendment No. 1 Flint's Pond Water Treatment Plant Coagulant Pilot Study T&H No. 6242. Commissioner Hendrickson seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Hendrickson, Aye; Glass, Aye; Barnes, Aye.

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

Ms. Wisner requested that the Water Commissioners sign the engineering agreement amendment for services rendered in April and May 2020. She said the funds would come out of engineering services in the FY20 operating budget. Ms. Glass asked if approval of this amendment is possible because of the \$40,000 transfer. Ms. Wisner responded yes. Ms. Wisner noted that the original amendment was for \$15,000, but given the operating budget constraints, she suggested altering the amendment to cover just the money owed to Tata & Howard.

Ms. Wisner said that the LWD received an invoice for \$4,062.01 on April 29th, and they owe roughly \$2,000 for services in May, so the total amount owed is \$6,000.

MOTION: Commissioner Barnes made a motion to approve signing the Engineering Agreement – Amendment No. 1 FY2020 On-Call Engineering Services T&H No. 6234 for \$6,000. Commissioner Glass seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Hendrickson, Aye; Glass, Aye; Barnes, Aye.

5. Discuss the June 13, 2020 ATM Motion

Ms. Wilkins stated that the requested appropriation of \$45,000 for software updates has not yet been approved by bond council and the back-up option is to take the funds out of retained earnings. In discussing preparations for town meeting, Ms. Glass shared before Town Meeting, each presenting department is required to do two tasks: 1) create a recorded presentation of their appropriations request with audio and post it on the town meeting webpage, and 2) host an online Zoom meeting between June 3rd and June 9th so members of the public can provide feedback on the appropriations request and ask questions. She added that the town meeting warrant is getting mailed on June 1. Ms. Hendrickson agreed to do the first presentation recording by herself and the second meeting via a scheduled Water Commissioners' Meeting. The Water Commissioners and LWD agreed to host the public meeting on June 9, 2020 from 9AM – 10AM.

Mr. Hutchinson noted that he did not receive an itemization of how the remaining funds will be used for the \$330,000 coagulant project. Ms. Wisner agreed to send the itemization to Mr. Hutchinson.

6. Discuss the June 13, 2020 ATM presentation

Ms. Glass and Mr. Hutchinson said they would email Ms. Hendrickson their feedback on her presentation notes. Ms. Barnes commented on the first slide, last bullet under #4 that said, “need for higher wages to attract new hires in a tight labor market.” She recommended being more specific about this being about the job market for the water operators and the widespread shortage in this industry since macroeconomic labor market conditions are not tight and in fact unusually poor by historical standards.

Ms. Wilkins suggested removing the first bullet in the first slide that said, “debt service increase to fund essential capital investments.” She noted that the debt service did not increase, and the debt service is \$267,000 for both FY20 and FY21.

7. Jim Hutchinson to discuss the FY21 Capital Plan

Mr. Hutchinson had no open issues to discuss regarding the FY21 Capital Plan. He summarized that the requested appropriation for Annual Town Meeting includes \$45,000 for SCADA and PLC programming, \$100,000 for residuals handling, and \$125,000 for chemical handling and ventilation systems. He added that the requested sub-total for borrowing is \$270,000.

8. Other Business

Ms. Barnes commented that considering the recent operating budget overage, she recommended that the Water Commissioners discuss how to make better estimates of unforeseen costs. She suggested itemizing the list of unexpected expenses for current and prior fiscal years, including what they are for and how much they cost, to better understand how regularly and to what extent such unforeseen expenses occur and to better plan for such contingencies in the future.

Mr. Hutchinson recommended reviewing the budget as the LWD spends its funds throughout the year. He added that a comparison of the budget for FY20 and FY21 would be helpful to analyze if we have budgeted enough money for this coming year. Ms. Wisner noted that outside services costs should drop dramatically in FY21 since most of the funds this year were used for the membranes and filter troubleshooting.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:16 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 9, 2020 at 9:00 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Monica Kacprzyk, Administrative Assistant