



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

June 23, 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/98240108379?pwd=aGoxOTFXNzhldzIjPMFIyMzB4SldVdz09>

Meeting ID: 982 4010 8379

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

Password: 937964

Attendees:

Ruth Ann Hendrickson, Chair

Jennifer Glass, Former Commissioner (left early)

Michelle Barnes, Commissioner

Colleen Wilkins, Finance Director

Jim Hutchinson, Commissioner

Tom Sander, Finance Committee

MaryBeth Wisner, Water Superintendent

Monica Kacprzyk, Administrative Assistant

Chair Hendrickson called the meeting to order at 9:04 AM.

1) Approve minutes of May 26, 2020

Commissioner Hutchinson made a motion to approve the May 26, 2020 minutes as amended. Commissioner Hendrickson seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Hendrickson, Aye; Barnes, Aye; Hutchinson, Aye.

2) Organization of Commission

Chairman Hendrickson stated that she would like to step down as Chairman; Jim Hutchinson volunteered to assume that position.

Commissioner Hendrickson made a motion to appoint Commissioner Hutchinson as the Chair of the Water Commissioners. Commissioner Barnes seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Hendrickson, Aye; Barnes, Aye; Hutchinson, Aye.

Liaison positions were discussed. Hendrickson stated that typically the Commission has liaisons to the Selects, the Planning Board, and the Conservation Commission. Liaisons need not attend all meetings of their assigned boards, just monitor the agendas and attend as appropriate. The need for liaisons to other committees and boards may be needed from

time to time and assignments will be distributed as needed. New liaison assignments: Hutchinson to the Selects, Hendrickson to the Planning Board, and Barnes to the Conservation Commission.

3) Drought update

The chart showing the level of Flints Pond revealed that the pond is full despite recent dry weather. The normal summer water use restrictions for May 1 to September 30 are in place, as required by the DEP because Lincoln annually exceeds the withdrawal permit and the daily per person water use guideline of 65 gallons. Superintendent Wisner informed the Commissioners that MWWA Mass Drought Task Force is meeting on Wednesday June 24 to assess the conditions and may vote to impose more stringent restrictions than those required by the LWD official drought plan. Ms. Wisner will report back on the results of that meeting on July 7. If changes to the restrictions become necessary, the Commissioners will use many channels to inform the public: road side signs, LincolnTalk, Lincoln Squirrel, and possibly reverse 911, although that should be used very sparingly in consultation with the Selects. In the meantime, the Commissioners voted to stay with Lincoln's Level 1 restrictions that are currently in place. Ms. Barnes advised the group to use moral suasion and ask residents to be as restrictive as possible with the forethought that we may need to assist other water systems across the state if drought conditions worsen, as we all draw from the same water table.

Commissioner Hutchinson made a motion to stay with the current Level 1 restrictions and encourage residents to be as restrictive as possible. Commissioner Barnes seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Barnes, Aye; Hutchinson, Aye; Hendrickson, Aye.

4) Use of recreational sprinklers

A customer called to see if it is OK to allow children to run through a sprinkler. Hendrickson and Hutchinson wanted to allow that in some limited fashion, but Barnes was concerned about the loss of water at a time when the Charles Water Basin in which Lincoln lies is already stressed and current weather trends suggest probable drought conditions this summer. The Commissioners voted to allow children sprinkler use two days a week for half an hour on the days outdoor watering is allowed (addresses ending in an even number can irrigate the lawn on Tuesdays and/or Saturdays and addresses ending in an odd number can irrigate on Wednesdays and/or Sundays).

Commissioner Hutchinson made a motion to allow children sprinklers to be used at any time of day for 30 minutes on same day as you would for outside watering. Commissioner Hendrickson seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Hendrickson, Aye; Barnes, Aye; Hutchinson, Aye.

5) Project summary

The Commissioners reviewed the current project status chart. The chart had not yet been updated with the results from the June 13 Town Meeting. Discussion ensued on improvements to the chart format. Hutchinson recommended creating a separate tab for projects that are finished and requested a copy of the original spreadsheet in Excel format (not PDF). Hendrickson asked to see two separate columns for the predicted and current completion date. Ms. Barnes recommended having two spreadsheets – one for the original plan and the other for any “slippage.” Lastly, Hutchinson recommended color coding the rows based on project status. Hutchinson accepted the task of collecting feedback from members of the group and editing the spreadsheet to create a version that meets everyone's needs.

6) Engineering and LSP Services Agreement – Amendment No. 1 Tower Road Well Potassium Hydroxide Release Assistance T&H No. 6153, (\$5,000).

Superintendent Wisner explained that the DEP required monthly reports until the testing of the well water showed acceptable water quality. It took longer than anticipated for the water to recover from the KOH spill, so an extra report was required. Moved to approve: Hutchinson. Seconded: Barnes. Roll call vote: Hendrickson, Aye; Barnes, Aye; Hutchinson, Aye.

7) Sign contract with Tata and Howard for Engineering assistance with Unidirectional Flushing T & H No 6125. Funds FY21 Operating Budget Engineering Services (\$58,900).

Work with Tata and Howard to review drawings, Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and valve tie cards on the known or assumed locations of existing hydrants and gate valves in the water distribution system. Collect exact location data for approximately 455 hydrants and 650 gate valves. Update the GPS location database. Develop a Unidirectional Flushing Plan. Superintendent Wisner explained that proper flushing of the mains is standard practice and is important to reduce TTHM concentrations and sludge accumulations. Lincoln had a flushing plan, but it was never documented. Verifying the location of the water gates and repairing those that are broken are important to allow isolation sections of the mains in case of a break. In response to a query from Barnes whether the Town should share in the cost to address issues with the hydrants, Hendrickson explained that the hydrants are used to accomplish the flushing, but this is not part of a hydrant maintenance operation. Moved to approve: Hutchinson. Seconded: Barnes. Roll call vote: Hendrickson: aye; Barnes: aye, Hutchinson: aye

8) Sign contract with Tata and Howard for Engineering assistance agreement for Risk and Resilience Assessment. T&H No. 6333, funds FY21 Operating Budget Engineering Services (\$25,600) On October 23, 2018,

America's Water Infrastructure Act (AWIA) was signed into law. The law requires community (drinking) water systems serving more than 3,300 people to develop or update risk assessments and emergency response plans (ERPs). The law specifies the components that the risk assessments and ERPs must address, and establishes deadlines by which water systems must certify to EPA the completion of the risk assessment and ERP. Systems serving 3,301-49,999 compliance date June 30, 2021 for the ERP revisions. Assess the risks to, and resilience of, its system. Hutchinson asked whether the LWD personnel could manage to do this work. Superintendent Wisner explained that the LWD will be supplying most of the data, and that IT manager Michael Dolan will complete the internet securities section, but that the analysis of the risk is beyond the Department's capabilities. Barnes commented that this could be because the LWD does not have access to data from other water departments and other needed information to establish benchmarks and to properly assess the risk. This Assessment will require updating every 5 years; the Department should be able to perform the future updates. Moved to approve: Hendrickson. Seconded: Barnes. Roll call Vote: Hendrickson: aye; Barnes: aye, Hutchinson: aye

9) Sign contract with Tata and Howard for Engineering assistance agreement for Flint's Pond WTP Residuals Handling Evaluation T&H No. 6337, Funds FY21 Operating Budget Engineering Services (\$24,000)

It was unclear how this related to the bond warrant passed at town meeting which purported to address the same issue. Item tabled until next Commission meeting.

10) Long Term Supply Evaluation project, funds FY21 Operating Budget Engineering Services.

Ryan Neyland submitted a tentative schedule for starting this project in August and delivery of the report in December, which would allow time to complete the assessment of both capital cost and operational cost for bringing the whole system up to date, including the new coagulation pretreatment facility. Commissioner Hendrickson commented that the Evaluation Project consisted of three independent assessments: joining MWRA; using new filtration technology with lower operating costs; and completing the overhaul of the existing plant. She felt strongly that the MWRA assessment should be started immediately so we would know if that was a realistic option and, if so, how long it would take to implement. The Commission needs to know how long we must continue to operate the existing well and WTP to decide how much to invest in the current equipment. The Commissioners asked Ms. Wisner to bring forward a formal contract proposal that addresses the cost and timeline for each of these investigations plus the final assessment comparing the three options to the next meeting.

11) Discuss the departments re-opening plan due to COVID-19

Ms. Wisner informed the Commission of procedures she had put in place to conform to safety guidelines for health and safety during the pandemic. She is meeting regularly with various groups, including the Town committee and a group of other water superintendents. She noted that the Pump Station building is too constricted to easily implement the

requirements for social distancing. The Commissioners commended her for responding quickly and thoroughly to the requirements and finding creative cost-effective ways to implement them.

12) Update on impact on revenues and expenses due to COVID-19

Ms. Wisner presented a chart comparing revenue and water use in 2019 vs 2020. So far, revenue and use are slightly above that of last year. She also presented a list of COVID-19 related expenses but was unclear how much would be recovered from Federal programs. Finance Director Wilkins expected that all the expenses should be recovered and will work with Ms. Wisner to ensure the expenses are properly submitted.

The Commissioners asked about the ability of the budget to absorb any extra costs. Wilkins confirmed that the FY20 budget was already \$11,000 over with June bills yet to be paid. Wisner predicted an overage of about \$30,000 which will have to be covered by a Town Meeting transfer from Retained Earnings. Hutchinson requested monthly reports on the budget at the line item level; he will work with Wisner to develop a format. Barnes requested that we look at historical information on what has been causing the continuous budget shortfall. Hendrickson reminded the Commissioners that she had done this study and the information was in the report prepared for (but never presented to) the FinComm; her study showed the driving factors to be the Engineering Services and Outside Services line items plus personnel costs associated with the need to use contract staff. FinComm liaison Sander worried that we had under budgeted again for FY21. Wisner noted that Outside Services should be greatly reduced going forward as we will now be able to do much of the maintenance work with in-house staff.

13) Superintendent performance review

The Superintendents performance review is usually done in May with target completion before the end of July. Chairman Hendrickson and Ms. Wisner decided to delay the review this year due to the other pressing business and to give new Commissioners more time to work with Ms. Wisner. The Town has an official form for use in personnel reviews. The Superintendent's review must be done in an open public meeting; the Superintendent may choose whether to attend. An important part of the review is developing, jointly with the Superintendent, a list of objectives against which the Superintendent's performance will be measured. The Commissioners decided that each one would independently create a "strawman" assessment BY JULY 15 and send them to Hutchinson for merging. Hutchinson will talk with Ms. Wisner about her self-assessment and will talk with Town Administrator Tim Higgins to get further guidance on the process. The public assessment will be done at a public Zoom meeting on **Wednesday, July 22 at 8AM**.

14) Discuss FY22 Operating and Capital budget due date for Superintendent submission

Superintendent Wisner has already prepared a draft FY22 Capital Budget and has started working on a draft Operating Budget. Hutchinson and Wilkins will contact the CapComm and the FinComm respectively to determine when those Commissions will want to review our budgets. The Commissioners decided to start the budgeting process in July.

15) Discuss and vote to authorize the Chairman to sign the contract documents to award the bid to D and C Construction for the WTP CIP and Chemical Feed Upgrades

These documents can be circulated for electronic signature. The Commissioners approved that process.

16) Other Business

Hendrickson suggested we change the regular schedule of Commission meetings to Wednesdays to allow the staff more time to respond to last minute changes in weeks when Monday is a holiday. The Commissioners agreed that future meetings will be held at 8AM on the first Wednesday of the month, starting in August. The next two Commission Zoom meetings will be on July 7 (regular business) and 22 (performance review) at 9 AM.

Commissioner Barnes shared that a concerned citizen contacted her to request that we notify the Lincoln Council on Aging of any customers who are struggling to pay their water bills so that they can offer assistance. Superintendent Wisner explained that the Water Commission does not have the power to offer hardship payment terms. The water bill collections are handled by the Lincoln Treasurer, Krystal Elder and there is by law very little flexibility: unpaid bills become a lien on the property. Wisner recommends that the COA address the issue with Krystal.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:55 AM. Moved: Hutchinson Seconded: Barnes
Roll call vote: Hendrickson: aye; Barnes: aye, Hutchinson: aye

Respectfully submitted,

Monica Kacprzyk, Administrative Assistant
Ruth Ann Hendrickson, Commissioner