



TOWN OF LINCOLN
WATER DEPARTMENT

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Water Commissioners Zoom Meeting
January 14, 2021 8:00 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.

Topic: Board of Water Commissioners Zoom Meeting

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Meeting ID: 933 9332 7939 Password: 770882

Dial by your location: 646- 876- 9923

Attendees:

Jim Hutchinson, Chairman	
Ruth Ann Hendrickson, Commissioner	
Michelle Barnes, Commissioner	
Dan Pereira, Assistant Town Administrator	Left the meeting at 8:30 AM
Gary Tuck, Treatment Plant Manager	Left the meeting at 8:43 AM
Stephen Olson, Distribution Operator	Left the meeting at 9:10 AM
Tom Sander, Finance Committee Liaison	Joined at 8:30 AM; left at 10 AM
Cindy Sheriff via cell phone 508-314-0912	

Chairman Hutchinson called the meeting to order at 8:01 AM

1. Appointment: 8:00am Dan Pereira to discuss revised COVID procedures

Due to the rising rates of COVID-19 infection, the Town is moving to more strict protocols to minimize the chance of infection. Alison Boland, the Department Administrator, will work remotely. Phone interface is being improved so that Alison is the first choice on the menu to help customers reach her quickly. New hire Rick Nolli will be teamed exclusively with Gary Tuck at the WTP to minimize contact with the rest of the team and to help him learn the operation of our systems. Steve and Joe will always work alone in their assigned trucks. (The weekend operators are always alone.) The staff will be offered COVID vaccine in Phase 2 of the State's vaccination plan, which is planned to start in February.

The Department is currently scheduling work 3 months in advance, which is working well.

2. Appointment: 8:10am Gary Tuck to discuss WTP Operations

The CIP improvement project will start soon and is expected to take about two weeks. Gary plans to come in early to run the required testing etc. and will then shut down the WTP for the day and supply water to the system as needed from the Tower Road well; the well should be able to handle the demand, since we are in the low water use season.

On Jan. 5, the TTHM level at the Sam Brooks House test point registered 83 ppb; Gary notified MASS DEP of the exceedance. The official limit is 80 ppb for a four-quarter running average; it is still possible the average will be OK. Gary would like to ask the DEP to allow us to change test points because the Sam Brooks House is closed, so the water in the mains is stagnant.

Gary is not convinced that the coagulation treatment is necessary; the new filters are working well enough that it is possible that they will sufficiently reduce system TTHMs. Also we are supposed to finish the project this spring about how to flush the pipes to minimize the impact of stagnant water, which could reduce TTHM readings. Hendrickson is still concerned because, as she understands it, the filters do not remove organics from the water and the organic water content has risen over the years. Gary will check with the DEP to see if we can delay that project as we continue to monitor the TTHM levels with the new filters in place,

and continue to flush the system to minimize the impact of stagnant water. Jim prefers not to spend the money on the coagulation project if we don't have to.

Gary alerted the Commissioners that we've been getting transmembrane and resistance readings on skid #2 that are higher than other skids; he plans to contact the contractor in case it needs to be fixed under warranty.

3. Appointment: 8:20am Stephen Olson to discuss Distribution Operations

The distribution team is up to date on tasks. He is arranging for the annual inspection of the fire extinguishers. The team is surveying the hydrants to locate them and see if planned repairs have been completed. Ten repairs that need work are on hold pending warmer weather; while five others are being evaluated. They are trying to locate all the hydrants.

Hendrickson believes that the locations of all the hydrants are noted on the GIS maps. Commissioner Barnes offered to train the operators in the use of the GIS system. The 2011 Wright-Pierce report on "Water Main Improvement Program & Capital Improvement Plan Report" may have information on the hydrants. Hendrickson and Barnes will try to find that report and provide it to Hutchinson and Olson.

The last leak detection survey identified 7 leaks; 5 have been fixed, one is in process, and one is on hold waiting for customer notification. Barnes noted that the family at that address has had two recent deaths and the daughter is just moving into the house. The Commissioners agreed to give the customer a little leeway. Barnes will contact the customer to help resolve the issue.

Residents near the water tank have expressed concern about several trees on that site. Olson has had their condition assessed, some need removal. Olson will ask Boland to assure the resident that the Department is investigating the tree problem.

The distribution team is using this relatively slow time to improve the organization in the various storage areas.

4. Chairman Hutchinson to update the Board on Cap Com discussions

Hutchinson's presentation to the Capital Planning Committee went well; no major concerns although they may come back later with more questions. They discussed vehicle policy, but there is no town wide policy, just case by case efforts to adopt reasonable policies for each relevant department. Regarding vehicle leases, we are cautioned to beware of high charges often assessed at the end of the lease for excessive wear; we should inform the operators. Point made that leasing incurs about a 3% interest charge while our bonding interest is currently under 1%. The Cap Com agreed with the general policy of replacing vehicles every 10 years or when annual repair costs become too high. Hendrickson asked about executing the buy option at the end of the lease and continuing to own the vehicles until the 10-year mark.

Jonathan Dwyer, Select, noted that Route 2A is scheduled for repaving in 2023-4. We should assess the need to replace that main and, if needed, coordinate with that project. Hutchinson will discuss with Olson how much of the cost of replacing a main is attributed to repaving and whether it is possible to test a pipe by boring into it. We discussed repairing pipes by lining them. Hendrickson said the Commissioners had researched this and found that it is usually done for sewer pipes, which are larger, and that after the relining every junction has to be dug up and cleaned. It is not as cheap an option as hoped. Every town and city in the country has the problem of aging mains; the department needs to monitor emerging technology to address this problem.

5. Discuss the FY22 Capital Request – vote expected

Hutchinson recommended changing two line items:

Water Audit: Hutchinson recommends that we go ahead with the Water Audit as we have not done one since 2012 and we still do not meet the DEP regulation of 10% UAW. T&H has removed the cost of leak detection from the quote since the department now does that work internally. The new figure is \$31.5K.

Hutchinson moved to reduce the line item to \$31.5K. Hendrickson seconded.

Roll Call Vote: Hutchinson – aye. Hendrickson – aye. Barnes – aye.

Tower Road Well replacement: After a site visit, Kleinfelder was able to reduce the estimate to \$473K by removing work associated with meeting Conservation Commission requirements. Barnes was concerned that they should not remove all contingencies for site restoration such as replanting; she felt that about \$5K should be left in the estimate. The Commissioners discussed the trade-off of budgeting too much, since the contractors could access this public information and bid high accordingly, versus budgeting low with the risk that the project might be delayed by a need to come back to the Town for more money.

Hutchinson moved to reduce the line item to \$473K plus any money needed for site restoration up to \$5K. Barnes: seconded.

Role Call Vote: Hutchinson – aye. Hendrickson – aye. Barnes – aye.

6. Review and approve draft insert for the Town of Lincoln Annual Report – vote expected

The Commissioners reviewed the draft of the Department’s section of the Annual Town Report and agreed to several changes. Hutchinson moved to approve the report as amended subject to updates in the staffing or budget that occur before the March 15th deadline. Barnes seconded.

Roll Call Vote: Hutchinson – aye. Hendrickson – aye. Barnes – aye.

7. Review and approve draft Annual Water Quality Report – vote expected

The Commissioners reviewed the draft of the Consumer Confidence Report (CCR). They agreed to several wording changes. Barnes suggested rearranging the test results table to match the one used in the Concord CCR which presents the contaminants in decreasing order of seriousness; she agreed to amend the document accordingly. Also discussed was how well we protect our water sources from accidental contamination by activities on properties that border Flint’s Pond and how best to inform residents on this issue, especially new residents. Barnes was aware that the LLCT was working on creating an information document and she will try to get drinking water protection added to that document. The Commissioners will review the CCR again before voting.

8. Discuss AG application for 58 Codman Rd Kitchen Bathroom – vote expected

The Commissioners reviewed the letter from Pete Lowy, the Codman Farm Manager, explaining that the water line that services the kitchen also services the upper pasture and gardens; 99% of the water use is strictly agricultural. Hutchinson moved to grant agricultural status to that meter. Barnes seconded.

Roll Call Vote: Hutchinson – aye. Hendrickson – aye. Barnes – aye.

9. Chairman Hutchinson to update the Board on Superintendent search

Numerous candidates responded to the advertisement for superintendent, but none were found suitable by the Search Committee. The \$117K salary offered was at the median level for Massachusetts. The position will be advertised again at a salary of \$130K.

10. Approve minutes from December 30, 2020 – vote expected

The latest draft of the December 30 minutes was approved as written.

Roll Call Vote: Hutchinson – aye. Hendrickson – aye. Barnes – aye.

11. 11. Other Business

None

Future Meeting dates:

- February 2, 2021 via zoom at 8:00am
- March 11, 2021 via zoom at 8:00am

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:05 am. Moved: Chairman Hutchinson. Seconded: Barnes.

Roll Call Vote: Hutchinson – aye. Hendrickson – aye. Barnes – aye.

Respectfully submitted,

Ruth Ann Hendrickson, Water Commissioner