



## BOARD OF WATER COMMISSIONERS

# Cotuit Fire District

## Water Department

4300 FALMOUTH ROAD, P. O. BOX 451

COTUIT, MASS. 02635

03/20/2019

The monthly meeting of the Board of Water Commissioners was held at Freedom Hall at 5:30 p.m. Chairman Tom Hoppensteadt, Commissioner Don Campbell, Commissioner Mark Robinson, and Superintendent Chris Wiseman were present.

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. Lisa Mycock, Chair of the Bylaw Committee opened the joint bylaw meeting, and took role call noting that Penny Levert and Mimi McConnell were also present.

Chairman Hoppensteadt read a proposal to remove the existing capital improvement bylaw in article 9 section 5 and replace it with new language establishing a new stabilization fund in keeping with the directive from the Prudential Committee for the Water Department to be self-funding and in accordance with MGL Ch. 40 Section 5B as amended 2016. The stabilization account would be funded by a new revenue source that is being proposed as part of the new water rates being introduced and going into effect on July 1, 2019. The proposed rate will be \$10 billed twice annually (total of \$20) per service connection. This revenue would be accounted for separately by the Water Department and would be kept in a separate account with the treasurer. The funds would then be expended for extraordinary or unforeseen expenditures including but not limited to capital improvements, emergency situations requiring immediate funds, and or land management activities necessary to protect the integrity of watersheds. Use of these funds would require a 2/3 vote at a district meeting.

After some discussion and clarification the bylaw committee agreed to meet again to review the language in order to prepare the proposal for the upcoming warrant for the annual district meeting. The bylaw committee adjourned their meeting.

Chairman Hoppensteadt opened the public comment segment of the Water Commissioners Meeting and took questions from district residents regarding the new rate proposal. Residents asked how the rate to tax ratio was determined now and why the commissioners had the authority to set the water rates. The board responded to these questions directing residents to the existing bylaws for the Water Commissioners responsibilities and addressed the questions regarding the calculations. More formal information will be available at the upcoming Civic Association Meeting on April 16<sup>th</sup>. With no further questions or discussion, the public comment segment was closed.

The commissioners reviewed and approved the warrants as well as the February 13, 2019 meeting minutes.

Mr. Wiseman gave the water quality report, noting that all total coliform tests were completed and were clear. VOC and MTBE samples were completed and the nitrate testing will be done in April.

Mr. Wiseman then went on to give the Superintendent's report.

Monthly Pumpage Results is as follows:

	<u>2019</u>	<u>2018</u>	<u>+/-</u>
February	6,997,000	5,641,000	+1,356,000

February Stats:

There were two leaks discovered during the month of February accounting for 1.1M gallons of the increase in pumpage. There were no new service installations or service replacements.

Truck Update - should be ready for pick up by the end of March.

TowerNorth - one carrier has moved equipment to the new tower.

Security System - Valley Communications work is almost complete. They are adding one more camera at the office to eliminate a blind spot in coverage and there are two cameras at each tank site to be installed once the electrical work is complete. Representatives from GHD, Valley Communications and SCADA will be onsite during the week of 3/25 for a walk through to determine next steps for the project.

Budget - Based on recommendations from Secure Networks the water department will be submitting an edit to the draft budget that was presented to the Prudential Committee earlier this month. The two office computers are running software that will be unsupported as of January 2020 and the storage is insufficient for upgrading the operating system. The superintendent recommended adding \$4k to the computer/printer budget for FY2020 to cover the purchase of two new computers and to rebuild one of the existing ones for the new Assistant Superintendent. The commissioners approved this requested and authorized the office to notify the treasurer of the change.

Commissioner Robinson asked for clarification on the Water Management Permit that Tata & Howard is working on for the district. As part of the Barnstable Land Trust he has received a request for a lot of information from the engineer and had concerns regarding the land use restrictions and which parcels were being included in their calculations. He would like further information from the principal at T&H who may have a bit more experience in this area than the associate who is currently working on the project. Superintendent Wiseman will follow up with Patrick O'Neale.

The commissioners then discussed the proposed rate increase and made a motion to present the rate increase scenario that implements the full increase in the first year.

The commissioners then discussed the candidates for the Assistant Superintendent position. There were 14 applicants for the position, and 10 interviews were conducted based on qualifications and experience. Superintendent Wiseman narrowed the search down to his top two choices and brought those resumes before the Board for review. References on both candidates were checked and pending a successful CORI check he would like to offer the position to candidate #1. This candidate had the best combination of experience, licensure and mechanical knowledge of our existing treatment system and the Superintendent felt he would be the best fit for the position. The commissioners asked to schedule a meet and greet with the candidate to be held on Tuesday, March 26<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 pm at the Water Department Office. Pending a successful meeting they would then make an offer to the candidate if appropriate.

The Superintendent and the BOWC then discussed the cost overrun of the cost of service and water rate study to determine the appropriate compensation for the engineering company.

Chairman Hoppensteadt notified the BOWC that he had received a communication from the treasurer regarding the accrued paid time off report as of the end of the 2018 fiscal year. He was questioning 6.5 hours of vacation time that the superintendent carried over in November of 2017. The board discussed the paid time off policy and agreed that, as written, all carry over time was at the discretion of the Superintendent. They made a motion to approve the report as it was submitted and at a future meeting will insert a more specific carryover provision with the next employee handbook revision. In the meantime, Chairman Hoppensteadt will draft a memo to the treasurer notifying him of the board's decision.

The next regular meeting of the board was set for Wednesday, April 17th at 5:30 p.m. at Freedom Hall, which is the day after the Civic Association meeting introducing the new rate structure to the district. The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "T. Hoppensteadt", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Thomas Hoppensteadt, Chairman