



BOARD OF WATER COMMISSIONERS

Cotuit Fire District Water Department

4300 FALMOUTH ROAD, P. O. BOX 451
COTUIT, MASS. 02635

04/16/2025

The Board of Water Commissioners held their monthly meeting on Wednesday, April 16, 2025, at 5:45 p.m. at Freedom Hall. Present at the meeting were Chairman David Churbuck, Commissioner Mark Robinson, Commissioner Scott Horsley, Superintendent Chris Wiseman and Office Manager, Jen Nash.

The meeting was called to order at 5:45 p.m. and was opened to public comment. There were no comments at this time.

Mr. William Caulder appeared before the Board to dispute a \$1,000 fine issued for tampering with a public water meter, as outlined in Massachusetts General Law Part I, Title XXII, Chapter 165, Section 11. Mr. Caulder explained that his property is currently under construction and that the water meter had frozen. According to his account, a neighbor—whom he identified as a plumber—removed the frozen meter and installed a shut-off valve. A subsequent plumber placed a red PEX spacer in its place. When the Water Department was later called to reinstall a new meter, it was discovered that the water service was active, water was dripping into a bucket, and the property had the ability to draw unmetered water through the PEX piping.

Mr. Caulder described the circumstances and requested that the fine be waived. After a thorough discussion, the Board agreed to take the matter under advisement. Mr. Caulder was instructed to provide a copy of the plumber's license, as licensed professionals are expected to know that tampering with a public water meter is prohibited. The Board also agreed to consult with Attorney Mark Boudreau to confirm that the statute was correctly interpreted and that the fine was properly assessed. The commissioners voted unanimously to table the discussion and defer it to the May meeting.

Chairman Churbuck read "Appendix A" of the Cybersecurity Grant application into the record. The appendix authorizes Superintendent Wiseman to sign the application and act on the department's behalf in all related matters. The Board voted unanimously to approve the authorization, and Chairman Churbuck signed Appendix A.

Superintendent Wiseman reported that March water testing showed no detections of Total Coliform. PFOS sampling at the production wells is scheduled for next week. Commissioner Horsley requested that additional samples be taken from the test wells on Mariner Circle for the specific analysis needed by Mark Nelson to continue PFOS source fingerprinting.

Although previously scheduled for every six months, he recommended accelerating the testing timeline.

The superintendent gave his report:

	<u>2024</u>	<u>2025</u>	<u>+/-</u>
March	6,781,000	6,954,000	+173,000

New Service = 0; Replacement Services = 0; Leaks = 0

Association Updates -Superintendent Wiseman attended the NEWWA Annual Meeting in Western Massachusetts. MRWA - class schedule has been released; all the operators have signed up for Continuing Ed classes. There is an application in the current warrant for Keegan's MWWA membership. Once submitted, he will enroll in the Intro to Water Works class needed to prepare him for his license exam.

Generators - Station #1 - No official report has been received regarding the condition of the generator. However, the technician who performed the annual maintenance noted extensive damage due to a rodent infestation-reportedly the worst they had seen-and expressed doubt that the unit can be repaired. A replacement quote will not be available in time for the Annual District Meeting. If replacement is necessary, it will need to be addressed at a Special District Meeting or next year's Annual District Meeting.

CyberSecurity - Appendix A was signed, and the grant application will be submitted this week.

Staffing Update - The new water operator, Keegan Duval is working out well and will be attending Intro to Water Works in the coming weeks.

W2 Issue 2024 - Tax Day has passed, and W-2 forms have still not been issued. The Treasurer informed the Superintendent that we are currently in a queue with the payroll provider, PayChex, with no confirmed timeline for receipt. All employees participating in the Barnstable County Retirement system will need to file either a tax extension or an amended return.

PFOS/PFOA Litigation - Superintendent Wisemen informed the Board that he has approved two more claims for Tyco and BASF. There are 12 other companies that they are still in negotiations with. He also noted a correction to the draft minutes of the March meeting noting that 4 companies have settled (not 5) and one has filed for bankruptcy. The draft minutes will be updated.

Drought Levels - The cape is still experiencing Level II drought conditions. The rain in recent weeks have raised the water table by 1" but is not enough to impact the drought status.

Consumer Confidence Report (CCR) - Commissioner Robinson commended the staff on the 2024 CCR, which was distributed to consumers last week. He noted that the new format is more user-friendly and appreciated the section dedicated to providing updates from the Board. Staff acknowledged that they had inadvertently omitted giving Commissioner Robinson photo credit for the beautiful images of Eagle Pond featured in the report.

Source Water Protection Plan (SWPP) - Commissioner Horsley reviewed a report detailing data from 114 private onsite irrigation wells installed throughout the district. The report compared current public water usage to usage levels prior to the installation of these wells. The data show that the wells have reduced public water demand—specifically water treated to drinking water standards—by over 12 million gallons. This reduction averages 142,000 gallons per day, or approximately 15%, during the 90-day peak usage period.

Commissioner Horsley also highlighted the benefit from a water quality perspective. When considering contaminants such as nitrogen, approximately 80% is naturally attenuated through these private irrigation systems. This level of nitrogen reduction is equivalent to removing the wastewater impact of 24 sewer homes, which would otherwise represent a capital investment of roughly \$100,000 per home.

Public Education Meeting - Source Water Protection & Wastewater Management

The Board is coordinating with the President of the Cotuit-Santuit Civic Association to host a public education session on Source Water Protection and Wastewater Management. The Civic Association has proposed holding the meeting in August, in conjunction with their Annual Meeting, to maximize attendance, particularly from seasonal residents with a vested interest in these topics.

The Board plans to invite several speakers, including:

- Commissioner Horsley, who also chairs the Comprehensive Wastewater Management Ad Hoc Committee
 - Rob Steen, Town of Barnstable DPW, to present on the current CWMP
 - Zee Crocker, Executive Director of the Barnstable Clean Water Coalition, to discuss IA septic systems
 - Anastasia Rudenko, Consultant (GHD), to present on Satellite Treatment Systems as outlined in the pending Wastewater Proposal
 - Bryan Horsley, Environmental Project Assistant at the Massachusetts Alternative Septic System Test Center (MASSTC), to speak on diversion strategies and alternative solutions such as self-composting toilets
- The Commissioners also plan to extend formal invitations to Town Councilor Seth Burdick and State Representative Kip Diggs to attend the session.

Cotuit Elementary Conservation Restriction - Commissioner Robinson connected with the Town and with the district's council on the status of the conservation restriction. It is currently in the hands of the

town's legal office to be reviewed, and they will get back to us on the approval status. Commissioner Robinson offered to work with them on the State review when it is ready.

Enabling Legislation - This has not yet advanced through the state. It is not likely to pass prior to the Annual District Meeting. Chairman Churbuck will continue to be in touch with Rep. Digg's legal aid.

Cape Cod Commission Rate Study - They have received a grant from the state to collect and analyze data from different water suppliers regarding their water rates. Cotuit sets the bar for assessing rates to encourage conservation (high rates for high use, low rates for low use). Commissioner Robinson will invite Tara to come to the May meeting to discuss the project.

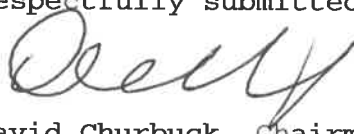
New Business/Matters Not Anticipated - None at this time. There was no additional public comment.

The minutes for the March 26th regular meeting were reviewed and approved.

Budget & Candidates night is scheduled for Tuesday, May 20th. The district will hold its annual elections on Tuesday May 27th and the Annual District meeting will be held on Wednesday, May 28th.

The date for the next meeting was set for Wednesday, May 14, 2025. The meeting was then adjourned at 6:50 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'D. Churbuck', written over a horizontal line.

David Churbuck, Chairman
Board of Water Commissioners