BOARD OF WATER COMMISSIONERS

Cotuit Fire District

Water Department

4300 FALMOUTH ROAD, P. O. BOX 451

COTUIT, MASS. 02635

09/16/2026

The Board of Water Commissioners held their monthly meeting on Wednesday, September 16, 2026, at Freedom Hall and via Zoom. Present at the meeting were Chairman David Churbuck; Commissioner Scott Horsley; Commissioner Mark Robinson; Superintendent Chris Wiseman; Office Manager Jen Nash.

Chairman Churbuck called the meeting to order at 5:45 p.m.

Public Comment – None at this time. No leak adjustment requests were submitted.

Superintendent Wiseman reported that there were no total coliform detections and noted that the next PFAS testing will take place in October.

The superintendent gave his report:

	2025	2026	+/-
August	31,197,000	25,446,000	-5,757,000

Service activity was reviewed: 1 new service, 1 replacement, 0 leaks.

It was noted that there are now 133 private irrigation wells installed in the district.

Association Updates –MRWA held their Trifecta event in early September.

Generators - Superintendent Wiseman reported that he has received quotes for a small generator for the Santuit Tank and is awaiting final pricing from the selected vendor. The generator for Station #1 currently has an estimated lead time of 19 weeks.

Water Main Replacement – Superintendent Wiseman reported that the engineering contract has been received for the Roosevelt/Truman water main project, which is scheduled for Spring 2027. He noted that the estimated cost of water main installation has increased from approximately $300 per foot during the Lewis Pond Road project to approximately $440 per foot.

Tank Cleaning & Inspections – Elevated tank inspections have been scheduled.

This concludes the Superintendent's report.

Water Rates – Commissioner Horsley introduced a proposal to consider increasing the highest-tier water rates as an additional means of encouraging conservation of the district's drinking water supply. He noted the potential for significant upcoming infrastructure costs, the costs associated with pumping and treating water, and concerns regarding manganese levels during periods of high pumping at Station #4. Commissioner Horsley stated that, despite the increase in private irrigation wells and the district's irrigation regulations, the existing rate structure has not resulted in the level of conservation anticipated. He asked the other Commissioners whether they would consider and support reviewing the highest-tier rates as a potential conservation measure. Mrs. Nash will provide the Commissioners with a table of historical water rates for further consideration.

Commissioner Horsley also recommended restructuring the semiannual billing periods from January–June and July–December to November–April and May–October. This would capture the entire summer usage period within a single billing cycle and allow higher seasonal consumption to be reflected within the same six-month billing period. Mrs. Nash will consult with the district's meter reading and billing software vendors to determine whether a mid-period usage statement could be provided to customers. The Board also discussed the possibility of implementing mandatory water use restrictions during periods of severe drought.

Long-Term Capital Planning – Chairman Churbuck reviewed the PowerPoint presentation prepared for the upcoming meeting with the Prudential Committee. The Board discussed additional information to be included in the presentation to further support the district's potential long-term capital needs and associated costs. The Commissioners will attend the Prudential Committee meeting on Monday, September 21, 2026, where Chairman Churbuck will present the information on behalf of the Board.

Conservation Restriction – Old Oyster Road (Former Elementary School) – The proposed conservation restriction on the Town-owned portion of the former Elementary School property has not yet moved forward with the Town Attorney. Commissioner Robinson will continue to follow up with the Town regarding its status.

Source Water Protection Plan (SWPP) – Commissioner Horsley continues to research a potential interim wastewater treatment system utilizing liquid-only collection for properties in Little River Estates that directly abut the wellfield. He estimated the cost at approximately $2 million to serve 30 homes and potentially $4 million to serve the entire neighborhood. In addition to protecting the district's water supply, the system could benefit the Town by reducing nitrogen contributions to Cotuit Bay by an estimated 80–90%. The properties could later be connected to the Town's municipal sewer system when it becomes available. It was noted that such a treatment system would also involve ongoing operating costs and would require a licensed Treatment Operator (T3 or T4). Commissioner Horsley will continue his research before making any recommendation to the Board.

The Board reviewed the July 29th minutes and the August 26th minutes and voted unanimously to approve them.

Cotuit Currents – The next article will compare average household water costs under four usage scenarios, with and without non-essential water use.

The next meeting was set for Wednesday, October 14, 2026, at 5:45pm.

The Board will then meet with the Prudential Committee on Monday September 21st at 6pm.

Seeing no additional public comment, the meeting was adjourned at 7:18 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

David Churbuck, Chairman
Board of Water Commissioners