

WMAC Meeting Minutes, March 16 2017

Attendees: David Crosby - Chair, Ann Carney, Lealdon Langley, Rory McGregor – Secretary, Chris Pimentel

Guest: Eric Hooper, Superintendent - Sharon DPW

1. Minutes from February 16 meeting were approved.
2. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts has reduced the drought status to “Drought Watch”. Eric predicts that drought status will reduce to “Drought Advisory” in Spring time due to high level of precipitation during winter months. Sharon will implement lawn/ground irrigation restriction guidelines effective May 1st similar to past years: 2 hours of watering per household 2 times per week will be authorized.
3. The selectmen met prior to our meeting in the Community Center Hearing Room and approved implementation of the proposed increase in water rates stated in February’s WMAC minutes. Future financial planning could move us to structure the base rate for water assessment at a revenue level which covers the cost for infrastructure maintenance/replacement. David Crosby estimates that this would be \$68 per quarter per household. Current base rate approved by selectmen is \$27.50 per quarter. So there is a challenge to reach the \$68 goal in less than a decade, even with 10% per year increases.
4. Selectman Joe Roach requested that a public information program on Sharon’s water rates be put together. Possible approaches: email blast to Sharon Smart user group, Conservation Connections newsletter, check with DEP and find out if any info packages have been put together, engage our Conservation Coordinator Nancy Fyler to come up with other possible ways to promote this info outreach.
5. Irrigation policy: hire someone, perhaps an intern, to start the registration process for households with in-ground irrigation systems; Eric will consider how to get this launched.
6. Eric’s report on water department operation: water pumping for February is lowest in last 20 years, revenue is \$100,000 short of budget due to total irrigation water ban implemented last August, nitrate at Well #4 down slightly but still around 4.1mg/L (nitrate at Farnham Road pit for dumping brush was causing this and has just resulted in selectmen requiring registration with DPW by commercial enterprises who use this location), groundwater elevation levels have returned to a good condition, water main break near East Elementary led to temporary brown water condition in that area, hydrant flushing will begin in April sometime.
7. The next meeting will be Thursday April 27 at 7:30 pm at the Community Center.

Respectfully submitted,

Rory McGregor