

WMAC Meeting Minutes – June 17, 2021

Attendees: David Crosby – Chair, David Brookfield, Anne Carney, Lealdon Langley, Robert (Rory) McGregor – Secretary, Chris Pimentel – Vice Chair

Guest: Eric Hooper, Superintendent- Sharon DPW

1. WMAC minutes for meeting held on May 13th 2021 were reviewed and approved.
2. Eric sent out a public notice by mail to all Sharon residents that Well #4, located at the Sharon Train Station, exceeds Massachusetts DEP's recently established MCL (Maximum Control Limit) of 20 ppt (parts per trillion) for the PFAS/PFOA chemical family, having registered 88.8 ppt based on tests performed in April. Additional information in the notice reported that the Water Department shut down pumping at Well #4 as soon as this test result was received. The repeat ordered for Well #4 has confirmed that the initial data is valid.
3. The Water Department has procured an ion-exchange resin filter for immediate installation at Well #4 to remove PFAS/PFOA family chemicals from the groundwater that will be pumped into the public water system. The filter will be leased at a cost of \$250K for every 6-month period of use. Startup of the filtration system will take place the week of June 21st. Water sample testing upstream and downstream of the filter over the next 2 weeks will confirm that PFAS/PFOA removal is effective. Well #4 will tentatively go back online delivering water for public use during the July 4th weekend.

Granulated carbon filter is a preferred alternative to the resin filter. It is not currently available due to high demand by many other public water systems throughout the country.
4. The Water Department will engage an independent consultant to identify potential sources for PFAS/PFOA chemicals that are in the groundwater at Wells #4 and #2. The absence of manufacturing facilities in the Sharon town center would suggest that the contaminants come from residential septic systems in the vicinity of the wells. Eric mentioned a serious fire in multiple commercial buildings in town center that may have been extinguished with chemical foam containing the PFAS/PFOA chemical family. This event will be researched as part of the investigation into potential sources.
5. Adherence to the current Level 2 drought water restrictions will be necessary to prohibit use of residential inground irrigation systems. The Select Board will vote on continuation of this restriction at its next meeting. This restriction must be kept in effect until Well #4 is back online (tentatively July 4th weekend).
6. IFB (Invitation For Bid) to install new residential water meters will be awarded to a qualified contractor later this month. The Water Department has the new Badger ultrasonic water meters available in inventory and is currently using them as replacements for old residential water meters that have failed.

7. The Water Department will propose a Residential Inground Irrigation System Policy for consideration by WMAC at its next meeting. The imminent installation of new residential water meters throughout Sharon provides the concurrent opportunity to equip inground irrigation systems with a separate water meter to monitor water usage for lawns. The Policy will address pricing structure for lawn watering which is the major factor affecting increased residential demand for water during summer months.

8. Eric Hooper submitted the following report on Water Department activity during May:

Pumping: 42,566,000 gallons: still about 12% above recent pre-quarantine history, which is similar to last May.

UAW (Unaccounted for Water): approximately 6% for year to date. Most reads took place during the week after Labor day, so exact accounting compared to pumping read date is not possible. This will be corrected next month when we read for billing purposes.

Revenue: \$700,215; projection for year is \$5.6 million, well above initial projection used for budget purposes. However, because of PFAS lab tests and treatment expenses at Well #4, this added revenue will be required to pay for lease of the new filtration system.

Groundwater elevation: normal

Nitrates: no measurements taken at Wells #2 or #4, since both are shut off.

Construction:

MWRA Pump Station on Tiot Street: by-pass main completed, under chlorination and disinfection testing. Pump Station building complete, pumps and equipment being installed.

Massapoag Tank near Thorny Lea Street: Foundation poured, pedestal mockup complete, pedestal erection underway.

New Badger Water Meters: Installation bid due Thursday June 24

PFAS Filtration System at Well #4: site preparation complete; filter bag skid delivery on Tuesday June 15; piping installed; filter system delivery/installation scheduled for June 17 – 20; Water quality testing Monday, June 21 – Friday, June 26; Lab results Monday, June 28 – Friday, July 2; start water pumping operation Fourth of July weekend.

9. Next WMAC meeting is July 15th 2021 at 7:30pm via ZOOM conference call.

Respectfully submitted,

Rory McGregor, Secretary