

WMAC Meeting Minutes, September 18, 2014

Attendees: David Crosby - Chair, Anne Carney, David Hearne, Paul Lauenstein, Rory McGregor - Secretary

Guest: Eric Hooper, Superintendent, Sharon DPW

1. Minutes from the August 21 meeting were approved as amended by Paul Lauenstein.
2. Election of officers: David Crosby – Chair, Paul Lauenstein – Vice Chair, Rory McGregor – Secretary. Vote was unanimous in favor of the candidate for each position.
3. Ground water has reduced to levels that are normal for this time of year. However, recent weather patterns have had a distinct lack of rainfall. WMAC discussed the situation and decided that we should extend the lawn watering ban for at least one more month through end of October. On further discussion, we decided that the restriction should be permanent on a year round basis. The WMAC voted unanimously to impose lawn watering restrictions in accordance with the current policy on a year round basis.
4. We discussed Unaccounted for Water and how to analyze the data in a way that gives more meaningful assessment of the magnitude of this problem.
5. Eric reviewed pumping data which showed that water consumption on days that lawn watering takes place averages 300,000 gallons more, which is roughly a 20% increase over the average consumption on days when irrigation is not allowed during the summer and fall months.
6. A public hearing for the proposed water rate increase that takes place in January 2015 is scheduled for the selectmen’s meeting during the last week in October, either October 28 or 30. The estimate for incremental revenue generated by the rate increase is 3.5%, which keeps pace with inflation and provides some additional funding for capital expenditures needed for water system repairs and upgrades, as recommended by the water master plan.
7. Paul Lauenstein brought up the question of supplementary water supply (OP 10) from MWRA, as opposed to an emergency water connection (OP 5). He said that Sharon’s wells will not last forever, and encouraged committee members to anticipate the three to five year lead time that would be needed to establish a permanent connection for supplementary water. Eric Hooper commented that new wells can be drilled adjacent to current well locations when and if the need arises.
8. Issues that WMAC will consider for discussion and/or action in the coming year:
 - a) Proposal for irrigation water meters.
 - b) Change in meeting dates so as not to conflict with Conservation Commission meetings.
 - c) Public accessibility to data reports on all town water management activities that could be included in a centralized database.
 - d) Determining elevations of monitoring wells and pumping stations in order to come up with a model that accurately monitors ground water flow.
 - e) Revisit the Town Water Master Plan to decide if remaining projects should change in priority and determine whether there are new projects that should be considered.

f) Check with Sharon's Conservation Coordinator, Nancy Fyler, and find out whether/how the program might be improved going forward.

g) Coordinate with the Treasurer's office to review whether/how financial administration for the Town Water Department can be improved.

h) Storm water management and recharge, and compliance with EPA's new MS4 regulations (see: <http://water.epa.gov/polwaste/npdes/stormwater/Municipal-Separate-Storm-Sewer-System-MS4-Main-Page.cfm>), including a funding mechanism.

8. The next meeting will be October 16th at 7:30pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Rory McGregor