



Water/Wastewater Commission

Meeting Minutes

July 20th, 2022

Legislative Building, City Hall Campus
700 Main St, Fitchburg MA 01420

A meeting for the City of Fitchburg Water/Wastewater Commission was held on Wednesday July 20th, 2022 at the Legislative Building, City Hall Campus, 700 Main St. Fitchburg, MA 01420

The meeting commenced at 5:15 PM

Members present: Nicholas Erickson, Commissioner of Public Works & City Engineer
George Seiner, Commission Member
Stephen Bodurtha, Commission Member
Colby O'Brien, Commission Member
Mark Piermarini, Commission Member
Rick Healey, Chairman

Others present: John Deline Jr, Deputy Commissioner Water Division
Mark McNamara, Interim Deputy Commissioner Wastewater Division
Jennifer Lambert, Head Clerk Water Division

Absent: Michael McLaughlin, Commission Member

Item #1

Approval of meeting minutes: Motion to approve minutes from June 15, 2022 meeting was granted by unanimous vote.

Item #2

Public Forum: None

Item #3

Water Division

- PFAS – New US EPA health advisories: Lots of talk about PFAS lately, being on the news and also the issues in Westminster (which does not affect us). PFAS is described as a forever chemical, meaning it doesn't break down. EPA has issued some new health advisories regarding PFAS,

they have not set any regulations as of yet, those will probably come out in a year or so. Fitchburg water supply is far below detection limits. Our detection limits right now are around 1.8 parts per trillion, EPA is talking about detection limits be at .004 parts per trillion which is around 1000 times lower. These are just advisories of what they would like to see, whether it be at or below. There are six compounds that MA DEP are concerned about and have stricter standards. Those six compounds combined should be 20 parts per trillion, we are at 4.36 parts per trillion which is well below the 20. We are in compliance which is a good thing. Unfortunately, PFAS is everywhere in our environment.

- Westminster PFAS issue – Area of contamination are isolated to wells and groundwater. There are over 100 wells that have been contaminated in the area of Bean Porridge Hill Rd in Westminster Ma. This does not affect our watershed nor is it in our watershed.
- Current Drought Conditions – The State has currently listed Worcester County to be in a level 2 significant drought. This means that customers are advised to limit landscaping watering needs. Limit watering to hand-held only or drip irrigation. Water after 5pm or before 9am to avoid evaporative losses.
- Material/Parts shortages & lead times – Shortages in parts and materials are impacting all. Our Scada project delayed due to this issue. We've recently had some issues with a circuit breaker at one of our pump stations, tried ordering a new one, and it six months out. We had to order a refurbished one for the time being.

Item #4

Wastewater Division

- 5th Year Rain Barrel Program – July 19th rain barrels were distributed to those who had purchased. We sold 81 barrels this year.
- West Plant Refurbishing – We have since conducted an initial review of the proposal. We had a clarification meeting yesterday July 19th, with the proposer Synagro. Biggest concern of course is PFAS. Of course PFAS gets into the sludge being disposed.
- Grief Paper/odors – We have received numerous residence complaints of strong odors in the West Fitchburg area of the City near the West Plant. Recent meeting with Greif personnel, BOH as well as us. Greif of course is blaming us or the dump. We are addressing this issue and are trying to find the cause. One issue is that Greif waste does go over to the West Plant. Once there, we pump it to the East Plant. Also its open air at the West Plant, so some of what people are smelling could be because of this, but not to the extent that people are describing.
- EPA/MA DEP site visit to East Plant – Site visit today 7/20 at the East Plant for inspection. Tour of the plant and discussion on the consent decree along with recent upgrades to the plant.
- Collection Systems Construction updates – South Street sewer drain repair should be completed by the end of this month. We will then address the combined sewers in this area. This will begin in August and will most like go through November. This is part of our consent decree.
- Westminster IMA (inter-municipal agreement) – The Town of Westminster has since signed the IMA. This item is now completed.

Item #5

Other Business:

- The Water/Wastewater Commission will next meet at 5:00 pm on Wednesday **October 19, 2022** at the Legislative Building, City Hall Campus 700 Main St. Fitchburg, MA.

Meeting adjourned at 5:39 pm