



## Citizens Advisory Board Meeting

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September 20, 2021

Board members present:

Chrissy Roberts, Hingham

Steven Weiss, Hingham

Sam Mullin, Hingham

Stephen Girardi, Cohasset

Donna Pursel, Hull

Not present: John Struzziery, Hull

### **7:05pm Call to order**

#### **Update from Water Commissioner Liz Klein**

The one year celebration of owning the water company was recently held. Jon Asher was appointed temporary historian and was given the book Water Works, which is available electronically. A presentation on the background and future of the water system will be held for the League of Women Voters with a date TBD.

**No one from the Transition & Evaluation Committee was able to attend but they continue to work on the rate study and master plan.**

Citizen Polly Rowe asked when the studies would be completed and who is paying for them. Water Superintendent Russ Tierney answered that they are about 65% done and the goal for completion is the end of the calendar year. It will be made public to all rate payers when completed. The 20 year master plan will be updated in five year increments. The plans are already in the budget, in fact they were paid for in water rates last year (built in to the rates) and the plans are on budget as well.

#### **Update from Water Superintendent Russ Tierney**

The first year of owning the water company went well. We retained staff with institutional knowledge. We instituted a new billing system and customer service area and kinks have been, and continue to be, worked out in both. We are looking to add a new water storage tank wherever it makes sense for the overall system. The Turkey Hill tank will be rehabilitated. Wells are running well and were rehabilitated last year. We received a lot of rain this summer which was helpful; Accord Pond is in good shape. Two filters were rehabilitated and more will be done before next summer. The SCADA system was updated. 46 hydrants were replaced in conjunction with the fire department. Hydrants are being inspected and painted. Valve inspections are ongoing and the flushing program is going well. There have been 18,000 customer service calls and 6,000 service calls. Leak detections showed 20 leaks and there were 34 main breaks. Restrictions came off 9/1. Suez is in Level 2 covid protocol and is working on their annual report.

Polly Rowe asked how our PFAS is. Russ answered that's it's very good, it's never been above 10.

Steven Weiss asked about customer service feedback. Russ said he will be asking for access to Suez's data on number of service calls and responses. Call volumes are down as are wait times.

Polly asked about water rates. Russ said that future water rates are unknown until we get the results of the rate study. Chrissy Roberts said that the rate setting process takes place around November during the Advisory Committee's public meetings. When asked if seniors would be considered for reduced rates Russ said that he didn't know of any plan for that but that could be discussed. Stephen Girardi said that Cohasset Light has a program where anyone can pay their bill early to get 10% off and that about 35% of people take advantage of that.

**Sam Mullin made a motion to accept the minutes from the June 9, 2021 meeting. Steven Weiss seconded. Roll call was yes from all members.**

CAB online feedback forms were discussed and it was agreed that the best approach was for forms to be forwarded to each town's members on the CAB as applicable, and forwarded to others as needed.

FAQ/Q&A was discussed as something helpful for the WRWS website - especially for repeated questions.

Billing issues that have arisen have had many different reasons for issues; many were seasonal, many were leaks.

Polly asked if there will be a newsletter and Russ stated there will be a monthly report on the website including a summary page.

Citizen Anne Murray asked about notifications for main replacements. Russ said message boards would be set up two weeks prior to the work and that the WRWS website was the best place for info. Anne also noted that Russ has been very responsive and the Board agreed that he's doing a fantastic job.

The next meeting was tentatively set for 12/6/21 at 4:00pm. It will very likely be another zoom meeting since that's easier for multiple town participation.

Sam Mullin made a motion to adjourn. Stephen Girardi seconded. All members agreed.

**Adjourned 5:11pm**