

WATER RESOURCES DEPARTMENT

The Board of Water Commissioners met on Tuesday June 1, 2021 via telephone conference. The meeting convened at 7:00 PM via teleconference

Pursuant to Governor Baker's March 1, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §20, and the Governor's March 15, 2020 Order imposing strict limitation on the number of people that may gather in one place, this meeting of the City of Westfield Water Commission & Board of Public Works will be conducted via remote participation. Specific information and the general guidelines for remote participation by members of the public and/or parties with a right and/or requirement to attend this meeting can be found on the City of Westfield website at www.cityofwestfield.org. For this meeting, members of the public who wish to listen to the meeting may do so by tuning into Channel 15 or online at westfieldtv.org. No in-person attendance of members of the public will be permitted, but every effort will be made to ensure that the public can adequately access the proceedings in real time, via technological means. In the event that we are unable to do so, despite best efforts, we will post on the City's website an audio recording, transcript, or other comprehensive record of proceedings as soon as possible after the meeting.

The meeting was broadcasted on local channel 12 and the Westfield Community Youtube channel.

AGENDA ITEMS:

Public meeting pursuant to 310 CMR 45.09 for SRF Dry Bridge Road WTP and Pipeline Projects Overview (DWSRF No. 6881)

Chris Bones and Jennifer Gilbert from Tighe & Bond were present at the meeting to provide information on the new Water Treatment Plant on Dry Bridge Rd servicing Wells 1 & 2. The presentation outlined the current water system within the City, the design of the new facility, and the projected time frame of construction. At the end of the presentation, they took questions from the Commissioners and other city officials. It was requested at the end to reach out to the residents directly affected by the project as no one from the public was present at the meeting. The Department will create mailings to notify the neighborhood, post on the City website all the information presented tonight, and offer a neighborhood outreach meeting to answer any questions that may have been missed.

Discussion and vote on Water Rate Increase

Christopher Bone and Jennifer Gilbert from Tighe & Bond were present at the meeting to answer questions in regards to last meetings water rate presentation. They provided the Commission with a residential bill comparison to show the different types of users within the City i.e. low, moderate, high, and very high usage. The board discussed providing this bill comparison to the residents to allow them to see and adjust their water usage. The Board requested the Department to advertise as much as possible to the public about the upcoming rate increase by publishing on the City website and the newspaper. Office Manager Hannah Larkham suggested that she may be able to put in the first quarter bill cycle an informational pamphlet to give final notice to the residents.

Motion was made by Commissioner Cole to adopt the rate schedule as defined in table 5-11 for fiscal year 2022 moving Westfield from a fixed consumption rate to a tier consumption rate. The base fees will also change as also defined in table 5-11 for certain service line size and this rate structure will be reviewed on an annual basis to adjust as needed to meet the revenues for the Department. The tier structure will have gallon thresholds for three different usage tier with three different rate based off quarterly usage. Motion seconded by Commissioner Niedzielski. Motion approved.

Roll call vote:

Commissioner Cole- YES

Commissioner Popielarczyk- YES

Commissioner Niedzielski- YES

Discussion of land transfer- Montgomery/Westfield Land

Acting Director Fran Cain spoke to the Board about an inquiry from the town of Montgomery to obtain land that the City currently owns. The land in question is part of the inactive reservoir. Montgomery is looking to use the land to extend their cemetery. The City has no problem with the arrangement, but there is a process that needs to be followed per the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) that can get costly. The Department does not have anything to present that needs to be approved at tonight's meeting, but more informal introduction for the Board that this may be coming in front of them in the near future.

5 Westminster St- Outstanding balance and solution

Francis Cain and Deputy Superintendent Steve Fernandes went to 5 Westminster St to look at the plumbing in the basement and it has been confirmed that the single meter can be removed and individual meters can be installed in each unit. The Department has spoken to the City Solicitor's Office and they have requested that any agreement made with the residents in regard to the outstanding balance be in writing. The Board confers with the City Solicitor's Office and asked to be kept in the loop moving forward on any decisions.

Discussion of second service- 31 Holyoke Rd

Steve Fernandes informed the Board of property 31 Holyoke Rd with a illegal second water service. Years ago a second service was installed near their garage, but the meter has never been stored properly; the meter is connected to a pipe coming from the ground. Per the rules and regulations of the Board any meter must be within a dwelling or meter pit. This meter has been used as a seasonal meter for gardening. The Department has recently become aware of the location of the meter and is requesting the meter be removed from the property for any future use unless a meter pit is installed or it is moved into the garage at the expense of the resident. Since the meter has already been installed for the summer, it will be removed in the fall and will not be re-installed next year. The Board agrees with the Departments decision and asks the Department to send a letter to the resident to inform them.

Approval of Minutes:

Motion was made by Commissioner Niedzielski to approve the minutes dated May 11, 2021. Motion seconded by Commissioner Cole. Motion approved.

Roll call vote:

Commissioner Cole- YES

Commissioner Popielarczyk- YES

Commissioner Niedzielski- YES

Project Updates

Water Deputy Superintendent Steve Fernandes spoke to the Board about the current project updates. The Dry Bridge Water Treatment Plant project is moving along. The City has received state revolving funds (SRF) for this project and have begun the application process for part A which include a checklist with all of the program requirements, which the Department can then incorporate into the finalized design and prepare to go out to bid.

Wells 7 & 8 have been running and the new treatment plant has treated 121 million gallons of water.

Approximately 320 million gallons of water has been treated through the temporary vessel at Well 2. This number has remained the same from mid-November, as we have not run Well 2 to the distribution system since then due to low demand, desire is to run Owen District Treatment Plant.

The new water tank on East Mountain Rd has been installed. The old tank has been demolished and removed from the site. The site work is about 80% complete. The security fence around the tank is just about done and the access road is being prepped for paving in the coming weeks.

The next big project for the Department will be the new bridge being installed on South Maple St. The contractor will be looking to install two butterfly valves so the water can be isolated at each end of the bridge. The Department ran a mock shut off last year and it went smoothly. When the project gets underway, any disturbance to the service will be after hours while water demand is low. The biggest concern is the traffic flow that construction will cause.

The next meeting will be scheduled for July 6, 2021

Adjourn

Motion made by Commissioner Niedzielski to adjourn; Motion seconded by Commissioner Cole, Motion approved.

Roll call vote:

Commissioner Cole- YES

Commissioner Popielarczyk- YES

Commissioner Niedzielski- YES

ADJOURN: 8:59 P.M.



Chairman

Secretary



Member

