

Nantucket Water Commission
Minutes of Thursday, August 12, 2021

A meeting of the Nantucket Water Commission was held on Thursday, August 12, 2021 in the conference room at the Wannacomet Water Company, 1 Milestone Road, Nantucket, Massachusetts.

Commissioners present: Commissioners Allen Reinhard, Nonie Slavitz, Nelson Eldridge, and Rob Benchley were present. Commissioners absent: Curtis Barnes. *Staff & Guests:* Mark Willett – Director, Denese Allen - Business Manager, Linda Roberts – Projects Coordinator. Public: Evan Jones, Franci Neely, John Kitchener and Emily Molden.

1. **Meeting Called to Order:** The meeting was called to order by Commissioner Reinhard at 8:00 AM.
2. **Acceptance of Agenda:** Commissioners accepted the agenda as printed by unanimous consent.
3. **Public Comment:** Evan Jones read a formal statement. This is titled "Statement of the Monomoy Civic Association to the Wannacomet Water Company Board of commissioners." (*This statement in its entirety has been included with these minutes.) The Monomoy Civic Association members would like the Nantucket Water Commission to covenant that no further development of the Wyers Valley site be allowed and presented how such a covenant could be worded. After Mr. Jones read the statement, Ms. Neely, Mr. Kitchener and Ms. Molden all spoke. Ms. Molden spoke as the Executive Director of the Nantucket Land Council concerns and work with water protection. Chair Reinhard provided a history of the Water Company, the protections that are in place and how sewer was extended to the Monomoy area to protect the water. Commissioners Benchley, Eldridge, Slavitz, and Chair Reinhard addressed the public comments and concerns. Director Willett provided an overview of the project thus far and the advantages of having solar power would be for the Town and rate payer on savings of electrical costs for pumping. Town Counsel is working administratively to change the map of the National Association of Agricultural as they show Wyers Valley as agricultural use. Director Willett continues to work with the Land Bank and Natural Heritage with locking down 20 acres which would need to be managed and maintained for the life of the system. We are in the early stages and many hurdles to get through including construction plans that would need to be approved by the Massachusetts DEP. Chair Reinhard recognizes that we are beyond the tipping point for our planet. He has concerns about the rising sea levels impact on the water table and believes in a small way this advances us and would be a significant contribution to the towns use based on all those items. This project has been reviewed for several years and would allow us to reduce our carbon foot print. Consensus of the Commissioners is present controls and protections in place are more than sufficient and feel strongly that the property is protected as is and are reluctant to adopt a statement or form an outside agreement with the association at this time.

4. **Review of Minutes from July 8, 2021** – After the meeting minutes for July 8, 2021 were reviewed a Motion was made by Commissioner Eldridge, seconded by Commissioner Benchley and voted to approve the minutes as presented. Commissioner Slavitz abstained.
5. **Production and Billing Report:** Director Willett reported that 24 million gallons of water was pumped in the past year. In August we are still averaging 4 million per day. Our highest single day in was August 6 to 7 pumping 4.4 million gallons of water. Looking at the Mark Abrahams report the numbers might be flipped. Sconset is up 46,400 cubic feet and revenue is up with the development of Cannon bury. Rainfall continues to be down with a very dry July. Monitoring of the drought transducer two to three times per week shows we are four to five inches away from a critical trigger number.
6. **Directors review and updates:**
 - a. **Solar power at Wannacomet Water:** This item was taken up under Public Comment. Mr. Willett continues to work with the Monomoy home owners and other groups opposing the solar power at the proposed site.
 - b. **Airport PFAS Project:** Tests around the airport area homes continue to be done. The Airport is supplying bottled water to the residents.
 - c. **Water Mains West of Airport:** The Airport and the Town's PFAS committee continues to work with CDM Smith Consulting sampling the areas to the West to determine how far into the neighboring properties they will need to go.
 - d. **Other Topics:** Director Willett is reviewing the fire service fee numbers and price structure. The DEP wants Siasconset sampling done in October. Motion was made by Commissioner Eldridge to sample in September seconded by Commissioner Benchley and so voted with Commissioner Slavitz abstaining. The Surfside Shack had a chloroform hit at 6:45 PM and with all DEP personnel still working remotely it took until 9 PM to get someone. Confirmatory resamples tested clean.
Director Willett announced that Denese Allen would be moving on and he is looking to move Shelby Campbell up. She has completed procurement training and is certified and given her education and work experience in finance we do not need to look for someone from the outside. The McNeal's have been told that we need the house at 43 Polpis Road for our employees and the school has been looking for a solution. With retained earnings it may be possible to purchase housing. Director Willett has been asked to assist the Public Works Department with the Wait Drive storm drains. The Town hopes to have a new Public Works Director in place in December.
7. **Execution of Contracts of Amendments if any pending:** None pending. Director Willett is authorized to sign all contacts under \$50,000. Contract over that threshold go before the commission for signature.
8. **Commissioner's comments and reserved for unforeseen items for discussion by the Chair:** None.

9. **Adjournment:** There being no further business to come before the Commission, a motion was made by the commissioner Eldridge, seconded by Commissioner Slavitz and unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting at 9:44 AM.

Approved: _____

Date: _____

Meeting packet included 08/12/21 Agenda, the minutes from 7/08/21; water production billing and rainfall reports and a map of the Wyers Valley Wells. *The written statement submitted by Evan Jones Co-President of the Monomoy Civic Association is included as an attachment to these minutes.

Statement of the Monomoy Civic Association to the Wannacomet Water Company Board of Commissioners. August 12, 2021

Good morning.

My name is Evan Jones. I am Co-President of the Monomoy Civic Association. Our Association represents more than 80 homeowners in Monomoy. We have been closely following the planned solar array since it was passed by the HDC last November. The majority of our members have expressed concerns about the impact of the planned solar array. We have highlighted concerns about the size of the planned installation and its environmental impact on the Water Company's open space at the Wyer's Valley site.

The original plans called for the clear cutting of approximately ten acres of open space and the siting of the solar arrays too close to Milestone Road. We appreciate that the size of the planned solar arrays has been reduced and that the perimeter setbacks from Milestone Road have been increased.

This project is just one example of pressure to develop the Wyer's Valley open space to meet the Town's growing municipal needs. Wyer's Valley is the gateway to the Monomoy community and Milestone Road is one of the most travelled roads and bike paths on the island. We believe it is essential to preserve the rural character and forested landscape of Wyer's Valley.

If the solar arrays are installed, this will result in a significant degradation of the Water Company open space. To help offset the anticipated negative impacts and to help prevent future development of the Wyer's Valley site we request that the Water Company covenant that no further development of the Wyer's Valley site be allowed.

Such a covenant could be worded as follows.

"The only allowed uses of the Wyer's Valley property at 1 Milestone Road will be the normal operations of the water company (including installation of new wells, replacement of infrastructure, construction of water company storage buildings, etc. but no new housing) and the installation and operation of the Solar Project. The Water Company will not allow will not allow the use the property for other Town municipal uses including parking, housing, construction of buildings not for use by the Water Company."

We hope that the Water Company Board of Commissioners will take steps to appropriately memorialize such a commitment and we want to thank Director, Mark Willett, for all of his diligent efforts to help oversee this project. We also want to thank Lauren Sinatra, Energy Coordinator for the Town of Nantucket for her efforts increase the use of renewable energy on Nantucket. Increasing the use of renewable energy on Nantucket is an import goal we all share.

Thank you.