

Nantucket Water Commission
Minutes of Thursday, September 9, 2021

A meeting of the Nantucket Water Commission was held on Thursday, September 9, 2021 in the conference room at the Wannacomet Water Company, 1 Milestone Road, Nantucket, Massachusetts.

Commissioners present: Commissioners Allen Reinhard, Nonie Slavitz, Nelson Eldridge, Rob Benchley and Curtis Barnes were present. *Absent:* none. *Staff & Guests:* Mark Willett – Director, Shelby Campbell - Business Manager, Linda Roberts – Projects Coordinator. Public: Dean Geddes reporter for the Inquirer and Mirror arrived at 8:04 AM.

1. **Meeting Called to Order:** The meeting was called to order by Commissioner Reinhard at 8:01 AM.
2. **Acceptance of Agenda:** Commissioners accepted the agenda as printed by unanimous consent.
3. **Public Comment:** None.
4. **Review of Minutes from August 12, 2021** – After the meeting minutes for August 12, 2021 were reviewed a Motion was made by Commissioner Eldridge, seconded by Commissioner Barnes with unanimous consent approved the minutes as presented.
5. **Production and Billing Report:** Director Willett reported that over the past month the highest pumpage was just under 4 million gallons of water. Siasconset had the most gallons pumped for any August. The numbers are not completely accurate in 2016. Wannacomet just added a new section for billing. Rainfall continues to be down with a very dry season. Monitoring of the drought transducer was never critical this season. We anticipate a few inches of rain today and six to seven more inches would help greatly.
6. **Directors review and updates:**
 - a. **Solar power at Wannacomet Water:** The solar project has a few snags with the Federal designation of agriculture and finding 20 acres of property to mitigate. The Department of Environmental Protection is working with the executive office to work on removing the agriculture designation. Director Willett continues working with the Executive Directors of the Land Bank and Natural Heritage to come up with ideas for the mitigation land.
 - b. **Airport PFAS Project:** The Airport continues to test area homes and supplying bottled water to those residents. A map of the Airport PFAS area was handed out. The Airport has agreed to do the red area. The green area is what they are proposing the Water Department to do. State funding might be available for PFAS areas. This is being submitted to see if we qualify. This might involve a betterment fee to extend the main. In the past water main extensions connection fees to tie in have ranged from \$5,000 to \$7,400. These are based on a 70% /30% ratio for the project extensions and connection cost. With the PFAS situation DEP may ask the Water Company to run the water main at our expense if its demonstrated to be eminent hazard for safe drinking water. The work is being proposed for

October/November, however the contractor is having difficulty with materials as there is no pipe available and no local plumbers willing to do the connections. The Airport is working with homeowners to approve applications for connections which the Airport will pay for. The residents that connect are asking if they can keep their wells for irrigation. The people in this area don't want to pay for their irrigation water. Ultimately this will be a Board of Health decision. They may propose a \$1,000 credit to each customer toward their water bills which is still under review. The Airport will be paying \$2,500 to cover our materials cost for these connections. With no plumber willing to take this on the Airport will be asking residents if they have a plumber to use. We have adequate staffing to assist with this.

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 need to go. Sample results are pending from private wells off of Sun Island Road in multiple locations.

d. Personnel / 43 Polpis Road / School Fields: Shelby Campbell has stepped into the Business Manager position. Customers continue to complement their ability to reach a person when calling or coming to the office. Linda Roberts went with Morgan Perry to do disconnections which helped her understand what happens with the service work. Andrea Mansfield has taken on more and all the administrative staff have stepped up for a seamless transition. Currently there isn't a need to add any additional staff. Chris Pykosz is reducing his time and looking to retire soon. Chris and Jeffrey Johnsen both have 43 years of service. Jeffrey has not determined a final date yet. Rob West and Bob Earle are ready to move up. They are doing well as we have had to learn how to do things with Chris' absence during COVID. Many of what we put in place over the past year have allowed us to be more efficient. Since Bob Gardner retired, Director Willett continues to do the general management and engineering work for the department. With Denese Allen leaving and the retirement of Chris Pykosz coming soon we will try to do things without replacing them and after allocating adjustments there should be funds to hire an engineer to take on some of his projects such as hydrant repairs and DEP reports. Commissioner Slavitz spoke to the difficulty of housing and the commission supports and encourages staff to take courses or work on degrees to move up. Director Willett spoke about Jonathan Vollans interest in auto cad and drafting which he could do through Cape Cod Community College. Jonathan Vollans and Morgan Perry have completed their online classes and will be going off for a day to take their Grade 2 test. Shelby Campbell has expressed an interest in getting her water distribution license. All utility staff have voluntarily left the union. They had been paying dues for years with no help or support and their union didn't even know who they were. **43 Polpis Road:** The McNeil's have been told that we need the house at 43 Polpis Road for our employees. The school has been looking for a solution as they understand they are renting month to month for now. Nothing is available at Cow Pond. They are reaching out to Diane O'Neil and the Friends of Nantucket Public Schools and others. With retained earnings it may be possible to purchase an existing house, or a house being made available to move over to Polpis Road. It was suggested that an article be submitted for Town meeting for housing. **School Fields:** The school fields appropriated 15-18 million dollars to redo the football, field hockey and athletic fields using artificial turf. There have been concerns raised about water runoff,

PFAS, and disinfecting. Director Willett will meet with and be part of the school fields group. Director Willett will meet with the Capital Committee at 10:15 AM today.

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:** Commissioner Barnes asked about paving at North Liberty and if anyone knows when this will be done. The work has been held up as the storm water drain issues have not been addressed. Commissioner Barnes stated it was unacceptable that the work was held up because of one drain. Director Willett explained that it isn't just the one it for all of them for the length of the road. The Sewer Director, David Gray has offered to take on storm drain water if the Water Department did the survey and mapping. Director Willett continues to assist the Acting Director of the Public Works Department. Grant Sanders is putting together a summary of costs of all lab testing the Town needs to do to support the need for an on-island laboratory. This lab would not be able to test for PFAS as there are only a few labs in the United States that have testing capabilities for this. The lab could test water for heavy metals, chloroform, lead and copper, nitrates and nitrites. Along with sewer waste testing. The savings of that alone might make it feasible to pay for a lab director and assistant. It might be above the water company shop or at the sewer department.
9. **Adjournment:** There being no further business to come before the Commission, a motion was made by the commissioner Eldridge, seconded by Commissioner Benchley and unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting at 9:14 AM.

Approved: _____

Date: _____

Meeting packet included 09/09/21 Agenda, the minutes from 8/12/21; water production billing and rainfall reports and a map of the Airport area.