



WATER RESOURCES ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes
April 13, 2023
7:00 PM
Virtual Meeting

Present: Barry Rosen, Ron Parenti, Joe Robb, Mike Geis, and Matt Mostoller

Chairperson: Mike Geis

Clerk: Ron Parenti

Others in Attendance: Himaja Nagireddy (Select Board Liaison)

1. Opening

WRAC chair Mike Geis opened the meeting at 7:05 PM.

2. Regular Business

A. Public Remarks/Comments – None.

B. Zoning Subcommittee Document Review – Barry Rosen and Joe Robb discussed their latest revision of the subcommittee's zoning document; an earlier draft was approved by a Committee vote in March. The revision includes a link to the Town's GIS map, which provides access to detailed water protection zoning information. The current plan is to discuss the report with the Planning Board and the Board of Health before a presentation is made to the Select Board. Parenti noted that this is not a topic that would likely interest the Town's Finance Committee. Rosen will attempt to schedule time with the Select Board soon after the Town Meeting on 1 May, but if it becomes difficult to schedule a time slot the zoning document could be presented to the Board during the public comment portion of a future meeting. WRAC members still intend to mail the zoning document to all Town residents, but the cost and funding for this mailing is yet to be determined. Mostoller reminded the members that the Water District Commissioners have agreed to pay a portion of the mailing cost.

C. Wright-Pierce Response to WRAC Questions About Water Study -- The Wright-Pierce kick-off meeting for the potable water portion of the Great Road Study was discussed at the previous WRAC meeting in March, and at that time Committee members expressed particular interest in the company's use of a 25% water demand growth estimate in their worst-case projections. Members asked if this number had been generated by a data-driven model that could be adapted at a later time for a town-wide study. Marc Moccio subsequently responded to a set of questions submitted to Wright-Pierce, and indicated that their growth factor was not the product of a detailed model but rather a best-guess number derived from past experience with similar consulting projects. Moccio also addressed the question about opportunities for WRAC to provide input prior to the release of the final report, and stated that Committee members would be invited to attend



the final briefing to the Select Board and would have an opportunity to review and comment on the report draft.

Parenti noted that during the kick-off meeting a Wright-Pierce representative mentioned that home owners along the Great Road corridor have shown little interest in connecting to a sewer line and that the businesses in the Gould's Plaza were also uninterested in sewer access. This initiated a discussion about the need for the proposed wastewater treatment infrastructure improvements, and questions were also raised about the Select Board's likely response to the recommendations presented in Wright-Pierce's final report. Rosen noted that several neighboring towns (including Westford and Stow) have also been dealing with a high rate of business closures, but have not attributed this problem to a lack of sewer access. Mostoller reminded the Committee that the Water District has seen some negative impacts due to inadequate wastewater management, and emphasized the potential benefits of improved sewage treatment on water quality. Nagireddy suggested that Julie Pierce (Acton's Economic Development Director) be invited to a future WRAC meeting to discuss the Town's vision for commercial growth along Great Road.

- D. Review Minutes – The draft minutes from 21 March with minor modifications recommended by Joe Robb were reviewed. A motion to approve the amended minutes was made by Mike Geis and seconded by Barry Rosen. The minutes were subsequently approved by a unanimous roll call vote of the five Committee members
- E. Draft EPA Regulations for Drinking Water -- Ron Parenti asked Committee members to revisit the discussion initiated at the previous meeting concerning a WRAC response to the EPA about its proposed regulations for PFAS levels in drinking water. He noted that the plant construction and O&M cost projections presented in the EPA webinar on 29 March 2023 are considerably lower than estimates generated by the Acton Water District and Wayland Water Department. Matt Mostoller stated that the American Water Works Association (AWWA) is aware of these discrepancies, and is developing an independent set of cost estimates; Joe Robb added that the AWWA has contracted with Black and Veatch to conduct that study. Mostoller also made the comment that the cost impacts of the new water quality regulations may eventually force water suppliers to develop separate distribution systems for drinking water and non-consumption uses. Following this discussion Parenti suggested that the WRAC table his proposal to submit a comment to the EPA, but recommended that the Committee continue to monitor responses submitted to the EPA by the professional drinking water organizations such as the AWWA.
- F. Any Other New Business -- None.

3. **Adjournment**

Committee members agreed to hold the next meeting on 18 May 2023 at 7pm. A motion to adjourn was made by Barry Rosen and seconded by Matt Mostoller. Adjournment was approved at 8:50 pm by a unanimous roll call vote of the five WRAC members.



Meeting Chat File

20:21:28 From Joseph Robb to Host and Panelists:

AWWA view on EPA's PFAS Proposal <https://www.awwa.org/Resources-Tools/Resource-Topics>