

BOARD OF WATER COMMISSIONERS
MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF
APRIL 1, 2025

A quorum being present, Chairperson Sheldon called the meeting to order at 5:02 PM. He announced that the virtual version of the meeting was being recorded and requested those in attendance to state their name and title for the record by roll call:

Board Members Present in Person: Robert H. Sheldon, Commissioner and Chairperson - Present; Joshua M. Fox, Commissioner – Present; and Robert E. Boyd, Commissioner - Present.

Board Members Present Virtually: None.

Others Present in Person: Vincent J. Roy, Executive Director - Present; Thomas S. Travers, Treasurer - Present; Karen Moretti, Assistant Treasurer - Present; Michael Abbondanzio, Foreman – Present; Renee M. Adams, Executive Administrator – Present; and Craig Blake, District Moderator – Present.

Others Present Virtually: none

1. Review and Vote to Approve the Minutes from the Board of Water Commissioners Meeting held on March 18, 2025.

The Commissioners reviewed and approved the minutes for the March 18, 2025, meeting, as amended. Commissioner Fox made the motion for approval, which was duly seconded by Commissioner Sheldon, and approved by unanimous roll call:

Robert E. Boyd, Commissioner - Aye

Joshua M. Fox, Commissioner - Aye

Robert H. Sheldon, Commissioner and Chairperson – Aye

2. Review of the Director's March 28, 2025, Bi-Weekly Report.

Director Roy presented his bi-weekly report, covering the following topics:

- *Drought Declaration by the Commonwealth:*

Treasurer Travers asked Director Roy to explain the impact of the recent drought declaration on the District. Director Roy stated that he received notice from the Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) on March 21, 2025, declaring a Level 3 – Critical Drought – in the Northeast, Central, and Connecticut River Valley Drought Regions of the Commonwealth. The declaration is due to a statewide precipitation deficit, despite temporary increases in streamflow from recent rainfall. Groundwater levels have worsened in nearly all regions, and the usual seasonal recharge has been diminished.

Director Roy noted that MassDEP is encouraging all public water suppliers to approach the 2025 outdoor watering season with a focus on conservation. Accordingly, drought-triggered restrictions for Sudbury will take effect at the start of the irrigation season on May 1st.

- *Faulty Meter Protocol:*

Commissioner Sheldon mentioned seeing a post on the Sudbury Bulletin Facebook site regarding someone who had an unusually high water usage bill and asked Director Roy about the District's response to such inquiries. Director Roy explained that the District's practice has been to schedule a work order upon receiving an inquiry and investigate potential causes of high-water usage at the residence or business. That typically includes checking for leaks within the home and testing the meter to verify its accuracy. If the meter is found to be faulty or has been in use for more than 15 years, it is replaced with a new unit that has the ability to track usage on a more continuous basis.

There were no further questions regarding the Director's Bi-Weekly Report.

3. Discussion on 89th Annual Meeting

Director Roy informed the Commissioners that the District Clerk may not be available during the upcoming Annual Meeting due to medical reasons. Mr. Roy relayed the opinion he'd obtained from District Counsel on the proper procedure to appoint a temporary interim clerk in situations such as this. The District Counsel reported that under M.G.L., Chapter 41, Section 14, the Commissioners may, in writing, appoint a clerk who shall be sworn in and shall, in the performance of such duties, have the same powers and be subject to the same requirements and penalties as the District clerk. A temporary clerk appointed under this section shall not be required to be a resident nor be a registered voter of the city or town.

Moderator Blake asked when the last Commissioners meeting prior to the Annual Meeting would be and what are the duties and responsibilities of the clerk during the annual meeting. Mr. Roy replied that the Commissioners are scheduled to meet on May 13th, one week prior to the Annual Meeting. Assistant Treasurer Moretti stated that the clerk's duties consist of witnessing the votes and certifying the election, posting of the Annual & Special Meeting Warrants and election ballots, and signing of legal documents. Moderator Blake stated that knows of a qualified person who would be available if needed. Commissioner Sheldon asked if the person could be available at the April 15th Commissioners meeting to meet with the Commissioners, and Mr. Blake was certain that would be possible. Commissioner Fox stated that the appointment could be made at the May 13th Commissioners meeting, at which time the status of the sitting clerk would be confirmed.

Moderator Blake inquired about the District's readiness for the annual meeting. Mr. Roy assured Mr. Blake that the District will be prepared, adding that the Annual Meeting PowerPoint presentations are scheduled for review and editing during the Commissioners' Meeting on April 15th.

Commissioner Fox asked Assistant Treasurer Moretti about the process for residents to acquire an absentee ballot. Mrs. Moretti explained that residents could request a ballot by phone or email. Ballots can then be either mailed or hand-delivered to the District by 7:00 PM on May 20th. Treasurer Travers emphasized the importance of tracking all absentee ballot requests as well as their returns, a point acknowledged by Mrs. Moretti.

4. Vote to Award Wireless Communication Facility Contract/RFP 25-6

Director Roy reported that the District received three proposals in response to the RFP, with Verizon Wireless Communications being the only respondent to meet the minimum requirements for awarding the contract. He informed the Commissioners that the District's Wireless Communications consultant had reviewed Verizon's proposal and recommended awarding the contract to them.

Director Roy provided the Commissioners with a copy of the proposal, outlining the terms. However, the Commissioners requested clarification on the proposed height of the tower before approving the lease agreement. Director Roy agreed to follow up with Verizon representative David Tivnan the next day to address this concern.

5. Review Draft Employee Policy (Handbook).

The attendees continued reviewing and revising the draft document, starting at the section on Vehicle Use Policy section and ending the review through the Employee Guide for Conduct section. Commissioners agreed to continue the review at the next meeting, with the goal of a complete review of the full document.

Conclusion of Open Meeting

Commissioner Fox moved to conclude the open public meeting session and move into executive meeting session, not to return to the open public meeting session, under executive session “Exemption 3. To discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the public body and to review and vote to approve Executive Session Minutes for March 18, 2025, and the chair so declares.” Chairperson Sheldon subsequently so declared. The motion was duly seconded by Chairperson Sheldon and was approved by a unanimous roll call:

Joshua M. Fox, Commissioner - Aye

Robert E. Boyd, Jr., Commissioners - Aye

Robert H. Sheldon, Commissioner and Chairperson - Aye

There being no further discussion, the meeting adjourned at 6:50 p.m.