



BOARD OF WATER COMMISSIONERS MEETING MINUTES

Date: January 5, 2023

Time: 4:30 PM

Location: Norwell Water Dept.
345 Main Street, Norwell

Present: Fred St. Ours, Steve Ivas, Peter Dillon, Howard Tufts and Water Superintendent Jason Federico

Residents: Christopher Kirwin (Otis Hill), John Valencius (Germaine Rd), Tim Timmermann (Main St), Brittany Kortis (Mt. Blue), Susan Fitzpatrick (Turners Way)

Prepared by: Donna Snow

Meeting Minutes from 12/8/22:

Fred St. Ours motioned to approve the meeting minutes from September 15th, Peter Dillon seconded, all in favor at 4:38pm

PFAS6 Discussion:

- Residents and Board members made introductions and Peter Dillon started with an overview to include the history of PFAS. Peter Dillon explained the public notices issued by the Water Department was a result of exceeding the PFAS standard that was set last year by the state. The PFAS levels tested at South Street in particular exceeded 20 ppt (parts per trillion). Norwell has 3 Treatment Plants: Washington St., Grove St., and South Street. The Washington and Grove locations did not exceed the PFAS standard.
- Norwell has three water tanks in town, located on: Paradise Drive, Judges Hill and Phillips Drive. These tanks operate based on tank elevation and flow. The water in the system is a blend of water supplied by these locations.
- PFAS compounds have been in production since the 1940's many of them are now outlawed from production.
- Peter Dillon stated PFAS has been in the water since the 1960's. Jason Federico advised other products are contaminated with PFAS including microwave popcorn, pizza boxes, fast food wrappers, cosmetics, clothing, scotch guard products, Teflon pans and firefighting foam. Peter Dillon reported Burt's Bees products are loaded with PFAS.
- PFAS is now being detected in rainwater, so it is literally everywhere.
- PFAS is colorless and odorless, any color seen in the water is not PFAS but a result of the system being manipulated while we try to daily changes within the distribution system.
- The PFAS standards that were set are based on what is considered to be safe "for a lifetime" of consumption.

- Last winter the South Street Plant was shut off for some time, we can not operate without South Street being online especially during peak demand.
- Recent color that has been seen in the water supply is a direct result of trying to manage the PFAS situation with wells coming on and offline. There has been instances of iron or manganese showing up in the water, they are not a health threat but a result of trying to manage and adjust the system.
- Peter Dillon explained the new PFAS standard is measured in parts per trillion. South Street runs at a little less than 30ppt for six of the PFAS compounds. There are many more than six compounds but only six are being regulated now.
- A filling station was set up at 79 Grove Street where residents can bring their own jug and fill up water for free where the PFAS levels are well below the standard.
- Mr. Timmerman, a resident in town explained perception is reality and understands the new regulations have caused much concern. One resident asked when was PFAS first detected in the water supply? Peter Dillon noted Norwell first detected PFAS in November of 2021.
- Jason Federico offered to compile and post the PFAS Frequently Asked Questions online.
- Hanover is similar to Norwell with levels around 30ppt. The South Street plant represents 50% of the water supply for the town. Jason Federico noted it is off now but will not remain off.
- The Board was asked how will the filters at South Street be paid for? Fred St. Ours explained the water rates will provide some of the funding for the filters. Water rates were recently raised by 6% on the base rate and will take effect in the next January billing.
- The filters were purchased from a company in California and there was a 9-month lead time on the order. The filters are lower profile tanks and will be housed inside the South Street Treatment plant building.
- The PFAS filters will use a GAC (granulated activated carbon) treatment process and the media will have to be changed out over time. The media contact time for removing PFAS is crucial, and the new configuration will require two months of pilot testing with completion expected in July 2023.
- The PFAS Washington Street results are around 18ppt, Grove Street is testing at less than 5ppt, and well #2 has almost no PFAS.
- Every community is dealing with PFAS in the Commonwealth. Norwell will be one of the first communities to have filters in place.
- The Board noted they do not know exactly where the PFAS is coming from at South Street. It could be attributed to the proximity to the many businesses in that area as well as the close distance to Route 3, several possible contributing factors exist. Car fires result in PFAS getting in the water supply from the firefighting foam.
- Fred St. Ours explained water is highly regulated, more so than your food supply and he understands everyone uses it, so it's not surprising that the state started regulating PFAS in the water supply.
- Fred St. Ours explained he does not want people to be afraid of drinking the Town water. The Federal standard is 70ppt much higher than the State standard of 20ppt.

- Jason Federico explained double reverse osmosis and activated carbon is the only way to get to zero according to what he has learned.
- One resident asked if PFAS is found in Poland springs, Jason Federico responded saying bottled water in MA also has to be below 20ppt.
- The water regulation that is set for water considers that people are being exposed to PFAS in other areas of their life, noting that Teflon probably has the highest amount of PFAS, ceramic cookware as an alternative would be safer.
- Fred St. Ours stated we will be spending 2-3 million dollars to filter the water at South Street. The annual cost will be \$100k to maintain the filters. Jason Federico explained the state and federal government will help subsidize.
- The discharged PFAS from the filtering will be burned and destroyed in an oven.
- Jason Federico mentioned having a reverse osmosis system at a kitchen sink is helpful, Peter Dillon added when water is heated the PFAS concentration is increased. Jason Federico noted a hydroviv filter as one suggestion.
- The goal is to bring the detectable PFAS level to zero with the new filters at South Street. The mixed water in the water supply likely would result in PFAS levels under 20ppt but the testing is done at the treatment sites and those results are what is reported when exceeded.
- Fred St. Ours noted the first water mains were installed in the mid 50's. Jason Federico will be initiating a flushing program in the spring and his goal is to complete the entire Town in two years.

Fluoride in the Water:

One resident was curious to know why Norwell does not put fluoride in the water. Fred St. Ours said it is almost like medicating the water supply and in years past residents did not want fluoride in the water supply. Both Peter Dillon and Fred St. Ours explained past public opinion was not in favor of this.

Water Main Breaks:

Jason Federico explained there was a water main break on Christmas Eve on Farrar Farm Road where the saddle blew off. Jason Federico explained it was similar to the break that occurred prior to this on E A Joseph Drive.

Proposed Water Main Replacements:

Jason Federico explained his plan to replace a section of the water main on Main Street will piggyback work being done by the Highway Department. Glenn Ferguson wants the water department to be two years ahead of him. The water mains that are in groundwater will be the top priority. The neighborhoods across from Stop and Shop along Jacobs Pond are the oldest pipes in Town. Peter Dillon explained this will be built into the budget and we will work in conjunction with highway.

Clothing Reimbursement:

Jason Federico explained he had clothing damaged in the line of work. The Work n Gear invoice was vouchered tonight for approval. Accounting needs the Board's approval to pay the

invoice since the Superintendent does not have a clothing allowance. Fred St. Ours voted to approve \$195.46 for the clothing reimbursement; Peter Dillon seconded, all in favor at 4:46pm. Jason Federico also noted that one receipt is missing from Home Depot invoice, he verified the purchase and did buy those items (drill bits) the receipt is lost, all other invoices will accompany the Home Depot statement which was also vouchered tonight.

Bill Trust Insert:

Ilana Quirk reached out to the Water Department looking to include an insert for complete streets, she is hoping to have the insert part of the January water billing and is aware that the insert cost will be her responsibility. The Board reached a consensus to approve the January insert for Planning Department which will be included in our water billing.

Norwell Chamber of Commerce:

Steve Ivas noted the State of the Town meeting will be held on January 26th; Steve Ivas will be away for the meeting. Peter Dillon suggested going and possibly discussing PFAS.

Other Items Not Anticipated:

- Jason Federico explained the time frame for bedrock well exploration is February with a triangle (of 3 borings) with one site at Bowker and one at Grove Street.
- Fred St. Ours asked for records to be pulled for the water main at the Reserve located on Pleasant Street, he would like to find old records to determine how this watermain will be maintained. Jason Federico stated there are other similar locations in Town such as High Street near the booster station. Originally Jason Federico suspected a possible but reassured everyone that the ground water was checked multiple times for Chlorine at the Reserve and there was no Chlorine present and no leak.
- Steve Ivas met with the Open Space and Recreation committee, and they briefly discussed what the Water Department can do to let people know about PFAS.
- Steve Ivas recommended a memorial flower garden to be created for former Water Superintendent Jack McInnis which can be located at the South Street Treatment Plant. Jason Federico has a spot in mind where trees were recently removed and thinks plantings that will not create overgrowth and that is aesthetically pleasing would work. Fred St. Ours agreed and there are lots of options to consider.
- Jason Federico explained the Master Meter Technician came to the plant today to calibrate meters. The findings showed we are logging the pumping levels to be 14% higher than they should be, this affects unaccounted for water. Jason Federico explained 10" meters will be pulled and cleaned to correct the problem. Staff will replicate for the smaller meters in the system. Jason informed the Board well #10 was under for pumping and Well #2 was perfect.
- The upcoming MWRA meeting; Peter Dillon agreed all should attend.

Fred St. Ours made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:32 PM, seconded by Peter Dillon.

Accepted: J. W. St. Ours Date: 1/19/23