

TOWN OF ACTON WATER RESOURCES ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING NOTES OF AUGUST 29, 2018

Documents: Any documents utilized during this meeting are either included in these minutes, available on the web and/or can be examined at the Town offices during regular business hours.

Present: Ron Beck, Lucy Kirshner, Matt Mostoller, Bob Sekuler, Barry Rosen. Guests: Terra Friedrichs, Kim Kastens.

Note Taker(s): Barry Rosen

Chairperson: Ron Beck

Called To Order: The chairperson called the meeting to order on 8/29/2018 at 8:05 PM.

Citizens' Comments:

Ms. Kastens announced that Green Acton has posted an announcement of the WRAC Water Resources Workshop and the GA/League of Women Voters 1,4 dioxane forum on their web site. [Both events are public events.] ([Mark your calendar](#))

Old Business:

1. Approval of Minutes: On a motion by Mr. Sekuler which was seconded by Ms. Kirshner, the minutes of August 22, 2018 were approved by a vote of 4 Yes, 0 No and 1 abstention.
2. History Catch-up: Mr. Beck spent some time reviewing for the committee the recent history of the planning for the Water Resources Workshop and the background of the teleconferences that had been taking place between some committee members, our BOS liaison and Ms. Bursky (the workshop facilitator).
3. Invitee List: Since the last week's meeting, there have been some changes to the invitee list.
 - 3.1. Mr. Stuntz (AWD) confirmed that he will not be attending the workshop. Mr. Cipar (AWD WLMAC) also indicated that he will be out of town on 9/22 and will not be able to attend.
 - 3.2. Mr. Mangiaratti (Town Manager) indicated that he will ask the following town employees to attend representing various departments:
 - 3.2.1. Corey York: Public Works
 - 3.2.2. Tom Tidman, Natural Resources Director representing Land Use Department
 - 3.2.3. Robert Hart, Fire Chief or someone designated by Mr. Hart to represent the fire department.
 - 3.2.4. The health department and planning department will not have direct representation at the workshop.
 - 3.2.5. A revised spreadsheet with the latest invitee list is attached to these minutes.
 - 3.3. *Action Item: Mr. Beck will write an email to the chairpersons of the Board of Health, Conservation Commission, Finance Committee and the Planning Board inviting them to choose up to*

two (2) persons from their committees to represent them at the workshop. The WRAC will be copied.

3.4. *Action Item: Mr. Sekuler will contact the chairpersons of the Finance Committee and the Conservation Committee to provide them with more information about the event, answer any questions they may have and to ascertain the email addresses of the individual(s) that will represent their respective committees.*

3.5. *Action Item: Mr. Rosen will contact the chairpersons of the Board of Health and the Planning Board to do the same (as 3.4).*

4. Agenda: The revised draft agenda was reviewed after explanations of why it had been shortened. There were no objections. It will now be reviewed and possible suggestions and/or refinements offered by Ms. Bursky.

4.1. Remarks by Ms. Kirshner are still being drafted. Mr. Sekuler and Mr. Beck will continue to assist.

4.2. It is still unclear how Ms. Bursky's remarks and Ms. Kirshner's remarks at the beginning of the workshop will work.

5. Action Items:

5.1.1. *Ms. Kirshner will forward her latest draft to Mr. Rosen to be included in the minutes.*

5.1.2. *Ms. Kirshner will participate in the next conference call with Ms. Bursky, Mr. Rosen and Ms. Gardner.*

5.1.3. *Mr. Mostoller and Mr. Rosen (N.B. This is a change) will "re-write" the five scenarios to add more detail (maximum 1 paragraph).*

5.1.4. *Mr. Sekuler will create a list of "water related terms" and their meanings which he will mainly extract from the SWAP (Source Water Assessment Program) report.*

5.1.5. *Mr. Mostoller will attempt to locate maps that can be utilized for the workshop:*

5.1.5.1. *AWD wells and Zone 1 and Zone 2's.*

5.1.5.2. *Watershed map of Town of Acton*

5.1.5.3. *Town Zoning Map (particularly showing location of Technical Zone)*

5.1.5.4. *Map of wastewater discharge sites in Acton*

5.1.6. *Mr. Rosen and Mr. Mostoller to find ways to print maps, breakout room assignments and scenarios for use by the workshop participants.*

5.1.7. *Mr. Rosen to check room numbers and room capacities at town hall for use by breakout groups.*

5.1.8. *Mr. Beck to make adjustments to the pre-workshop on-line survey to have "open-ended" survey questions on it. He will send the next iteration out to the WRAC and Ms. Bursky for comment.*

5.1.9. *Ms. Bursky, Ms. Kirshner, Mr. Rosen to place a spot in the agenda for remarks to be made by Senator Eldridge.*

6. Pre-workshop Reading Materials: The WRAC believes that any pre-workshop reading materials should be available to read on-line only—no hard copy materials will be provided. The invitees will read as much or as little as they desire anyway. The belief is that some will be interested enough to read quite a bit and some invitees may read little. The reading material that is to be suggested in the order of importance is:

- 6.1. Protecting Drinking Water Sources in Your Community ([Protecting Drinking Water](#))
- 6.2. AWD WLMAC Report to Water Commissioners ([WLMAC Report](#))
- 6.3. SWAP (Source Water Assessment and Protection) [SWAP Report](#)
- 6.4. Comprehensive Water Resource Management Plan, very large file (CWRMP) [CWRMP](#)
- 6.5. AWD Master Plan Update, very large file [Master Plan](#)
- 7. OML Questions: There were some questions raised during the meeting about communications and the Open Meeting Law. Mr. Beck explained the genesis of the Open Meeting Law and what it was designed to prevent. Mr. Rosen and Mr. Beck then talked about the transparency objective of the law and what was considered deliberation by a municipal body and under what circumstances it could take place. It was also explained that committee members and participants were allowed to send their responses to an action item that was discussed during an open meeting and were, in fact, allowed to copy others. However, it was not permitted to discuss the item in question between members of the committee via email. The discussion of any such items would have to wait until the next open meeting of the committee.
- 8. [*Note added by Mr. Rosen after meeting adjournment*] After the WRAC meeting, a note from the Town Manager was forwarded to Mr. Rosen asking the WRAC for decisions on who will invite the town staff. Mr. Rosen responded that it seemed appropriate for the Town Manager to ask the employees that he had chosen to attend the workshop. This does raise the question that the WRAC does need to formally invite the Board of Selectmen.
- 9. Attachments to Minutes:
 - 9.1. Updated (8/29/2018) Invitation/Participant List
 - 9.2. Draft of Ms. Kirshner's opening remarks to be discussed with Ms. Bursky
 - 9.3. Latest draft of Breakout groups list.

New Business:

- 10. Date/Time of Next Meeting: Because there may be some last minute items prior to the workshop that might need attention, the WRAC decided to schedule another committee meeting which, if not needed, would be cancelled. The meeting date was set for September 20, 2018 beginning at 7:30 PM at the Water Supply District of Acton, 693 Massachusetts Avenue, Acton, MA.

Adjournment:

On a motion to adjourn the meeting by Mr. Sekuler which was seconded by Mr. Beck, the motion was passed to adjourn by a unanimous vote at 8:35 PM.

Workshop Participants List		Last Edit: 8/29/2018
First ▼	Last ▼	Affiliation ▼
Janet	Adachi	BOS
Chris	Allen	AWD
Erika	Amir-Lin	AWD
Ron	Beck	WRAC
Jon	Benson	BOS
Peter	Berry	BOS
Member	Board of Health	Board of Health
Sarah	Bursky	Facilitator
Paul	Campbell	Town Engineer
Member	Conservation Committee	Conservation
Jamie	Eldridge	State Senator
Member	Finance Committee	Finance Committee
Joan	Gardner	BOS
Katie	Green	BOS
Robert	Hart (a representative)	Fire Department
Kim	Kastens	Citizen Liaison
Lucy	Kirshner	WRAC
John	Mangiaratti	Town Manager
Matthew	Mostoller	AWD
Ron	Parenti	AWD
Member	Planning Board	PB
Barry	Rosen	WRAC
Robert	Sekuler	WRAC
Tom	Tidman	Land Use
Corey	York	Public Works

My name is Lucy Kirshner, and on behalf of the Water Resources Advisory Committee where I volunteer, I extend a welcome and huge gratitude to each one of you, for giving up a Saturday morning to get together for this workshop.

Each one of us has a deep interest and certain, specific authority regarding our town's water, but there is no single person or group where all the authority resides. It is only in collaboration that we can ensure that our town has the quantity and quality of water that we will need in the coming decades.

We are indebted, first of all, to the Acton Selectmen, all five of whom are here today, who recognize that almost every decision they make will involve a look at water needs or impacts on our water quality and supply. They funded this morning's workshop in order to determine outstanding questions related to our town's water use that need clear, science-based answers. The Water Resources Advisory Committee, WRAC, has been charged to research such questions in order to provide information that will help the selectmen in making decisions over the next twenty years. Your input today, in identifying questions that need resolution will help direct this research. This is the first step in an extended process.

We are not gathered to solve specific problems today. The scenarios we are going to ask you to address are not actual issues the town and the water district are struggling with right now, but they resemble problems our town is likely to face. In addressing the scenarios we are not looking for solutions, but asking you all, each having a slightly different expertise, to consider the information you would need in order to work toward a solution.

Some information you would need, regulations for example, is available and uncontested, accessed with a search of a town, state or federal website. Some knowledge, like the availability of people or funding, can only be estimated with predictions based upon past experience. Some knowledge, like the changes in the amount and type of rainfall we will experience in the next decades, will depend upon various models and predictions.

We are fortunate to have a good representation of the Acton Water District here today, and remarkably lucky that just last month along with Wright-Pierce engineers, they published their Water Master Plan Update considering critical water issues for the next twenty years. While you may not have had time yet to digest all 350 pages of that document, information from (or a link to?) that work will be included in the hand-outs you will receive shortly.

And you among us who are town officials and committee members are often the ones with the closest, realistic, understanding of how this town operates. You each have daily responsibilities and can inform the group on how best to ensure that well intended plans can be carried out.

We are particularly happy to see the group of interested citizens in attendance this morning. An unfortunate truth is that many people in this country take a steady supply of clean water available for granted. It is a big part of this town's strength that so many citizens recognize we are all part of it's governance and all share a responsibility to this resource.

So, thank you again. Our water is a most precious resource, and I say "our" water knowing that we can never own the water that flows through our town. All over the planet, countries, states, towns and individuals are dealing with the same H₂O that started out on Earth when the planet was first formed. We can never get new water to replace or augment the water we have now so we have to protect the water as it passes through our hands. Our work today to keep water clean and to use it efficiently is vital. We are so glad that you are here.

This information may be Sarah's to deliver? or mine?

Today, during two breakout sessions, each of you will be asked to work in a small group to consider different scenarios. Briefly the five scenarios are the following:

1. The rate of water consumption in the town of Acton begins to exceed the amount of water pumping that is permitted by the Commonwealth's Water Management Act.
2. Contamination enters one of Acton's well fields and renders it not useful for the foreseeable future.
3. A large organization wants to construct a number of buildings in Acton's "Technical District"
4. The town of Stow approaches the town of Acton to seek a mutually beneficial public water supply.
5. The town of Acton needs to site another waste water treatment discharge site to accommodate disposal capacity for a neighborhood of failing septic systems.

Two breakout sessions will ensure that two different groups will address each scenario.

As each group discusses a scenario they will keep a list of the information they would need in order to address the assigned issue, the questions that might need resolution before a decision could be made.

In the last hour of the workshop we will collate the list of questions that would need research. While you will each participate in just two scenarios, I suspect you'll be interested in and might have ideas about the other three scenarios you didn't have a chance to address. For that reason, the last hour of our workshop today will be a review of all the outstanding questions needed for addressing these possible situations and your input will be helpful at that time as well.

We suspect that this gathering will help each of us recognize the need to cooperate as we confront possible water problems that will demand action over the coming years. As we see, through another person's eyes, the way water demands impact their work we will be able to anticipate the challenges and opportunities before they face us.

Depending upon which of the following two situations occurs the following information can guide the directions for public attendance:

Situation 1: ten or fewer members of the public attend

For those of you from the public, thank you for coming and for your interest in Acton's water. We are going to split up the members of the public so that each group can benefit from citizen input. Kim Kastens, Chair of the Green Acton Water Committee, is over there with cards which have scenario, session number and room number on them. Please choose two cards from Kim, one for session 1 and one for session 2 and join the indicated group.

Situation 2: more than ten members of the public attend

For those of you from the public, thank you for coming and for your interest in Acton's water. You have two choices. If you would like to listen to the deliberations of one of the breakout groups you can join one of those groups as an observer. The break out rooms are small so the facilitator of each group may limit how many citizen observers can be in the room. or if you would prefer to actively discuss the scenarios, Kim Kastens, the Chair of the Green Acton Water Committee, will be facilitating a sixth discussion group of the public cup here in room 204. Input from the citizen discussion will be used to inform the water study along with input from the other working groups.

Packet of basic information:

Being faced, abruptly, with any scenario is not easy so we will be giving (or have given?) you each a packet of basic information that will start us all in the same place. Let me review that now: (This list may not be complete. Kim suggested she was going to include a "synopsis" of the AWD's master plan, and other suggestions are also possible)

1. The list of attendees including their specific water related authorities. (general background)
2. A list of the two break out sessions, showing room #, times, and assigned participants

3. a map of our larger watershed area showing neighboring towns with information about water flow
4. A map of Acton showing the locations of our wells, treatment plants and storage units showing zones 1&2 for protection around each well
5. A zoning map of the town showing where the Technical District is located
6. A map of the two superfund sites that impact our wells
7. A map of septic systems and the sewer section in our town

Scenrio #1: The rate of water consumption in Acton begins to exceed the amount permitted by the water Management act.

First Session 9:30 - 10:15

Selectman: Janet Adachi
AWD: Erika Amir-Lin
WRAC:
Town: Fire Dept. rep

Second Session 10:30 – 11:15

Selectman : Joan Gardner
AWD: Chris Allen
WRAC: Barry Rosen
Town: Corey York

Scenario #2: Contamination enters a well field and renders it not useful for foreseeable future

First Session 9:30 - 10:15

Selectman: Jon Benson
AWD: Matt Mostoller
WRAC: Ron Beck
TOWN: Paul Campbell

Second Session 10:30 – 11:15

Selectman: Katie Green
AWD: Ron Parenti
WRAC: Bob Sekuler
TOWN: Tom Tidman

Scemarop #3: A large organization wants to construct a number of buildings in Acton

First Session 9:30 - 10:15

Selectman: Katie Greene
AWD:
WRAC: Barry Rosen
TOWN: Corey York

Second Session 10:30 – 11:15

Selectman: Peter Berry
AWD: Matt Mosteller
WRAC: Lucy Kirshner
TOWN: Fire Dept. rep

Scenario #4: Stow approaches Acton to seek a mutually beneficial water supply

First Session 9:30 - 10:15

Selectman: Joan Gardner
AWD: Ron Parenti
WRAC: Lucy Kirshner
TOWN: Tom Tidman

Second Session 10:30 – 11:15

Selectman: Janet Adachi
AWD:
WRAC: Ron Beck
TOWN: John Mangiaratti

Scenario #5: Town needs to site another waste wter treatment discharge site to accommodate disposal for failing septic systems

First Session 9:30 - 10:15

Selectman: Peter Berry
AWD: Chris Allen
WRAC: Bob Sekuler
TOWN: John Mangiaratti

Second Session 10:30 – 11:15

Selectman: Jon Benson
AWD: Erika Amir-Lin
WRAC:
TOWN: Paul Campbell