



WATER RESOURCES ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes
October 10, 2024
7:00 PM
Virtual Meeting

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

Chairperson: Joe Robb

Clerk: Ron Parenti

Others in Attendance: Alissa Nicol (Select Board Liaison), Katy Orciuch (AWD Environmental Compliance Manager), and Kim Kastens

1. Opening

WRAC chair Joe Robb opened the meeting at 7:05 PM.

2. Regular Business

- A. Public Remarks/Comments – Matt Mostoller introduced Katy Orciuch, who is the new Environmental Compliance Manager for the Acton Water District. Matt explained that Katy will be attending future WRAC meetings to become familiar with the Committee's activities, and may eventually replace him as the Water District's WRAC representative.
- B. Review Minutes from 10 October 2024 – A motion to approve the minutes for 10 October 2024 was made by Barry Rosen and seconded by Ron Parenti. There were no requests for revisions, and the Committee members present at that meeting, Barry Rosen, Ron Parenti, and Joe Robb, all voted to approve the minutes. Matt Mostoller and Mike Geis did not attend that meeting, and abstained.
- C. Review of the 11/1/24 meeting with Woodard & Curran – Barry Rosen provided an overview of the stormwater briefing given by Rich Niles and Jack Troidl from Woodard & Curran on 1 November. That meeting was attended by Corey York and QinRui Pang from the Town's Public Works department, Alissa Nicol attended as the Select Board representative, and WRAC was represented by Rosen and Joe Robb. Rich Niles described the approach proposed by Woodard & Curran, which included the following four phases:

Phase 1 – Preliminary Investigation (Completed by Woodard & Curran)

Phase 2 – Stormwater Management Feasibility Study (2024-2025)

Phase 3 – Detailed Stormwater Management Feasibility Study (2025-2026)

Phase 4 – Implementation of the Preferred Alternative (2026-2027)

Phase 1, which was funded by the Acton DPW, has been completed by Woodard & Curran. The scope of the Phase 2 Feasibility Study was discussed, and it was determined that Woodard & Curran and WRAC share a similar view of this part of the investigation.



Rosen reminded the group of WRAC's prior experience in performing studies for the Town and writing bylaws, and it was subsequently agreed that WRAC should assume the lead in the Feasibility Study. Rosen promised that the infrastructure funding options considered by the Committee would be evaluated in an unbiased manner. The level of assistance that WRAC will require from Town staff and Woodard & Curran was also discussed, and it was estimated that the required budget for this assistance would be relatively small (of the order of \$5,000). The funding required to complete Phases 3 and 4 would be more substantial, and would probably be in excess of \$100,000. It was noted that Concord is moving forward with their stormwater studies, and has hired Weston & Sampson to perform that work.

D. Statement of Work for the Next Phase of the Stormwater Utility Study – Joe Robb presented a draft statement of work for the Phase 2 Feasibility Study, which addresses the following set of question:

1. Why are we proposing that Acton seek a solution to manage and maintain the stormwater infrastructure?
2. Why do we want to move forward with a sustainable method of management?
3. How the methods would support compliance with NPDES and the MS4 requirements.
4. What enabling regulations and/or laws would be necessary in Acton for each sustainable method of management?
5. Plan for and engage with the Acton community in learning about the needs, options available and working together to move a supported solution forward

Committee members thanked Robb for preparing this draft. Each item in the list was briefly reviewed, and members discussed options for conducting educational workshops, rate structures that have been employed by other towns to fund a stormwater utility, and the amount of assistance that the Committee would need from Woodard & Curran and Town staff. Opinions about the likely taxpayer response to an increase in taxes or fees to fund infrastructure improvements were reviewed. Following these discussions, Committee members agreed that the task list was well structured, and within the capability of the WRAC to perform. Members also agreed that the output product should be a formal written document rather than a PowerPoint presentation. Parenti asked if the report should include a statement of the funding approach favored by a majority of the WRAC members. It was decided that this question should be revisited at the end of the study, following a review of the information collected from public outreach sessions. Alissa Nicol indicated that the Select Board would probably schedule a vote to approve WRAC's Feasibility Study statement of work at its next meeting on 18 November.

E. Any Other New Business – Kim Kastens asked Matt Mostoller to discuss the impact of the worsening drought on the activities of the Water District. She noted that Acton is now included in a region that has been elevated to the Level 3 severe drought condition. Matt responded that the Water District has not seen a significant drawdown in its wells due to the large storage capacity of the aquifers. When asked about the impact on water quality, Matt stated that there has been no need to modify water treatment procedures and



that the Water District sometimes observes that water quality improves when water is withdrawn from new parts of the aquifer. The current red flag fire hazard warning, which is based on several parameters including the rain deficit, low humidity, and high wind conditions, was also mentioned.

3. Adjournment

Committee members agreed to hold their next meeting on 12 December 2024 at 7pm. The primary topic for that meeting will be a discussion of task assignments for the upcoming stormwater feasibility study. A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Matt Mostoller and seconded by Barry Rosen. This motion was unanimously approved by Committee members at 8:40 pm.

Meeting Chat File

20:23:45 From Kim Kastens to Host and panelists:

<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/drought-status>