



TOWN OF LINCOLN

WATER DEPARTMENT

MIDDLESEX COUNTY
MASSACHUSETTS

TOWN OF LINCOLN
WATER DEPARTMENT
16 Lincoln Road
Lincoln, MA 01773-6353
Phone: 781-259-8997

Water Commissioners Meeting
September 10, 2019
9:00 am

Town Hall 2nd Floor Hearing Room, 16 Lincoln Road

Attendees:

Ruth Ann Hendrickson, Chairman
Heather Ring, Water Commissioner
MaryBeth Wisser, Water Superintendent
Colleen Wilkins, Town Accountant

Absent Bob Antia, Water Commissioner

Commissioner Hendrickson called the meeting to order at 9:30am.

1. Approve Minutes of the August 20, 2019 - vote expected:

The Commission reviewed and approved the minutes as written for the August 20, 2019 meeting. Motion made by Chairman Hendrickson, Second by Commissioner Ring. Approved unanimously.

2. Approve Minutes of the August 21, 2019 - vote expected:

The Commission reviewed and approved the minutes as written for the August 21, 2019 meeting. Motion made by Commissioner Ring, Second by Chairman Hendrickson. Approved unanimously.

3. Discuss the water rates and fees:

Colleen Wilkins updated the rate study spreadsheet to reflect the current rates and explained that the data for the usage by tier was the FY18 totals. The Board will continue discussions at the September 18, 2019 meeting. Superintendent Wisser will revise the FY21 Operating and Capital request and Ms. Wilkins will re-run the rate study model.

The Board is considering increasing the quarterly base charge from \$35.00 per quarter to \$50.00 per unit or dwelling per quarter. Commissioner Ring stated surrounding Towns are charging for each unit in dwelling where multiple units are served by a single meter. We have the data to support that. Commissioner Ring, however, disagreed with an increase for the base charge.

Neither Chairman Hendrickson nor Commissioner Ring were comfortable with the proposal to charge all condos at a Tier 2 rate without data to understand condo usage patterns. The Board decided to assess the Battle Farm Road Condos and perhaps several other condo complexes to understand the average usage by unit so we can make an informed decision about which tier rate to apply.

4. Discuss the FY 21 Operating Budget

Superintendent Wisser presented the FY21 operating Budget to the Board. Details of the request can be found in the FY21 operating budget request memo submitted by Ms. Wisser. The Board will continue discussions on the FY21 Operating Budget at the September 18th meeting. Superintendent Wisser began to explain the rationale for her preferred budget.

Wages and Salaries: Superintendent Wisner explained the increase for wages to the Board. Ms. Wisner added the Utility Laborer 3 position and asked for a part-time Administrative Assistant. The Board declined the request for an additional Administrative Assistant. The Board strongly suggested that Ms. Wisner fill the current vacant Administrative Assistant position. Chairman Hendrickson questioned the need for the Utility Laborer 3 position. Superintendent Wisner reminded the Board they discussed the staffing plan at the July meeting. Superintendent Wisner advised the Board there have been no applicants for the Plant Manager and Water Operator vacant positions. Ms. Wisner reminded the Board that there is a shortage of license water operators. Wisner presented her career path plan and explained the idea is to be able to hire inexperienced employees and train them. The Board authorized Ms. Wisner to move forward with her plan. **Total Wages and Salary request is \$573,773.**

Expenses: Customer Service and Billing assistance added \$70,000 in anticipation of outsourcing the Munis billing and the customer telephone response services to a company like Pennichuck. **Water Testing:** Increased this line from \$18,000 to \$26,000. Increased monitoring as required and increase in lab costs. **Filter Maintenance** was increased from \$24,000 to \$30,000. To be able to perform deferred maintenance. Not to replace the modules. The original appropriation was \$30,000 in FY18 and the Board cut the request to \$24,000 in FY19. **Engineering Services:** increased this line from \$30,000 to \$74,000. Investigate interconnections \$22,000 and Capital Efficiency Planning \$52,000. **Total Expense request is \$999,900.**

The Total FY21 Operating Budget Request is \$1,718,673.

Commissioner Hendrickson suggested Ms. Wisner research the cost for renting or buying a modular building for additional office space and bathroom. Commissioner Hendrickson also instructed Ms. Wisner to have Tata and Howard investigate pump up toilets for the office bathroom.

Commissioner Ring suggested we try a local contractor for the bathroom improvements, Commissioner Ring said she would check with a Craig Nichols, who is a Lincoln resident and construction project manager.

Chairman Hendrickson instructed Ms. Wisner to either have a representative from Pennichuck attend the next meeting to discuss Customer Service and Billing Services or acquire a proposal from them.

5. Discuss the FY 21 Capital Plan

Superintendent Wisner presented the FY21 Capital request Budget to the Board. Details of the request can be found in the FY21 Capital request memo submitted by Ms. Wisner.

- Filter Module Replacement Estimated total capital request \$325,000
- HVAC: 77 Sandy Pond Road Pump Station/Office Estimated total capital request \$80,000
- Vehicle and Equipment Replacement of the Ford Ranger: Estimated capital request \$65,000
- TOC Analyzer Estimated capital request \$10,000
- Raw Water Pump Station Restroom Replacement Estimated capital request \$100,000
- Investigate interconnections Estimated capital request \$22,000
- Develop Directional Flushing Plan Estimated capital request \$68,000
- Tower Road Well Replacement Estimated capital request \$575,000
- Capital Efficiency Plan for Water Main Replacement Estimated capital request \$52,000
- Dead End pH Evaluation Estimated capital request \$21,800
- Full Scale Demonstration Study \$1,000,000
- Security Upgrades Waiting on engineers estimate Estimated capital request \$80,000
- EPA's America Water Infrastructure Act of 2018: Risk Assessment and Emergency Response Plan Waiting on engineers estimate Estimated capital request \$80,000

The Board carefully reviewed each request. The Board directed Ms. Wisner to re-prioritize the proposed capital expenses to reduce the size of the needed borrowing with its attendant impact on the operating budget. The following Capital request will be discussed further at the September 18, 2019 meeting

- Filter Module Replacement Estimated capital request \$325,000
- Raw Water Pump Station Restroom Replacement Estimated capital request \$50,000
- EPA's America Water Infrastructure Act of 2018: Risk Assessment and Emergency Response Plan
Waiting on engineers estimate Estimated capital request \$80,000
- Full Scale Demonstration Study estimated \$500,000

6. Other business – Did not discuss

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:39am. Motion made by Chairman Hendrickson. Second by Commissioner Ring. Approved unanimously.

The next meeting of the Water Commissioners is scheduled for September 18, 2019 at 4:00pm at Town Hall in the Donaldson Room, 16 Lincoln Road.

Respectfully submitted,

MaryBeth Wisner, Water Superintendent