TOWN OF KINGSTON
BOARD OF WATER COMMISSIONERS
OPEN SESSION
WATER DEPT OFFICE - 22 ELM ST, MICHAEL J.
MACPHERSON MEETING ROOM & VIA ZOOM
APRIL 8, 2025

3:30 PM – CALL TO ORDER
Chairman Richard W. Loring, Jr. called the meeting to order at 3:30pm.

In attendance were Vice Chairman Robert Erlandsen, Commissioner Robert R. Kostka, Kristen Berger of Resilient CE, Water Superintendent Chris Veracka, Clerk Stacey Smith, Sewer Superintendent Dave Walsh and Sewer Commissioner Brian Donahoe.

APPROVAL OF DEPARTMENT BILL SCHEDULES:

MEETING MINUTES:

<u>VOTE TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF MARCH 10, 2025</u>
Vice Chairman Erlandsen made the motion to approve the minutes of March 10, 2025. Commissioner Kostka seconded the motion and it was voted (2-0-1).
Chairman Loring abstained from the vote as he did not attend the meeting of March 10th.

<u>***AMENDED*** BOARD VOTE TO APPROVE FY26 DEPARTMENTAL BUDGET</u>
Chairman Loring moved the vote of the FY26 budget out of order. Chairman Loring states a formal vote is needed for the Board of Selectmen meeting this evening. Commissioner Kostka made the motion to approve the FY26 water department budget of $2,146,598.
Vice Chairman Erlandsen seconded the motion and it was voted unanimously (3-0-0). Commissioner Kostka stated to Ms. Smith,he noticed there was a small change in the debt service and the indirect cost to the town. She confirmed those changes.

APPOINTMENTS:

<u>PINE DUBOIS, 93 ELM ST RE: WATER LEAK ON RESIDENT SIDE OF CURB STOP</u>
The appointment was canceled by Ms. Dubois.

<u>KRISTEN BERGER, RESILIENT CE RE: ENGINEERING UPDATES</u>

<u>MAIN STREET WATER MAIN UPDATE - FINAL PAVING PLAN</u>
Ms. Berger updated the board about the onsite meeting today. Attendees were herself, Superintendent Veracka, water department foreman Mitch Williams, Mass DOT, paving contractor Lawrence Lynch and CC Construction. They walked the entire route of the project and discussed limits of work. The final paving is scheduled to begin Monday, April 21st. There will be another remote meeting held next week to finalize plans. The priority is to complete from the south side of the Jones River to the school in case of inclement weather later in the week.

Chairman Loring asked about the closing of the off-ramp request. Ms. Berger stated that the permit amendment request was submitted back in February, and they are still waiting for approval. She stated she asked Sean Stockman, the Mass DOT representative present at today's onsite meeting, to follow up on that request. She suspects it is close to being approved. She stated Mr. Stockman suggested a board sign on Route 3. Ms. Berger stated she has reviewed the budget and the remaining funds appear to be sufficient to complete the project.

<u>NEW WELL PROJECT - FUNDING/LOAN STATUS UPDATE, IF ANY</u>

<u>ONE STOP GRANT EXPRESSION OF INTEREST SUBMITTED</u>

Ms. Berger stated an expression of interest has been submitted to the One-Stop Grant Program. A response has been received suggesting the Mass Works Infrastructure Program will likely be the best fit for the well project. They noted some requirements to make the grant competitive. They mentioned that vertical construction is not eligible. Ms. Berger stated she's assuming it would include Chapter 30 funding. It's typical that the well would be constructed by a well driller/contractor (eligible for Chapter 30) and the pump station with the water main would go out as a separate project and be constructed under a separate bid contractor. She said it wouldn't make much sense to separate the two out. She stated we would need to think about how we could encapture both under the same grant program. For eligibility for the grant, they would like to see the design at 25%, which we are currently not at right now. Ms. Berger stated the program needs to see an imminent public project or development leveraged directly against the public improvements. For projects accepted during this round, the construction contract must be completed by June 30, 2026. This would make the new well project ineligible to apply for this round of applications. Ms. Berger suggested working closely with the Town Planner, Valerie Massard on this grant application to discuss public projects that could hinge on the new well. Ms. Berger stated there is a Q&A session offered by the grant program in April.

Regarding Kleinfelder and their work on the well project, Ms. Berger stated representatives will be coming out tomorrow with the well drillers to the site to locate the test wells. Once that's been done, a site exam can be scheduled. Kleinfelder can begin the site exam and pump test proposal submittal to Mass DEP in late May.
Mass DEP will take a few months to review and, concurrently, while that's being done, Kleinfelder stated they can start the wetlands flagging and the survey work.

An updated schedule has been provided based on the contract execution. The estimated timeframe that they see themselves finishing all the permitting and bid documents is by November 2026. She stated late 2028 is a realistic goal for construction completion. Discussion continued regarding time savings in the schedule. Ms. Berger stressed these are estimates as our hands are tied when it comes to the review work of Mass DEP.

<u>CONSUMER CONFIDENCE REPORT 2024</u>

Ms. Berger presented the 2024 Consumer Confidence Report, and she pointed out some of the additions made. She stated last year there was a block of information regarding the new treatment facility. She replaced that this year with the status of the new well source. She added the water service line inventory was added as a requirement from Mass DEP. The PFAS-6 detection limit has been noted as well. Discussion continued when the approval is needed as a third party vendor does the mailing for us separate from the June bills.
Ms. Berger asked the Board to review the document and let her know if there were any questions or edits.

<u>*** AMENDED *** SEWER COMMISSION RE: WATER MORATORIUM</u>

Sewer Commissioner Brian Donahoe thanked the board for including him on the agenda. He proceeded to introduce Dave Walsh, the Sewer Superintendent, to the board. Mr. Donahoe said he wanted to speak about the water moratorium and the effect it's having on the sewer commission, particularly their budget moving forward. He stated it's important we open up the water connections to complement the growth the sewer commission needs. Mr. Donahoe reviewed the history of the sewer system, and it's growth from 2006, the delayed expansion in 2010-2011 due to the economy and the facility improvements in 2017 to current day. He would like to offer the board the opportunity for both the water and sewer commissions to come together to devise a solution. He drafted what he believes to be a comprehensive Administrative Consent Order (ACO) to Mass DEP without penalty. The idea is that this will tell the story to Mass DEP and help them identify what the water commissioners have done regarding the moratorium so they can help facilitate a quicker path to the new well going online. He stated he spoke with the Regional Director of Mass DEP. Mr. Donahoe stated his suggestion is to remove the moratorium with conditions. The moratorium affects the town as the town will pay the debt of the sewer project regardless. Mr. Donahoe stated Mass DEP indicated to him that there could be an expedited process which ensures permitting by placing it on a fast track and they will elevate this project over others.

Chairman Loring stated we need to take our time in considering all of this. It took years to get to this point, and it's not going to be solved overnight. He added, we need to be sure all departments at Mass DEP are aware, not just Mass DEP in Boston.
Mr. Donahoe stated he's here to express the urgency of the issue with the town.

Mr. Donahoe showed the map of the sewer system in town. He explained the importance of expediting this process.

Resident Mark Guidoboni entered the meeting at 4:05pm.

Mr. Donahoe stated a 65 million-dollar capital investment was made by the sewer to keep the water clean. He stated the outline he's provided is a way to get us to resolution and be able to meet the revenue goals of the sewer commission.
Commissioner Kostka asked if the Sewer Commission was in support of this ACO. Mr. Donahoe responded, absolutely and unanimously.

Vice Chairman Erlandsen asked Ms. Berger what her thoughts were on this subject. Ms. Berger stated the town is not meeting Mass DEP's requirement of the maximum daily demands with the largest well offline. Vice Chairman stated this is why we placed the voluntary moratorium in place because we are trying do what's right.

Vice Chairman Erlandsen asked Mr. Donahoe if this was an exemption. Mr. Donahoe stated no, this is a voluntary moratorium, not one issued by the state. The ACO lets Mass DEP acknowledge the moratorium issue, and they would help expedite permitting.

Chairman Loring asked if either I-86, Grassy Hole or Trackle Pond wells go down, then what? He stated we need to supply potable water to all residents. If a mechanical issue shuts down a well for a prolonged period, how do we supply fire protection and potable water to every single house? He went on, unless Ms. Berger and Superintendent Veracka can convince the Board we can do the above safely. I'm not sure that we agree to this consent order.

Commissioner Kostka asked Ms. Berger if we issued a complete outside watering ban, how much water would that be? Ms. Berger stated it's hard to say and deferred to Superintendent Veracka as he is more familiar with the numbers. Superintendent Veracka stated he'd have to take a look at the maximum gallons pumped in a specific timeframe. Commissioner Kostka stated we haven't had a catastrophic failure since he's been on the board. If there are other things we can do, if we lift the moratorium, would restricting water use bring that pump total down? Chairman Loring stated there's no way to enforce it.

Vice Chairman Erlandsen asked whether overuse would result in lack of pressure and/or could that result in a catastrophic failure? Superintendent Veracka stated pressure loss can result in a catastrophic failure. The loss of a well not only creates the loss of water but also the time it takes to restore the well to working condition. He stated he doesn't believe the risk versus benefit is there. He added, we can't get residents to comply with voluntary watering bans and our pumpage totals increase every summer. Chairman Loring asked Superintendent Veracka what we are we pumping today. Superintendent Veracka stated 20 years ago we would pump 800K gallons a day, this time of year. Now, we are pumping 1.8M gallons per day on average and the summer pump rate is over 3M gallons per day. Vice Chairman Erlandsen mentioned budget restrictions and then asked what would be categorized as a catastrophic event. Superintendent Veracka stated it's as simple as when the pumps in the wells don't have time to rest. Vice Chairman Erlandsen asked about being pro-active on a water ban, and if that would be enough to reduce the risk. Discussion continued regarding risk versus benefit.

Chairman Lorng stated what he's hearing is the moratorium should be lifted so whoever wants to hook up to sewer can do so. Chairman Donahoe stated that's not true. Chairman Loring stated he's looking at potential areas outside the sewer system that would like to hook up to water, for instance residents on Main Street who don't have the ability to hook up to sewer. Mr. Donahoe shouted "Don't ever say that to me again!". Chairman Loring asked, why not? That's the truth. For whatever reason, it was determined sewer would not be installed there. Mr. Donahoe stated this is the plan and this is what we are working towards, referencing the consent order. Vice Chairman Erlandsen asked, can the moratorium be lifted for only those areas with sewer? Mr. Donahoe stated that's the only area he's concerned about. Chairman Loring stated you can't do that.

Superintendent Veracka stated he wanted to make it clear the moratorium does not prevent building. Mr. Donahoe stated he's only concerned about the area with sewer and argued the development in the RT 3A corridor isn't optimal for digging wells, and therefore it does impact development. He added, this is what we are trying to get you to understand, it's about the water-contaminated affected areas in town on the sewer map.

Vice Chairman Erlandsen stated he would only support this if assurances could be made to keep our system operating as designed. Discussion continued regarding continuing this conversation. Vice Chairman Erlandsen agreed to meet with Mr. Donahoe, Ms, Berger and Superintendent Veracka and Walsh. However, it cannot be during the day due to his school schedule.

Sewer Superintendent Walsh stated the estimated time that a new well will be built is late 2028. With that being said, the estimated time between the well construction (3-4 years) and the development of any new project construction could be 1-2 years. The liability the water department would have is now reduced by a couple of years. He added, it will be a slow process between when a project is permitted, construction is complete and water is being consumed.

Ms. Smith asked about any legal liability when allowing water in parts of town with sewer but not in the other parts of town. Superintendent Veracka agreed. He added, how can we tell one project in town not on town sewer they can't have water, but we tell a project on town sewer they can have water. Superintendent Walsh agreed, that would be unfair. Commissioner Kostka stated a legal opinion is needed. Discussion continued.

Mr. Donahoe stated he's trying to bring issues to the table for both boards to work on. Vice Chairman Erlandsen stated both the engineering side and the legal side of this would need to be explored further. Superintendent Veracka stated we need to proceed with extreme caution and referenced pending litigation with the Post Court/May Ave project. Regarding the inability to meet commercial demands with wells in the Rt 3A corridor, he suggested looking at the surrounding communities such as Plympton, Middleboro and Carver, they have wells and booster pumps and continue to develop.

Chairman Loring suggested a subcommittee be formed to discuss this further. Chairman Erlandsen moved to form a subcommittee to further discuss the issue. Commissioner Kostka seconded the motion and it was voted on unanimously (3-0-0). Chairman Loring suggested Vice Chairman Erlandsen, Ms. Berger and Superintendent Veracka arrange the next meeting with sewer commission representatives.

WATER SUPERINTENDENT DEPARTMENTAL UPDATE:

UPCOMING MASS DEP SANITARY SURVEY APRIL 14 & APRIL 15 (IF NEEDED)

No discussion

SOUTH ST. GENERATOR UPDATE

Superintendent Veracka stated at the previous meeting he had been made aware that the South Street Generator was out of service after yearly maintenance. He took a look at the generator himself, cleaned the contacts, and it is back up and working fine. He stated he had a call to South Shore Generator to see what the technician's findings were that deemed it inoperable during the maintenance work.

FCC UPDATE - DEAN MARENGI UPDATED SCADA SYSTEM APRIL 2

The new FCC license for the SCADA equipment is in hand and the updates to the system were done last week. There should be no radio interference with Eversource going forward.

SHUT OFF PROGRAM UPDATE. GROUP 1 - 3 PAYMENT PLANS, 1 BANKRUPTCY AND 1 ACCOUNT ALREADY SHUT OFF PER BUILDING DEPT; ALL OTHER ACCOUNTS PAID IN FULL.
GROUP 2- 11 OF 12 ACCOUNTS PAID IN FULL; 1 PAYMENT PLAN.

Superintendent Veracka stated Stacey and Laurie have been doing a great job sending out shut-off notifications. Progress is being made with this program regarding collections.
Ms. Smith stated most people have paid in advance of the shut-off date and those who haven't had arranged payment plans to avoid shut-off. We had one property shut off which paid immediately, and their water was turned back on. Commissioner Kostka asked if significant revenue was coming in. Ms. Smith stated as of right now, out of the 100K

worth of shut-off letters sent, approximately 50% has been collected.

ASR SUBMITTED TO MASS DEP LAST WEEK IN ADVANCE OF MARCH 31, 2025.
No discussion

NEW BUSINESS:

ABATEMENT REQUEST FOR DECEMBER 2024 BILL FROM RESIDENT AT 17 SUMMER ST
The board reviewed the abatement request from the resident. There was no clear explanation for the high usage on the December bill and the usage has gone back to normal. Ms. Smith did explain to the resident that the deadline to apply for an abatement on the December bill has lapsed; however, he is adamant he did not use the amount of water that registered through his meter. Discussion continued regarding the possibility of air in the lines. Chairman Loring suggested an accuracy test be performed at the property to ensure the meter is working appropriately. He suggested holding off on any decision regarding an abatement until after the accuracy test. Ms. Smith stated the resident did receive a shut-off notice and the payment is due within a couple of days. She asked if we should pause the shut-off until such time an accuracy test is scheduled? Chairman Loring responded, yes.
Ms. Smith stated she would notify the resident to schedule an appointment. Superintendent Veracka stated in all the years he's performed accuracy tests, he's never seen a meter fail in our favor. It's always been in the favor of the resident.

Vice Chairman Erlandsen asked if there would be discussion on the next meeting agenda regarding the DPW article. He stated the Board of Selectmen is meeting tonight, and the Sewer Commission has already voted on the issue. He asked if we should do the same. Commissioner Kostka said yes we should.
Ms.Smith will place it on the next meeting agenda.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

NONE

WATER CORRESPONDENCE FROM LAST MEETING:

LETTER DATED MARCH 26, 2025, TO RESIDENT AT 5 RIVERSIDE DR RE: PAYMENT ARRANGEMENT AND SERVICE APPOINTMENT

BUSINESS OF WATER QUALITY REVIEW COMMITTEE:

NONE

NEXT REGULAR MEETING:

TUESDAY, APRIL 22, 2025 AT 4:00PM

ADJOURNMENT OF OPEN SESSION:
Commissioner Kostka made the motion to adjourn. Vice Chairman Erlandsen seconded the motion, and it was voted on unanimously (3-0-0).
The meeting adjourned at 4:47pm.

ZOOM INFORMATION

TOPIC: BOARD OF WATER COMMISSIONERS
TIME: THIS IS A RECURRING MEETING MEET ANYTIME
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Respectfully submitted,

Stacey L. Smith
Clerk