



CHESTER Water Commission CHESTER TOWN HALL Meeting Minutes

13 July 2022

Members Present: Lyle Snide (Chair)
Bob Daley
Tom Bean

Members absent: none

Others present: Emily Lee-Smith; Liz Massa; Andy Meyers; Rosemary Delesandro; Jane Sutton; Andy Sutton;
Mike Stapleton; Ryan Lister; Nick Chuisano; Elaine Gibson; Michele Kenny; Norma MacDonald;
Elaine Gilmore

Meeting called to order at 4:00 pm.

Item 1: The minutes from the 26 May meeting and 28 June public hearing were unanimously approved.

Item 2: A synopsis of the major water leak that occurred on 08 July was given to keep the public informed: A large, unlocated leak quickly drained the entire water system early morning on Friday, 08 July. The leak was sectionalized by late Friday afternoon, allowing the unisolated part of the distribution system to refill (approximately 20 homes were in the isolated section). A boil water notice was put in effect and a drinking water distribution center set up at the Town Hall parking lot, with a grey water station set up at the fire station, for the duration of the event until the boil water notice was lifted. Once the system had sufficient water, further leak location efforts were made Sunday, 10 July, morning with the leak located around 1000 and repairs completed by 1600; the leak was a failed patch for a previously repaired leak near the east end of the 8 inch main pipe along Rt 20. The boil water notice was lifted on Saturday afternoon, 16 July, once all bacteria samples were negative.

One resident insisted the primary water operator be immediately fired or suspended. It was explained that this was an unexpected, catastrophic failure that was not the result of operator actions, although there are ongoing efforts to locate qualified water operators to ensure continued operations in the event of injury, illness, or for replacement purposes. However, there is a regional shortage of qualified water operators in western Massachusetts, and the search was ongoing. Given the need for an operator on a daily basis, with no substitutes available, we would be in violation of DEP requirements to remove the current operator; efforts to find substitute or alternate operators would continue.

Item 3: Water plant equipment replacement status: Berlin Instruments has replacement chemical pumps and a finished water turbidity analyzer on back order. The replacement will occur once the parts are received.

Item 4: SCADA status: Elm Electric reviewed the SCADA performance after recovery from the major leak. All SCADA functions are operating normally. The alarm functions were also tested and were functioning normally.

Item 5: Watershed management RFP: need to contact Town Administrator on status

Item 6: Austin Brook reservoir improvements: requesting quotes for dredging the reservoir and for pump and valve inspection and repair required to use the reservoir as a water source.

