

NORTH SAGAMORE WATER DISTRICT
MEETING MINUTES MARCH 25, 2020

The North Sagamore Water District Board of Water Commissioners held their monthly meeting on Wednesday, March 25, 2020 at 4:15 pm via tele-conference per Governor Baker's order suspending certain provisions of the open meeting law dated March 10, 2020 due to the Coronavirus (Covid-19). Chairperson George Sala called the meeting to order at 4:15 pm.

Those who dialed in remotely at the start of the meeting were: Chairperson George Sala, Commissioner Mark Bergeron, Commissioner Mark Melchionda, Superintendent Matt Sawicki and Treasurer Maureen Fruci.

Chairperson Sala said all agenda items requiring a vote will need to be taken by a roll call vote because the meeting is being held via tele-conference.

Superintendent Sawicki asked if he should record the meeting. Commissioner Sala said yes.

DISCUSSION & POSSIBLE VOTE TO DECLARE A STATE OF EMERGENCY

The Superintendent informed the Board he spoke to attorney Bob Troy about the District declaring a state of emergency. Attorney Troy said it wasn't necessary but if the Board felt compelled to do it, he is fine with it. Commissioner Sala said the town of Bourne, Buzzards Bay and Bourne water districts have all declared a state of emergency. He explained the declaration would protect the District if there are any reimbursements related to the Covid-19 virus. The Superintendent asked if the District can waive late payment fees. The Board agreed to waive late fees until the state of emergency has been lifted. Commissioner Melchionda said that should be added to the declaration as well. Commissioner Bergeron noted a change on the last page of the declaration. The date on the bottom of page 1 should be changed to Wednesday, March 25, 2020. Commissioner Melchionda made a motion to declare a state of emergency for the North Sagamore Water District on 3/25/20 as written in the Declaration of the North Sagamore Water District Local Emergency. Commissioner Bergeron seconded the motion. All Board members were in favor. Roll call vote – Commissioner Melchionda – aye, Commissioner Bergeron – aye, Commissioner Sala – aye.

The Superintendent will send a copy of the declaration to the Board in the morning. In addition, he will post it on the District's website.

DISCUSSION & POSSIBLE VOTE ON ANNUAL DISTRICT MEETING & ELECTION

Superintendent Sawicki said the Annual District Meeting scheduled for 4/29/20 will need to be postponed. He explained the state has given guidance to municipalities on how to handle this. The Board can vote to postpone the ADM. A new date doesn't have to be chosen at this time. Commissioner Sala said all town buildings are currently closed. The District will have to wait for restrictions to be lifted to choose a new date for the ADM.

Commissioner Bergeron made a motion pursuant to Section 1 of Chapter 45 of the Acts of 2020 and because of the state of emergency declared by the Governor, pursuant to Executive Order 591, Declaration of a State of Emergency to respond to COVID-19, the North Sagamore Water

District election and Annual District Meeting scheduled for Wednesday, April 29, 2020 is hereby postponed. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Melchionda. All Board members were

in favor. Roll call vote: Commissioner Melchionda – aye, Commissioner Bergeron – aye, Commissioner Sala – aye.

DISCUSSION & POSSIBLE VOTE ON MANDATORY WATER CONSERVATION MEASURES

The Superintendent addressed the possibility of the District implementing mandatory water conservation measures if the state of emergency continues into May and June. He said some districts are having difficulty getting chemicals which could put a strain on operations. He isn't sure if everybody was trying to buy chemicals at the same time or perhaps an issue with production or transport of the items caused the shortage. Superintendent Sawicki said keeping the run time down at the treatment plant will use less chemicals. Commissioner Bergeron suggested the discussion should continue at the next monthly meeting.

DISCUSSION OF ESSENTIAL PERSONNEL & COMPENSATION TO EMPLOYEES DURING THE STATE OF EMERGENCY DECLARATION

The Board had a discussion regarding personnel and their compensation during the state of emergency. The Superintendent explained all staff are currently working in the District with the exception of Chey Phillips who is working remotely, but would be available to come in to the office if necessary. All employees have separate work areas. Field staff are not entering customer's homes. They are doing their best to accommodate requests for turn-ons and mark outs. There was a discussion regarding ongoing construction in the District during the state of emergency. The Board said new construction should be the lowest priority during this crisis. New water services should be put on delay until further notice. The Superintendent should evaluate each situation on a case by case basis and determine what the District can safely handle. If it is necessary to do any excavation work the Superintendent has a plan to do the work safely and keep staff in separate areas. Commissioner Melchionda told the Superintendent to call in an outside contractor if he feels it is necessary. Superintendent Sawicki said Governor Baker has extended school closures until 5/4/20 because of this some employees may have issues down the road with childcare etc. The Board agreed a vote was not necessary for this agenda item at this time because all staff are currently working.

Commissioner Melchionda asked if there is a back-up plan if one of the employees gets sick. Commissioner Sala recommended putting a written emergency plan in place for the District. The Superintendent said he will write up the plan. He also said he has been in close contact with other local towns and districts regarding mutual aid. In addition, the District is now a member of the MA Water/Wastewater Agency Response Network (WARN).

NEW BUSINESS

Commissioner Sala suggested the District keep track of any expenses related to the Covid-19 virus. There was a discussion about the FY21 budget. The Board recommended holding off making changes at this point until further information is available. The Board discussed the 2 upcoming projects (Phillips Road water main and Bournedale tank rehabilitation). They all agreed one of the projects may need to be put on hold. Commissioner Melchionda suggested

-3-

perhaps the Bournedale tank rehab could be done in the fall if the current situation improves by then. Discussion will follow at the next scheduled meeting.

ANY BUSINESS NOT REASONABLY ANTICIPATED WITHIN 48 HOURS OF MEETING

None

COMMISSIONERS COMMENTS/SELECT NEXT MEETING DATE

Commissioner Sala said if an issue arises and a meeting is necessary the Board will be available via teleconference with a 48-hour notice. Superintendent Sawicki suggested waiting until after April 7, in order to see if there are any updates from Governor Baker. The next meeting is tentatively set for Wednesday, 4/8/20 at 4:15 pm.

The Board said the staff has done a great job especially considering the pressure everybody is under.

ADJOURN

Commissioner Bergeron made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:06 pm. Commissioner Melchionda seconded the motion. The motion was accepted. Roll call vote – Commissioner Melchionda – aye, Commissioner Bergeron - aye, Commissioner Sala - aye.

Respectfully submitted,

Maureen Fruci,
District Clerk