

MINUTES
HARWICH WATER DEPARTMENT
BOARD OF WATER/WASTEWATER COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR SESSION MEETING MINUTES
Friday March 14, 2025
Open Session / Public Hearing 9:00 a.m. /Executive Session 10:30 a.m.

WATER COMMISSIONER'S PRESENT: Chair Noreen Donahue, Vice Chair Allin Thompson, Commissioner Bob Young (absent), Commissioner Judith Underwood, Commissioner John Gough

OTHERS PRESENT: Superintendent Jason Trepanier, Administrative Assistant Tracey Alves

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Donahue called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. and then motioned to open the Public Hearing for the proposed water rate increase. Vice Chair Thompson moved the motion and Commissioner Underwood seconded, all in favor; 4-0-0.

PUBLIC HEARINGS / PRESENTATIONS

A. Discussion and possible vote to approve increase to Water Rates & Fees- 9:00 a.m.

PROPOSED WATER RATE INCREASE
TOWN OF HARWICH

The Harwich Board of Water/Wastewater Commissioners will hold a public hearing on Friday, March 14, 2025, at 9:00 a.m. at the Harwich Water Department, 196 Chatham Road, Harwich, MA 02645. The purpose of the hearing is to receive public input regarding the proposed new water rates established by the Board of Water/Wastewater Commissioners.

QUARTERLY BASE RATE INCREASE	
CURRENT	PROPOSED
45.00	55.00

The proposed rate increase would go into effect July 1, 2025.

Chair Donahue asked for a motion to increase the quarterly water base rate from \$45.00 to \$55.00. Vice Chair Thompson moved the motion and Commissioner Underwood seconded, all in favor; 4-0-0.

Chair Donahue motioned to close the Public Hearing at 9:07am and return to Open Session. Vice Chair Thompson moved the motion and Commissioner Underwood seconded, all in favor; 4-0-0.

CONSENT AGENDA

A. Minutes

1. January 21, 2025
2. February 4, 2025
3. February 18, 2025

Chair Donahue asked for a motion to approve the Minutes listed under Consent Agenda. Vice Chair Thompson motioned to approve the Minutes of January 21, 2025, February 4, 2025 and February 18, 2025 with one small change to the Minutes of January 21, 2025. Commissioner Underwood seconded, all in favor; 4-0-0.

ABATEMENTS

A. FY 2026 Q2 Internal Adjustments

Vice Chair Thompson motioned to approve the FY 2026 Q2 Internal Adjustments as presented. Commissioner Underwood seconded; 4-0-0.

B. FY 2026 Q2 Water Department Usage

Vice Chair Thompson motioned to approve the FY 2026 Q2 Water Department Usage as presented. Commissioner Underwood seconded; 4-0-0.

OLD BUSINESS

A. Haley & Ward Contract for Tank Painting

Superintendent Trepanier has the Haley & Ward Tank Painting contract. Commissioner Young will be sent an e-mail to come into the Department to sign the contract.

B. Tank Painting Funding - \$600K transfer from Water Retained Earnings – *vote 2 Articles*

Chair Donahue asked for a motion to transfer \$600,000 from available funds of water retained earnings. Vice Chair Thompson motioned to transfer \$600,000 from available funds of water retained earnings. Commissioner Underwood seconded. By doing this it saves the Department \$75,000 a year in interest. All in favor; 4-0-0.

We are rescinding the authorization of a borrowing of \$750,000 from last year. Vice Chair Thompson moved to rescind the action of Article 19 and rescind borrowing of \$750,000 which would have been used to paint the Pleasant Lake tank. Commissioner Underwood seconded; 4-0-0.

C. GHD Contract for Route 28 Water Main East

One of the two contracts for East/Phase 2 will be bid in May and construction will start September - October 2025 from South Street to the Herring River bridge. This stretch of Route 28 is a couple of miles long.

The Board is much happier with the GHD contract now and will need to vote to approve.

Vice Chair Thompson moved to approve the proposed contract between GHD and Harwich Water Department in the amount of \$630,000 for engineering as presented. Commissioner Underwood seconded. All in favor; 4-0-0.

At the next meeting planning for the informational sessions for the public.

In relation to this project, the Conservation Department is meeting next week regarding the wetlands in the bridge area.

D. Town Warrant Capital Articles - vote 2 Articles

The Board will vote on the Capital Articles that will be presented at Capital Meetings this May.

Chair Donahue will take a motion to transfer \$100,000 from retained earnings to put towards pipe discontinuity in the Capital Outlay plan. Vice Chair Thompson motioned to transfer \$100,000 from retained earnings to put towards pipe discontinuity in the Capital Outlay plan. Commissioner Underwood seconded. All in favor; 4-0-0.

Wastewater Capital Plan

Move \$150,000 out of Wastewater retained earnings for the purpose of the vehicle. Vice Chair Thompson motioned to move \$150,000 out of Wastewater retained earnings for the purpose of the vehicle. Commissioner Underwood seconded; 4-0-0.

E. Follow up on Water Quality Discussion – Mar 3, 2025, SB meeting

Last week at the Select Board meeting on March 10th, in the staff report, the Water Quality Statement for Great Sand Lakes Sewer Project was read aloud into record. Petitioners continued to say that if the project isn't done the drinking water would be impaired. Nobody should be worried. It's speculative and fear mongering.

People need to be reminded that if we were going to do a project to help the drinking water, we would sewer near the wells and not 2 miles away!

NEW BUSINESS

A. FY 2026 Water Budget – vote

Vice Chair Thompson moved to approve the FY26 Water Budget in the amount of \$4,940, 416. Commissioner Underwood seconded the motion; 4-0-0.

B. FY 2026 Wastewater Budget – vote

Vice Chair Thompson moved to approve the FY26 Wastewater Budget in the amount of \$704,863. Commissioner Underwood seconded the motion; 4-0-0.

C. FY 2026 Wastewater Subsidy Allocation – Transfer \$105K from Wastewater Retained Earnings – vote

Chair Donahue asked for a motion to approve a transfer of \$105,000 from Wastewater retained earnings. Vice Chair Thompson motioned to approve a transfer of \$105,000 from Wastewater retained earnings. Commissioner Underwood seconded the motion; 4-0-0.

D. Topic List for future agendas – Chair will present topic

Over the next 5 months, the latest things that are ongoing, will be added onto the agenda.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

The Route 28 phase 1 west contract is being worked on. The Department of Transportation (DoT) will be doing the bidding on this portion of the project.

Green Seal Environmental did the survey out at Station 10 for new well exploration. The survey will be sent to the company GZA for well planning.

The conduit to monitor the vernal pool came in and the wire has arrived. Once the monitoring devices come in we will move forward.

Leak detection was deployed during leak detection training, and they are collecting data. Hopefully they don't detect any leaks.

The Hydrostop valve insertion will be done next week on two water mains that were excavated.

The hydraulic model will be presented at an upcoming Board meeting.

A couple of new vehicles will be in in about 3-4 weeks.

Phase 3 sewer construction is moving along. There were two minor disruptions that Robert Our already addressed.

The Bay Rd sewer main had a camera lowered into it that took video. The video was given to both the engineers and Town. Maybe the issue could be fixed by bringing sewer through the other side of Bay Rd?

Chair Donahue commented that legal counsel received a records request from the Town related to Bay Rd.

Superintendent Trepanier is working on grinder pump Sewer Regulations.

COMMISSIONER'S REPORT

The water table is very low as there has been no recharge. The Department will have to have water restrictions this year starting May 1st.

The water restrictions signs throughout town say "watch" and "warning" and may need to be redesigned.

Chair Donahue has received a request from a petitioner to present at an upcoming meeting about fertilizers, pesticides and trees. The Board is happy to let him present but won't be able to write a letter of support.

NEXT MEETING

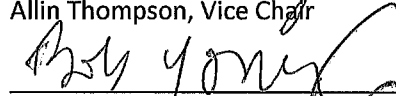
The next Board meeting will be held on Tuesday, April 8, 2025 at 9:00 a.m.

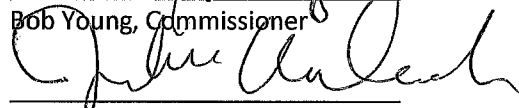
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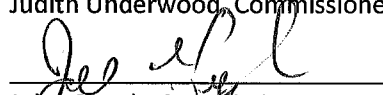
Chair Donahue entertained a motion to enter into Executive Session at 10:24am and not return to Open Session. Vice Chair Thompson moved the motion with a second by Commissioner Underwood. All in favor; 4-0-0.

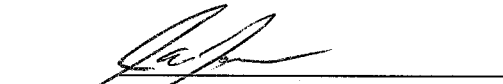

Noreen Donahue, Chair


Allin Thompson, Vice Chair


Bob Young, Commissioner


Judith Underwood, Commissioner


John Gough, Commissioner


Jason Trepanier, Superintendent


Tracey Alves, Board Secretary