

**TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES**  
**Ordinance Committee**  
**Town Council Chambers**  
**November 16, 2022 at 6:30 PM**

Present: Kenneth DiFazio, Chair  
Gary MacDougall, Vice Chair  
John Abbott, Councilor  
Lisa Belmarsh, Councilor  
Arthur Mathews, Councilor

Also Present: Richard McLeod, Town Solicitor

Recording Secretary: Mary Barker

Chair DiFazio called the meeting to order at 6:32 PM.

**22 131- Citizen Petition Proposed New Building Moratorium**

The chair reported that the committee was provided with three attachments for the meeting- a PowerPoint presentation, the minutes from the Public Works Committee's meeting and the initial petition submitted by the citizens. The proponents were invited to the table- Kathy Swain, 134 Mill Street and Alyson Dossett, 56 Belmont Street. They are requesting an 18-month moratorium; however, the timeframe is not etched in stone. It can be negotiated to take whatever time it takes to get the water issue resolved. Ms. Swain added that she will not be present in person for the public hearing on December 5, 2022, but will log in through Zoom.

The proponents introduced themselves; Kathy Swain of 134 Mill Street, and Alyson Dossett of 56 Belmont Street, who gave a slide presentation with their added narrative:

*Thank you to the Ordinance Committee for offering us the opportunity to present this evening. We look forward to sharing with you our work group's recommendation that the Town consider an 18-month building moratorium. [The length of the Moratorium could be shorter]*

Why a "building moratorium"?



- May 2022 the Mayor states "Weymouth most likely will exceed its allowable water draw within the next 5 years"
- The town still continues to expand while operating without a valid Water Management Plan (expired 2017)
- Joining the MWRA is a complex issue and will have an unpredictable timeline

*1st slide: “Why a moratorium?” The image you see on this slide is our reservoir, Great Pond, from an overhead drone view.*

*In May 2022, Mayor Hedlund made the statement that “Weymouth will most likely exceed its allowable water draw within the next five years”.*

*In the last several years leading up to this statement, requests for permitting of multi-family dwellings have increased at a resource-challenging pace.*

*Towns require growth for sustainability, but growth must be responsible. I’m not sure if the committee realizes this, but Weymouth has been operating with an expired water management plan since 2017. It should also be noted that according to the DEP’s Order to Complete, we appear not to be following even our own prior plan.*

*We appreciate the Mayor tackling the complexity of joining the MWRA but whether we will meet MWRA criteria, or the residents of Weymouth will want that choice, has not been decided. Therefore, we must take a few steps back. MWRA may be one answer, but it is likely not the only answer to the question about water.*

*It should also be noted that there have been ZERO short-term or long-term solutions identified and we are now at or near our permitted limits.*

*Our recommendation for a temporary moratorium is to simply allow residents and the Town time to assess what the MWRA means for Weymouth ratepayers and Weymouth’s future.*

*{{Not supporting this Moratorium may signal willingness to gamble public health, safety, and overall welfare in exchange for tax dollars. It is easy to argue that the Moratorium offers a better long-term rate of investment in Weymouth*

**Date:** 10/6/2022

**Event:** The State DEP met with water conservation-minded Weymouth residents to discuss the Water Management Permit Act to Complete (received by the Town on March 8, 2022)

**Statement:** *“The DEP is waiting for the Town’s answer to 10 questions in the **Order to Complete**”*

**Date:** 10/11/2022

**Event:** Weymouth Ordinance Meeting

**Statement:** The Town states we are “waiting for the DEP to issue the permit”

**DEP: Water Management Act - Order to Complete (questions 1 and 4)**

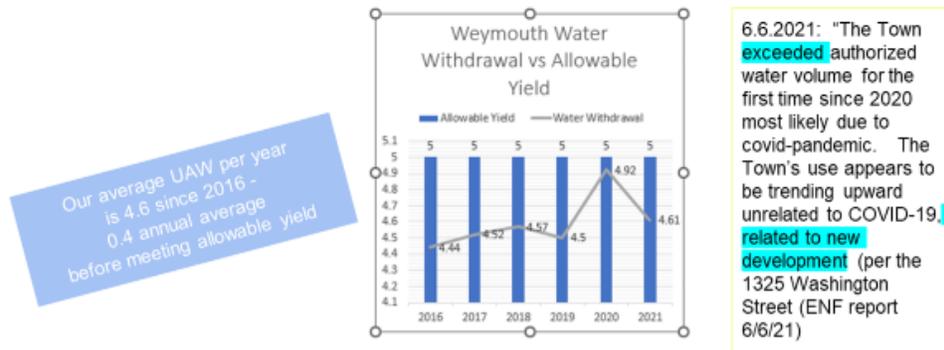
1. “Please confirm that Weymouth understands that the Registration #3-19-336.01 authorizes the town to withdraw up to 4.51 mgd from their registered sources. Continued withdrawals from the registered sources in excess of 4.51 MGD **may result in enforcement by the Department**”.

4. “Please document all actions taken by the town over the past 5 years to implement streamflow monitoring. **Based on the Town’s Annual Statistical Reports filed over the past 5 years this does not appear to have been the practice.**”

*This slide indicates how close we are to an enforcement order being issued by the DEP. What is the more conscientious way to react as Town Councilors? To wait for the enforcement order to be issued, or to act in a proactive way which includes support of a Moratorium?*

*In addition, this slide also suggests that the town is not reporting correctly to the State. The State informed a group of residents on 10.6.2022 that they were waiting for the town to respond to their request - this does not align to the Mayor's statements on 10.11.2022 on the Water Q &A, where he indicated the town was waiting on the state.*

*An analogy might be, as Councilors, if you witness a fire starting, do you wait for a state agency to arrive to put the fire out? Or do you grab the nearest hose at your disposal?*



*The Town exceeded authorized water volume in 2020, a situation attributed to the pandemic. As you will note in upcoming slides, that situation was not the case for similar towns in the Commonwealth.*

*Regardless, the town's use appears to be trending upward unrelated to COVID-19. It appears, in fact, to be related to new development (per the 1325 Washington Street (ENF report 6/6/21)*

*In 2021, the town touched the limit of our yield.*

*2020- Exceeded our yield*

*2021 – reached our yield (Changed spoke with DEP - we exceeded our yield)*

## Complexity of Joining the MWRA

Prior to seeking a new source of water supply, a water utility should have **5 years' worth of auditing data.**

Five years of data is needed to establish trends in performance indicators, and the utility should continue completing water audits annually with a goal of achieving a high level of data validity and improving audit results over time.

Requirements for new communities joining MWRA:

- Residential water conservation efforts (including meter replacement)
- UAW analysis/data for UAW levels for last 3 years
- True cost and conservation-based pricing for water/sewer services
- Guidelines for lawn/landscaping
- Communities shall provide a plan for water conservation
- The MWRA's current FY22 water rates are \$4,387.28 per million gallons of water. Based on anticipated increases in operating and capital expenses for the MWRA water system, the MWRA has projected a **3.9% rate increase per year through FY31.**
  - Over the past five years the average rate increase has been 3.5% (personal communication, MWRA, June 2021).

*The MWRA's own documents indicate a projected 3.9% yearly rate increase until FY 31 for towns subscribing to the program. By endorsing a moratorium, the town will benefit from an opportunity to collectively make an informed choice about what we already have, versus what the MWRA is seeking to sell us. 3.9% per year is a guaranteed increase based on research the MWRA has already conducted. Is this level of expense necessary for towns such as Weymouth who already have an existing and potentially robust water source if effectively managed?*

### Example: Burlington Joins the MWRA

**Criterion #3:** Water Conservation - Town of Burlington

Requirement: Demonstrate that *all practical measures to conserve water have been taken.* The WRC water conservation performance standards are numbered below, followed by a bulleted narrative of Burlington's actions.

- A full leak detection survey should have been completed within the previous two years of the application. The proponent should provide documentation regarding repair of leaks identified during the survey.**
- Leak detection is conducted at least every two years. Surveys were completed in 2015 and 2017; documentation was submitted that leaks were repaired.
  - Another survey was completed from January to February 2019; documentation was submitted that leaks were repaired.
  - According to the Water Conservation Survey submitted as part of the February 2020 FEIR, another survey was ongoing in 2020.\*\*
    - The water supply system should be 100% metered, including public facilities served by the proponent.**
    - Unaccounted-for Water (UAW) should be 10% or less. The proponent should provide documentation of UAW, in both gallons and percentage of the total finished water**

**DEP Order to complete, Questions 7 and 8:**

**7: Provide updates on the status of the implementation of the Water Conservation Plan, Sept. 2020**

- Special Condition 10, Water Conservation Requirements specifies the contents of the Town's Conservation Plan
- Special Condition 7 requires that the town implement conservation as part of its Water System Management Plan

**8: The Town shall demonstrate they are in compliance; complete the Water Conservation Survey**

*Burlington is selected on this slide as an example of a community recently joining the MWRA. Burlington was required to prioritize water conservation. In addition, statements relating to Burlington’s efforts had to be documented and provable to the MWRA. Burlington included a roll-out of conservation efforts several years prior to connecting to the MWRA. They implemented a legitimate leak detection program and, based on the data, were able to provide provable results prior to linking up with the MWRA. Higher than required standards for metering were also part of their efficiency program. They were also able to satisfy the required documentation of improvements in their unaccounted water loss to 10% or less.*

*Also included in this slide are questions 7 and 8 from the DEP order to complete - Weymouth must demonstrate that it is in compliance by submitting honest and transparent survey responses. A town-wide conservation plan is required.*

*A moratorium will allow the Council and administration time to establish updated policies for new development, with construction materials mandated which will help the town better meet its own, MWRA, and State conservation measures. High standard metering is but one example of conservation-minded construction.*

COMMUNITY:	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Reading	1	2	1	1	2	2	3
Burlington	10	10	9	10	9	9	8
Ashland	16	16	9	8	8	8	7
Stoughton	16	18	24	10	6	4	2
Wilmington	6	8	4	1	1	1	2
WEYMOUTH	23	20	22	21	24	20	24

MWRA COMMUNITIES: UNACCOUNTED FOR WATER  
WEYMOUTH: UNACCOUNTED FOR WATER

2016 Agreement with the SRA - Weymouth Committed to Provide Water to the Base

*This graph compares several similar towns and their unaccounted-for water rates. If you’ll notice, Weymouth’s rate sticks out rather shamefully compared to the others. If you look at Stoughton in particular, in 2018 their water infrastructure work was likely the culprit in their worst UAW overall, but as you note it also represents the “darkness before the dawn”. Their infrastructure repairs resulted in an incredible 14-point dip in the UAW. It should also be noted that Stoughton’s worst UAW, before correction, is equal to our worst UAW, and we have no correction plan in place.*

As the DEP stated to the resident water advocacy group, MWRA water is very expensive water to waste.



## Obstacles to Expanding

- Infrastructure Costs – Weymouth Example:

Assumptions

Pipe = 42,500 lf of 30".

Unit Price from CDM model updated to July 2021 is \$1100 per lf for construction and \$235 per lf for DE/CA/RI.

Pump Station construction and engineering cost say \$2.5M.

Cost Estimate

Pipe Construction: 42,500 lf @ \$1100 per =	\$46,750,000.
Pipe DE/CA/RI: 42,500 lf @ \$235 per =	\$9,987,500
Pump Station construction and engineering =	\$2,500,000
Subtotal	\$59,237,500
20% Contingency	\$11,900,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$71,200,000</b>

05-15-2021

MWRA Advisory Board

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This slide shows obstacles to expanding and is lifted from the MWRA Advisory Board's own document. We're looking at a \$71 million price tag.

Do we need to obtain more water - or implement ways to conserve more water?



A rendering of Hanover Weymouth, which Hanover R.S. Limited Partnership is proposing for 1325 Washington St. in Weymouth. Wallace Wilson Architects

Water supply reservoirs and withdrawals from surface water or groundwater can also have significant negative environmental impacts and do not address the root problem of the need to use our limited water supply wisely

1325 Washington Street is anticipated to use **47,432 gallons per day** impacting mitigation the Town will be required to provide for increased water withdrawals

This slide shows the 1325 Washington Street structure, proposed by Hanover Group. The property at 1325 is anticipated to use 47,432 gallons per day. By

*implementing a moratorium and defining conservation policy, future projects approved by the town will be required to implement water conservation standards to all new development, as well as observation of other Town conservation standards. This will reduce water consumption and the overall draw by any new projects, and have the added benefit of positively impacting our ecosystems by the mandatory use of environmentally responsible materials*

#### **Effective Management of Water Resources**



As water utilities consider options, it makes sense to ensure that they are effectively managing the water resources already under their control. **More efficient use of water may avoid impacts to aquatic resources, provide greater ecosystem protection, and/or free up the water saved to serve additional needs**

*At the town/DPW meeting on 10.11.22, the DPW noted that “there is no worst area in the town”; this was clarified to mean all sectors of the town are equally compromised in terms of water infrastructure and threat of main breaks. Chairman DiFazio asked what the plan was for rectifying this situation, and was told by the Mayor and DPW - “we don’t know”.*

*Proper water management should ensure that the water resources already under our town’s control are effectively and proactively managed, which includes protecting vulnerable aquatic resources. “Recovered” and “restored” (formerly “lost”) water can be then utilized to serve additional needs in the community. This, in turn, could support expanded development.*

Efficient water use can have major environmental, public health, and economic benefits by helping to:

- Improve water quality
- Maintain aquatic ecosystems
- Protect drinking water resources.

Water efficiency is one way of addressing water quality and quantity goals.

The more water we use, the lower the quality of our water because of where we obtain it.



*The goal of restoring Whitman's Pond to strictly recreational and environmental use may not be a possibility given MWRA's requirement that we continue to utilize all our existing registered water sources.*

*Currently, recreational use of Whitman's Pond includes motorboats and jet skis, machines which leak "forever chemicals" into the pond water. When Whitman's Pond is invoked as "an emergency drinking water source", these chemicals are then transferred into Great Pond. These products then become part of our drinking water supply for the months the pond is drained to stabilize water levels at Great Pond. "*

Ms. Swain added that water is pumped from the South Cove and dumped into Great Pond without filtering. There is no mechanism to record what is pumped. If water gets too low in South Cove, the sluice gate is opened and water is reverse flowed. At this point in time, with no meter (as required by the state), there is no way to measure. Chair DiFazio asked how many years has Weymouth been pumping from Whitman's Pond into Great Pond. Ms. Swain responded that there is documentation that it happened twice this year and Conservation stopped it. When the town redid the sluice gate, it was repaired to include a concrete bottom and the water was reversing. Chair DiFazio added that it has likely been like that for decades.

Councilor Heffernan noted that all water that goes through Great Pond is treated at the pumping station. At no point is water untreated. Ms. Swain noted that water from wells goes through Bilodeau and is filtered. Great Pond is a pristine source.

Vice Chair MacDougall asked what is the rule about pulling water from Whitman's Pond through the sluice gate? Ms. Swain responded that the gate should be closed so water can't enter from Whitman's Pond when they are pumping. It's supposed to be open when not pumping- There is a protocol but it is a draft- and has not been accepted.

**DEP: Water Management Act**

**Action: Order to Complete, Question 5**

"Please describe how and why the plan has not been followed over the past 5 years and how Weymouth plans to proceed moving forward"

**Water System Management Plan guidelines:**

- Great Pond will be full on May 1 of each year.
- The Washington street Pump Station should be used starting late Autumn to transfer water from South Cove as necessary to keep Great Pond full.

**Town of Weymouth Water System Management Plan (upd. 05/2009):**

- In order to store water for a drought, Great Pond will be full (pond elevation 166.8) on May 1st of each year thus allowing the Town to meet demand in a drought with a once-every-2- years probability

**A review of Weymouth's ASR indicates that significant diversions from Whitman's Pond have frequently occurred during the months of June-September**



*Weymouth's ASR clearly indicates significant and regular diversion from Whitman's Pond, June through September. There are no regulations that protect the water levels at the South Cove of Whitman's Pond or Whitman's Pond. The town is currently allowed to pump as much as it needs regardless of the environmental impacts or potentially harmful "components" such as fuel.*

*One may also ask: What happens if we lose a well? All of our wells (except Libby) are in close proximity to one another. What happens if one or two run dry, or are contaminated? Defining and writing policies to protect our water sources from pollutants and development could be undertaken during a moratorium".*

Councilor Belmarsh asked whether the question from DEP management order- how there is no answer? Ms. Swain responded that the town has not responded. It has to do with the time of year. Ms. Swain noted in looking at numbers for 7-8 years- pumping during summer, is not supposed to be the protocol. Why is so much being diverted from South Cove to Great Pond? It should maintain a level but it is not working. Additional pumping appears to be happening outside of the plan. The problem is that the drought management plan is set at the level of Great Pond. Pumping is offsetting the numbers. South Cove is a very small body. Councilor Belmarsh added that the plan referenced is on the website.

### Whitman's Pond: The Impact of Drinking Water Withdrawals

- We pump out of South Cove of Whitman's Pond
- The two sources of Whitman's Pond: Old Swamp River and Mill River (our wells draw from those sources)
- Our drought protocol does not include protection of water levels in South Cove of Whitman's Pond

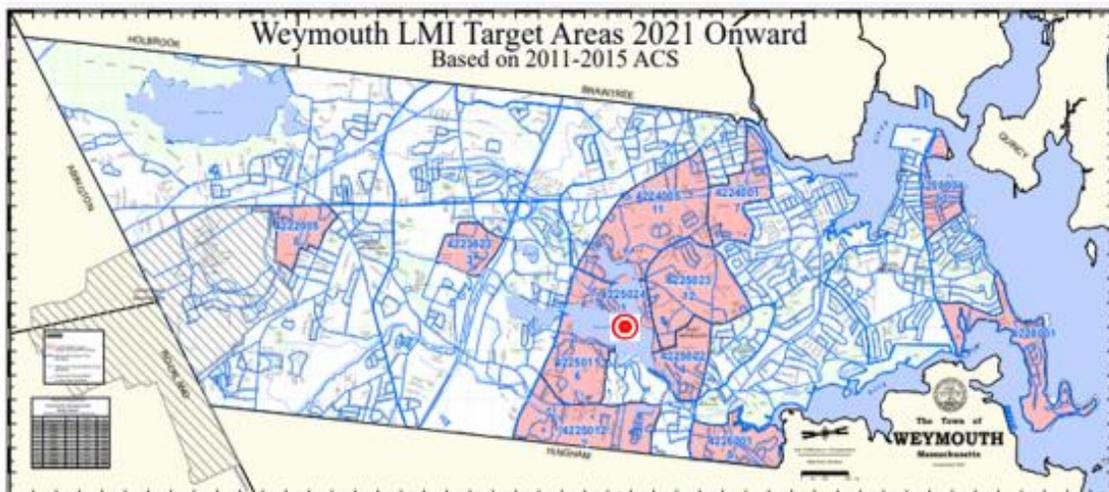
Environmental justice is based on the principle that all people have a right to be protected from environmental pollution and to live in and enjoy a clean and healthful environment. Environmental justice is the equal protection and meaningful involvement of all people with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies and the equitable distribution of environmental benefits.



Constitution of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Article 97: "The people shall have the right to clean air and water, freedom from excessive and unnecessary noise, and the natural, scenic, historic, and esthetic qualities of their environment; and the protection of the people in their right to the conservation, development and utilization of the agricultural, mineral, forest, water, air and other natural resources is hereby declared to be a public purpose."

*The premise of the state-defined environmental justice areas is to ensure that specific areas are not regularly targeted for proposals that pollute - this classification of communities was designed to protect against heavy concentrations of negative health-impacts for those residing there, including wildlife.*

### Weymouth Environmental Justice Map

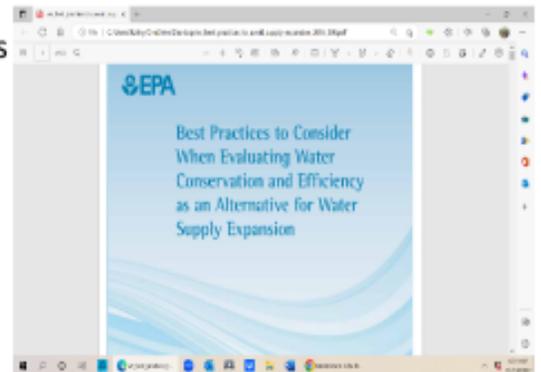


*“An interesting side note for the Weymouth residents is that the EPA redefined the criteria of EJ maps shortly after the approval of the Compressor Station in Weymouth. If this map was in place when the permitting of the Compressor Station was taking place, there would be “No Compressor Station in Weymouth”. It is more interesting to note that since the permitting of the Compressor Station, the Federal Government has admitted it was a mistake, saying. “I know it is a hard pill to swallow”. Paying attention to EJ areas on the front end of any proposals may salvage those neighborhoods from undesirable projects that threaten not only the residents in close proximity, but elsewhere in the community.*

*Environmental justice is a basic human right. It allows everyone to have some level of agency over the decisions that impact their lives. Policy should be implemented to ensure that no one person or group can jeopardize or compromise the health, well-being, or rights of others.*

**The EPA 6 best practices that a water utility can undertake will assist our community’s conservation efforts**

1. Water System Management: Supply Side and Demand Side Accounting
2. Water Loss Minimization: Leak Management
3. Metering
4. Conservation Rate Structure
5. End Use Water Conservation and Efficiency Analysis
6. Water Conservation and Efficiency Plan For each section, the document describes the purpose of the practice and what information it



*The moratorium will provide the town with the opportunity to research and implement some of these best practice water conservation measures. Remember, careful attention to water conservation will actually allow the town to continue to grow..*

### Focusing on Water Conservation for Multi-Family

- Provide water efficiency audits and 'direct-install' programs targeted at high water users
- High-efficiency toilet direct install program, giveaways, and rebates
- **Require sub-metering of individual units and monthly billing based on actual metered consumption**
- Address watering outdoor and landscape use
- Plumbing codes requirements of WaterSense labeled products, where practicable (WaterSense Programs make the best use of their water resources and build resilience to water shortages)

xRequiring **Developers to "find" water by retrofitting older homes and buildings, a process now termed capacity buy back (Santa Fe Model)**

XConservation be involved before decision are made for all new multi-unit development to ensure that actions affecting land or water use do not impair the integrity of the public water supply by enabling source water to be diminished in quality or quantity, or by permitting development that exceeds the capacity of the system or impairs the quantity or quality of future potential sources



*The moratorium will provide the town with the opportunity to research and implement some of these best practice water conservation measures. Remember, careful attention to water conservation will actually allow the town to continue to grow.*

### The benefits of sub-metering: EPA recommendation

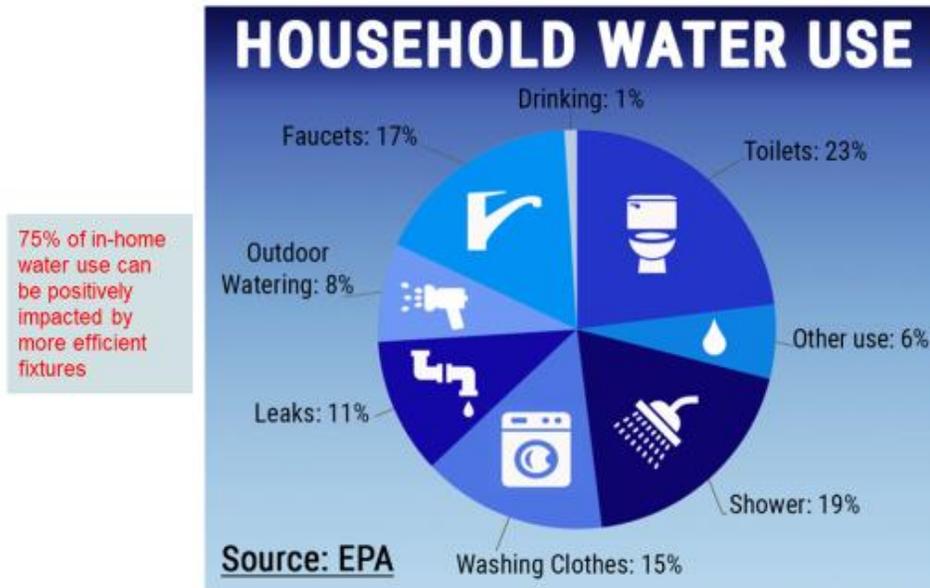
- Some utilities bill multifamily, industrial, and commercial buildings with a **fixed water rate**, which **does not encourage conservation** because it lacks any linkage to degree of use.

**Without sub-metering, customers lack incentive and information for managing their water use.**



*If a moratorium is imposed, improvements in the town's approach to water management could include incentivization programs. Submetering water programs and requiring the use of Water Sense labeled products in new construction will also help conserve our existing water resources. Developing a*

*program similar to the “capacity buyback program” in Santa Fe could actively involve developers in town-wide water efficiency efforts. Water use and conservation are elements of the same dialogue. Conservation must not be eliminated from discussions of our town’s water future.*



*The town should re-examine continued use of fixed water rate billing for multifamily, industrial, and commercial buildings. As you may know, fixed water rate billing provides limited information to the water bill recipient. Improving end-user awareness about water losses and actual costs will undoubtedly promote conservation. Landlords could target water losses more easily, address and repair them, and thus save the community, and themselves, significant rate dollars.*

#### Water Conservation into Multi-Family Dwellings: State Recommendations

1. Require the use of high efficiency plumbing fixtures and appliances in retrofits and new construction
2. Offer rebates for replacing inefficient fixtures and appliances.
3. Consider providing free or low-cost water audits to residential customers.
4. Facilitate Leak Repair
5. Incorporate Alternative Technologies, where appropriate
6. Replace Lead Service Lines, where needed
7. Update the Plumbing Code to require WaterSense products in all new construction
8. Create incentives, including rebates, for installing water-efficient plumbing fixtures and appliances
9. Incorporate water conservation into MEPA review for large new developments

*The moratorium could provide an opportunity to implement water conservation standards on residential units; as the slide indicates, 75% of water use occurs in the units themselves. This will allow for substantial water savings.*

#### Documented Results of Conservation and Efficiency Programs

- Conservation and efficiency programs adopted in the State of Georgia have led to **per capita demand declines of more than 30%** between 2000 and 2015.
- Santa Fe, New Mexico reached a point when developers were seeking permits, but the system had no additional water capacity. **The solution: Developers “found” water by retrofitting older homes and buildings, a process now termed “capacity buy-back”**
- Seattle achieved notable improvements in efficiency. **Between 1990 and 2010, the population in Seattle’s regional service area increased by 15%, yet the water demand decreased about 30%**

*Both at the Federal and the State levels there are “Best Practices” available to help the town save thousands of gallons of water a day. The town is not alone in this task, there are resources available, including researching other towns and DPW managers who have adopted successful efficiency plans. The City of Cambridge, Burlington, Stoughton, and many others boast excellent progress in this arena; their experiences should be mined to help inform our town’s plan of action.*

Deer Island Treatment Plant



- The efficient use of water can prevent pollution by reducing wastewater flows, recycling process water, reclaiming wastewater, and using less energy.
- The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Office of Water strongly encourages all sectors, including municipal, industrial, and agricultural, to achieve efficient water use.
- MWRA System Expansion Feasibility Studies wastewater portion says Nut Island collection system is near or at capacity

Less water coming onto the system means less going out of the systems which equates to substantial savings to the ratepayers



*Georgia's approach to conservation is well worth looking into, with efficiency programs resulting in significant declines in per capita demands despite heavy population increases. As noted previously, the Santa Fe plan involved partnering with developers to retrofit older, "water hog" buildings with updated fixtures. The state of New Mexico is a desert state which maxed out its water capacity due to drought and population increases.*

*Warm/hot weather states such as New Mexico, Georgia, California, and Florida are the cornerstones of the American produce and livestock industries - water waste would be unquestionably counterproductive to their economic objectives.*

*Seattle has seen an increased population over the last 30 years; with such a huge influx of new residents, a "pinch" in water resources began to be felt fairly rapidly. Seattle and other cities we have researched, have adopted programs which successfully decreased water usage despite higher residential numbers.*

*Note, these are not STATE plans, but individual city plans.*

### Issues that impact water beyond our control

#### Droughts in Massachusetts:

- Short-term droughts are predicted to occur more frequently
- Short-term droughts in Massachusetts impact water supply sources, streams, and ponds more quickly because of geology
- It is suggested that droughts will increase in frequency and severity in the future (annual summer temperatures are predicted to rise)

Placing streams and wetlands **under chronic and unnatural low-flow conditions can cause substantial harm to aquatic organisms and ecosystems and ultimately to our economy and quality of life through loss of scenic and recreation value, loss of ecosystem**



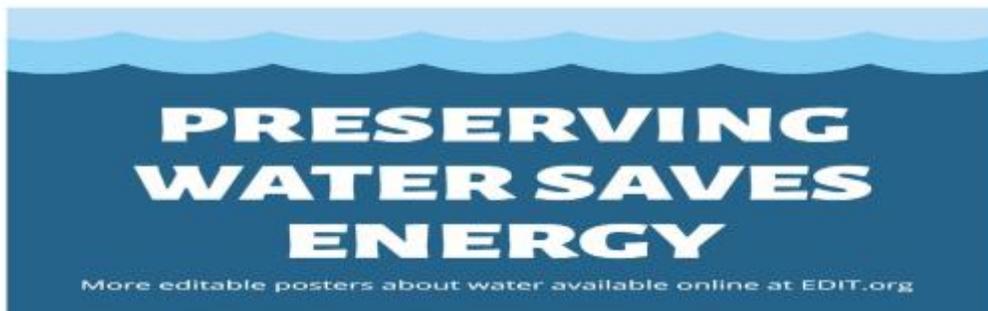
Mill River 2022

*Recently a story was written in Boston.com which warned people not to swim in Boston Harbor because of raw sewage discharge. This was the result of a recent heavy rainfall overwhelming the Deer Island facility. In addition, Nut Island is at or near sewage capacity according to the MWRA System Expansion Feasibility Study's wastewater portion.*

Ms. Swain added that if water is conserved it will save on wastewater also.

#### The moratorium will save the town money by:

- Reduced demand which can lower operating and maintenance costs such as:
  - pumping
  - chemical costs
  - associated energy costs
  - wastewater costs



*Weymouth is not immune to what has become a problem throughout the United States and the World.*

*Will this hurt those already permitted? Permitted projects will not be impacted, but it should be recommended or required that water-saving fixtures, fittings, metering, and specific user billing - rather than fixed rate billing - be implemented in a proactive effort to control water overuse.*

*Efficiency measures such as the Net Blue Project, which is a collaborative initiative of the Alliance for Water Efficiency, the Environmental Law Institute, and River Network Explore, explore offsets such as rainwater harvesting, conservation retrofits, and similar conservation-minded options. Projects such as these allow development to continue. Offsets contribute to conservation, and limit heavy additional demands on already compromised local water supply systems. Offsets can be targeted towards individual projects or broadened, depending on how the community chooses its approach.*



Will a moratorium compromise plans for developers already permitted or in the middle of projects?



No. They are already permitted and projects underway will continue.

The Moratorium will help developers because it will allow development in “Weymouth proper” to continue while we await the possible arrival of the MWRA (pending Town Council approval)

**REMEMBER:**

Currently, we are operating **without a water management permit and without a water needs forecast.** The water needs forecast would improve if the town were to adopt measures to conserve water

*Will this hurt those already permitted? Permitted projects will not be impacted, but it should be recommended or required that water-saving fixtures, fittings, metering, and specific user billing - rather than fixed rate billing - be implemented in a proactive effort to control water overuse.*

*Efficiency measures such as the Net Blue Project, which is a collaborative initiative of the Alliance for Water Efficiency, the Environmental Law Institute, and River Network Explore, seek to identify offsets such as rainwater harvesting, conservation retrofits, and similar conservation-minded options. Projects such as this allow development to continue. Offsets contribute to conservation, and limit heavy additional demands on already compromised local water supply systems. Offsets can be targeted towards individual projects or broadened, depending on how the community chooses its approach.*



But won't the town lose revenues if we adopt a moratorium? Development is needed to pay the bills



No. The building moratorium plan in Dedham indicated there was no loss of revenues for their town. Efficient water use and water conservation will allow development to continue in Weymouth while we await the MWRA as a possible alternative source

The town of Dedham Planning Department (in response to its residents) declared a one-year moratorium in 2019. The goal: To grow Dedham responsibly

**Spring 2019:** The Dedham Board of Selectmen approved a moratorium on Mixed Use Development until Nov 30, 2019.

**Fall 2019:** The Board voted to continue the moratorium to May 31, 2020 as the Mixed Use Development Study was not yet completed by Fall 2019

In speaking with a member of the board, we were informed by the Board that "there was no major revenue loss"

*We again ask you to look at the risk over the long-term return.*

Community Residential and Commercial Tax Rates

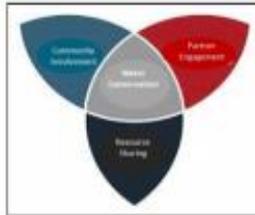
Community	Residential Tax Rate	Commercial Tax Rate - low to high
Cambridge	5.92	11.23
Weymouth	11.46	18.36
Newton	10.52	19.95
Peabody*	10.1	21.14
Braintree	9.95	21.63
Quincy	11.98	23.86
Boston	10.88	24.98
Dedham	13.35	27.93
Taunton*	13.18	28.87

Source: Shimkus, J. (2022, July 13). 2022 Massachusetts Property Tax Rates. MA Town Property Taxes. Retrieved November 5, 2022, from <https://joshshimkus.com/MA-Tax-Rates.aspx>

*This slide shares the commercial and residential tax rates for surrounding/similar communities to Weymouth. The Mayor mentioned recently that we had the lowest rates but that is not the case, Braintree’s residential rates are lower. Braintree requires a higher commercial tax rate, but this has actually not compromised Braintree’s ability to attract medical, laboratory, and other research enterprise. There is great interest in setting up operations in communities along the Route 3 corridor in the high tech medical field. Lab space square footage prices in Cambridge and Boston have become prohibitive, that is, when lab space can even be found. Braintree has made it clear, they will not sell out to the lowest bidder when it comes to ventures such as this and it has not resulted in a reduction in community-business partnerships.*

*A moratorium also represents a good time to evaluate what types of medical interests are coming, and if the practices conducted within such facilities are appropriate to the proximity of residential and school-zoned abutters,*

Effective public engagement in managing demand also involves end users as part of the solution to resource management.

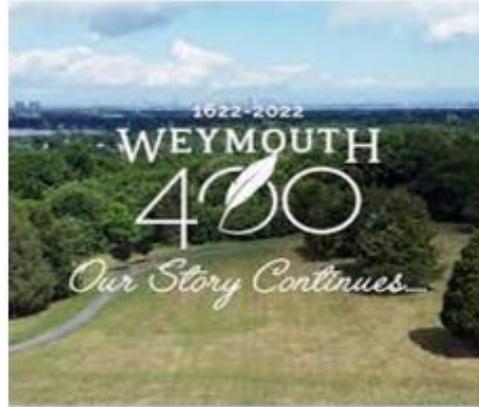


*Where are we going?*

#### Supporting a Moratorium

- Provide an accurate water cost assessment to all residents
- Review water and feasibility studies
- Promote responsible growth with a renewed Water Management permit
- Implement a water conservation program
- Update drought guidelines
- Alleviate the current strain on surface water sources and their surrounding wetlands
- Provide opportunities for public engagement and education on water issues
- Allow the people of Weymouth a choice





*"Our story continues" - where will our story take us?*

**Key Takeaway: There is no "us" versus "them".  
It is all "us"**



**This is not about stopping development - it is about  
improving development to meet future demands**

*"Our story" will take us where we are led - in a direction identified by crucial decisions made today by both the Town Council and the Mayor's office regarding our water supply and its future state.*

*It should also be recognized that questions being posed today by the Council, residents, and the Mayor simply cannot be answered until the pipeline cost is known, the UAW fixed cost is known, and the sewer upgrade costs are known. None of this information is*

*available at the current time. A tremendous amount of research and conversation is needed before the community should be asked, is this the way we see Weymouth of the future.*

*We also have no understanding of what costs the town will incur if we become water brokers for other South Shore communities, as the Mayor suggested on 10.11.2022 at the Q&A session. What are the costs associated with development of such a facility, the liability the town may incur, the number of benefited full-time employees, and emergency preparedness of the water supply for such an undertaking involving other towns and consumers?*

*How will Weymouth's story continue?*

*Will you seek to ensure that the residents of Weymouth do not become victims of the plans and ambitions of others, many of whom are not even residents of Weymouth.*

*As Town Councilors you are tasked with the authority to make sure your constituents are protected so that one person or group of persons cannot jeopardize our health, well-being, and financial future.*

*The timeline for the proposal of MWRA is still not known and is potentially a decade away. The MWRA may indeed be a choice for the Town of Weymouth, but it would appear there is still a significant amount of homework required before an educated decision can be made. How will we manage our water resources until then?*

*We ask you to support this moratorium as a responsible way to lead Weymouth towards being better stewards of our environment. Weymouth's story should acknowledge water as a precious resource that must be efficiently managed, allowing the town the opportunity to continue to develop for decades to come.*

*Your decision about a moratorium, and its goal of more prudently managed water supply, will help define the Weymouth we leave to our children. “*

During the presentation, at 7:18 PM, Councilor Mathews arrived.

Chair DiFazio asked that the presentation be provided to the administration before the public hearing. He asked for confirmation- the moratorium is needed because Weymouth isn't responsibly managing what they have and adding new apartments will be jeopardizing the numbers over the next several years, and Weymouth will be over its safe yield. Ms. Swain responded that the town just went through a drought- can the town guarantee it won't continue? The town exceeded yield over the past 2 years. What happens if the town loses one of its wells? It all impacts Whitman's Pond. The chair asked if the town could provide assurances that this is under control and that upward water use, increased conservation measures are anticipated- that could protect from development that will send water usage out of control. He does not see the concern is with the MWRA plan. The Mayor and DPW have been proactive. The town and citizens want the assurance that the town is ahead of this. Ms. Dossett responded that the Mayor's response that he didn't know what the solution is scared her. There doesn't appear to be a

good leak detection program. She doesn't feel the town has a grasp on the water management. The Chair responded that he recognizes her concerns. The public hearing is scheduled for December 5, 2022. Ms. Swain added that the Mayor had indicated the town would exceed its allotted draw in the next five years, but they are already exceeding it. When she attended an SRA meeting the other night, it started off with the statement that "Weymouth has a water problem," which is advantageous to the base. Water has a water-wasting problem. The town loses over a million gallons a day. If the Hanover project was built with submetering, could it have lowered the gpd that project would need? The town needs concrete demands rather than suggestions.

Vice Chair MacDougall agreed this petition asks to put the brakes on to address development. He is more concerned with the water lost. He asked if they researched how Stoughton improved its standing. This petition does not affect Union Point- they have a separate and a town permitting process. The town of Weymouth is part of the layer of oversight for permitting. Ms. Swain added that her understanding is that the base can't develop without solving for a water source. Vice Chair MacDougall asked about the water moved from South Cove. Why is it? Ms. Swain responded that it is done to meet the levels required in the water plan for Great Pond.

Councilor Abbott asked why this targets only residential development? Ms. Swain responded that they used research that allowed this model as a legal precedent, and to use it as a starting point for discussion. Councilor Abbott noted the Town Council recently voted an ordinance change specifically to spur development in Jackson Square; knowing it will bring in apartments of 3+ apartments. What would they say to the Councilors who voted in favor of this?? Ms. Swain responded that the drought, the DEP, the 1325 Washington project--DEP does not look at it the same way that Conservation does -- specifically the herring. 1325 Washington was lost because the DEP was not concerned with any water than that directly abutting the project.

Ms. Dossett added that the drought, the lack of attention to the state request on the drought, the panic pumping, and she reached out to the DEP who welcomed their involvement. Their goal is to protect the water and the historical resources. There are pipes in some neighborhoods that are 50+ years old, so it's obvious that there has never been management. Weymouth is a good place to live and raise a family.

Councilor Belmarsh noted that the Jackson Square potential development is the reason the Council voted the ordinance. Once it was voted, the Mayor proposed his budget. It included the statement about the town exceeding its draw over the next several years. In order to make a good decision, they need the facts, especially with the MWRA. She noted the committee should be asking the Mayor questions- what is the status of the DEP questionnaire? She made some slide suggestions for the presentation. She noted that the town will be spending more than they need to; without any updates or assessments, will pay a quarter more for the loss. Even if they choose to go MWRA, assess the loss and deal with it. there are opportunities. The chair added that there is a plan in place that has been in place for several years. Councilor Belmarsh asked when Whitman's Pond can be used? She pointed out the significance of the Environmental Justice area, which

surrounds Whitman's Pond. They need to pay careful attention to this area because of the potential inequities. Ms. Swain added that the Back River is also surrounded by EJ area. It's all connected beginning with Great Pond. Councilor Belmarsh asked what is the plan to protect these areas? If the town is currently at capacity, there are properties permitted that will add to that, and she has asked the administration to provide a list of currently permitted residential, and the occupational potential. Ms. Swain added an analogy to shutting the door to development until the water issue is resolved.

Vice Chair MacDougall pointed out that he wished he had some of the research on water loss and other items brought out in this petition, prior to the vote on Jackson Square. He asked the administration to provide the grant potential loss the town might realize if this moratorium is in place.

The chair summarized the next steps, including statutory requirements and timing. Councilor Mathews noted it will be a joint public hearing with the Planning Board, and the Council will take action after the Planning Board meets and submits their recommendation.

#### ADJOURNMENT

At 7:58 PM, there being no further business, Councilor Abbott motioned to adjourn and was seconded by Vice Chair MacDougall. Unanimously voted.

Respectfully Submitted by Mary Barker as Recording Secretary

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Approved by Ken DiFazio as Ordinance Committee Chairman  
Voted unanimously on 3 January 2023