

**Public Works Committee  
Town Hall Council Chambers  
October 3, 2023, 6:30 p.m.**

Present: Kenneth DiFazio, Chairperson  
Greg Shanahan, Vice-Chairperson  
Arthur Mathews  
Christopher Heffernan

Absent: Lisa Belmarsh

Also Present: Ted Langill, Chief of Staff  
Robert Luongo, Planning Director

Recording Secretary: Janet P. Murray (transcribed via recording)

Chair DiFazio called to order the meeting of the Public Works Committee at 6:30 p.m.

Councilor Mathews read the following statement:

WE DO NOT HAVE A RECORDING SECRETARY FOR THIS EVENING’S MEETING, AND MEETING MINUTES WILL BE CREATED FROM THE RECORDING. THIS SATISFIES “OPEN MEETING LAW” REGULATIONS.

PLEASE NOTE THAT ANYONE THAT GETS UP TO SPEAK TONIGHT MUST IDENTIFY THEMSELVES AND THEIR POSITION IN ORDER THAT THE PROPER NOTATIONS ARE INDICATED IN THE MINUTES.

Chair DiFazio took a roll call: Councilor Mathews – present; Councilor Shanahan – present; Councilor Di Fazio – present

Chair DiFazio stated that Councilor Belmarsh is returning from a distant work commitment and is not sure if she will make it this evening. Councilor Heffernan called and is going to be about 15 minutes late due to traffic.

**23 083 MWRA Water Application**

Chair DiFazio stated that this measure was referred to the committee on April 27, 2023.

Ted Langill appeared before the committee with Ryan Allgrove from Environmental Partners, the town’s consultant, and Robert Luongo, Weymouth’s Planning Director.

Mr. Allgrove gave a recap of what has happened since the last meeting.

### November 2022

- Environmental Partners completed the first assessment of the town's water and wastewater capacity, and projection of demands for the next 20 years, including projections for the South Weymouth Naval Air Station development.
- Report submitted with recommendations for improvements required to satisfy the water demand and wastewater needs of the town using all the built out projections. Weymouth's existing water supply does not have the capacity to satisfy what the demand could be, based on all the projections made.
- CDM and the Massachusetts Water Resource Authority (MWRA) released a study to explain at a very high level of what the MWRA's capacity could be, to extend service on the drinking water side to not just Weymouth but most of the South Shore.
- The CDM and MWRA study laid out what they could do, how much water they would be able to supply to the south shore. Weymouth, being the first community outside of the current MWRA service region on the waterside, would be first in line, no matter which way the pipe went.

Chair DiFazio asked if the conclusion that the town did not have sufficient water coming up in the future for the town of Weymouth included Union Point.

Mr. Allgrove stated that the conclusion was that under the existing water management plan, the withdrawal, what the town is allowed to extract from the ground from its surface water supply sources, that Weymouth's projected demand exceeded that. It would need more than it is allowed to take out of the ground currently.

### January 2023

- Mr. Langill and Mayor Hedlund had an initial meeting with Mayor Kokoros of Braintree as the town needs cooperation from neighboring communities to have a substantial pipeline go through them to serve Weymouth.

### February 2023

- Mr. Allgrove and Mr. Langill participated in a forum with the MWRA, and other communities interested in MWR expansion.

### March 2023

- Environmental Partners was contracted to begin developing the application materials.
- Decisions still need to be made prior to the submittal of an application to the MWRA.
- There is a long list of items that need to be documented in order to submit to Massachusetts Environmental Protection Agency (MEPA), and ultimately, to the MWRA for approval.

Mr. Allgrove stated that an analysis was conducted to determine where mixing zones would be; how much percentage of MWRA water would it be versus Weymouth water and all the different pressure zones that the town has. They took water quality samples throughout the system, indicating the different pressure zones that the town has separated basically into three zones. They submitted that to the MWRA for review and their comments on any water quality concerns that they might have. This will eventually lead to a submittal to MEPA, the drinking water program, to obtain their approval.

Mr. Allgrove stated that they have completed a draft of a water audit which is looking at all the aspects of accounting for water supply versus water build, and determining where the town could focus to get the unaccounted for water levels down. This draft is currently being reviewed by the Department of Public Works (DPW). This water audit sets a baseline for the town and is a way for the MWRA and the Interbasin Transfer Permit regulators to see that the town is committed to making progress on unaccounted for water, which is the goal of these audits. An analysis was conducted to see if there are any other water supplies in town. He stated that there are no surface waters available and the only potential locations to put a well with a 400 foot radius that does not encroach on land uses that are not allowed, are on the southern side of Great Pond in areas that are article 97 land. This means that this is reserved for water supply protection of the surface water supply thus they are not feasible as a groundwater source.

Mr. Allgrove stated they are preparing a water supply management plan and surface water supply protection plan. The document shows the town's efforts as far as conservation and drought plans. It brings many separate plans that exist together under one document that has to be submitted. He added that an Alternatives Analysis for the pipeline, and conceptual design of the selected alternative is currently being prepared. This analysis will show traffic, constructability, third party risks, environmental risks, capital costs, O&M costs: everything in a pipeline project will be considered. The other communities will have input onto what the impacts will be because it will be in their communities. This proposal should be completed by the end of October.

Councilor Shanahan asked when this committee would get a status update on all of the above-mentioned documents and reports. He also questioned how many reports there are and how they will be submitted, separate documents or one all-inclusive document.

Mr. Allgrove stated that it should be by the end of the year as per the contract. He stated that this is all part of the MEPA submission; it is not all one report. There are a many requirements for the MWRA submittal as well as for the MEPA submittal. Some of the requirements are the same but there are others that are specific to each agency. The major document is the Water Supply Management Plan-which encompasses a lot of the work done last year.

Councilor Shanahan asked if there was a checklist of what is being worked on that could be shared.

Mr. Allgrove stated that he can provide this.

Mr. Langill asked what the expectation would be on voting on this measure versus being updated because the vote on the measure is part of all this paperwork. Part of the application is the Town Council approval.

He added that all the reports, and agreements with the other towns, and the approval of the Town Council is combined and handed over to MEPA and MWRA as the application.

Councilor Shanahan stated that a "A vote by date" would be helpful.

Councilor DiFazio asked for clarification on exactly what this measure means and what happens once it is voted.

Mr. Langill stated that this is a vote to apply. This comes at a cost that will require full Town Council approval. The Town Council will vote on that component when the time comes. He stated that it is important to have this initial approval to apply prior to spending a lot of time, money, and resources devising a plan and then ending up not having the approval to apply.

Councilor DiFazio asked how the administration feels about getting information out to the citizens of the town about joining the MWRA.

Mr. Langill stated that there will be public meetings.

Councilor Mathews noted that since the last meeting, Environmental Partners has released a 180 page report. He stated that the report mentioned specific recommendations on which way to go for water as well as costs. He added that the cost totals for water ranged from \$55 million to as high as \$93 million.

Mr. Allgrove agreed and stated that this was the first bullet on his list for November 2020.

Councilor Mathews recommended that the remaining Councilors take a look at this report as it has a lot of information about cost estimates.

Councilor Mathews stated that voting for the authorization to enter into an application to change the town's water source is one of the most important decisions to be made as a Town Councilor and could well be life altering for this town. He continued that things that he would need to know before he would consider voting are: 1) Is the application for the entire town to be on MWRA or is it for a partial hookup; 2) Is application for the North Weymouth option at a million gallons of water a day; 3) If there is only a partial hookup, then how much water is being requested from the MWRA; 4) Is the 2.4 million gallons of water needed for the full build out of the base included.

Mr. Langill stated that the town will be applying for the most that can be asked for. whether that amount is used in the end, the MWRA said to ask for the most needed. At this time, the MWRA can provide up to seven and a half million gallons a day; that is what the town is going to apply for and then how that is used will be determined as part of the process.

Mr. Langill asked the committee to give him some direction on what they want to be updated because there is so much information.

Councilor Mathews stated that there are so many variables involved such as the Interbasin Transfer Act, He questioned how many municipalities throughout Massachusetts have been allowed to abandon their entire water source to join the MWRA.

Mr. Allgrove stated that he did not know the figure off the top of his head.

Councilor Mathews stated that there are so many unknowns. He stated that if they vote on this now and it comes back differently a year from now, then what?

Mr. Langill stated they will be voting on that cost or whatever the option is at that point.

Mr. Langill stated that they have had very productive meetings with Braintree and Quincy. Each was asked if there were any non-starters; there weren't any. The other part of that was ensuring open lines of communication at the staff level with each municipality; this has been on-going. He stated that both Braintree and Quincy have said that they are not going to stand in the way of other communities' needs for water. He stated that they have given some indication of what they would be looking for in regard to tearing up their streets. He added that many of Braintree's roads are state roads so the state will also be involved. This is a long process.

Mr. Langill stated that the MWRA entry fee is \$25 million for 6 million gallons.

Chair DiFazio asked for a couple of paragraphs to be added to the measure that spell out what they are agreeing to.

Mr. Langill stated that the wording is consistent with what the MWRA gave other towns to vote on. He added that the details come when there is a vote on the project and the cost. Mr. Langill stated that this measure is to vote to develop an application. He pointed out that the application is a two-year process, and this is not something that they will have until the end of next year. There is a lot of information to gather over that time as part of the application process. The vote is to approve the two-year process to come up with the plan which will include input along the way.

Mr. Langill stated that he believes that the town is on schedule. If we keep up to our schedule, we'll have water flowing by 2030. That is the target.

Mr. Langill stated that the MWRA is looking for towns that are supportive of the process and support the application.

Councilor Mathews stated that most towns are looking for full hookups. Weymouth is looking at multiple options.

Mr. Allgrove stated to provide enough water to Weymouth to meet the projected demands, MWRA can supply seven and a half MGD, Maximum gallon demand, which means on the hottest summer day, when the town is using the most water, seven and a half MGD is their limit. The projected demand for Weymouth is higher than that number. He continued for the application at this time, the town cannot abandon Great Pond.

Mr. Langill stated that they believe redundancy and emergency backup are important; this will not occur without Great Pond.

Councilor Mathews asked if the administration would be amenable to changing some of the language in the measure.

Mr. Langill stated yes, they are amenable to make changes.

Councilor DiFazio suggested removing the following sentence, "Mayor to take all necessary steps for the town to secure a permanent connection to the MWRA."

Councilor Mathews suggested that the Town Solicitor be present at the meeting for his input on the drafting of the language of the measure.

Mr. Langill stated that he can create a checklist so that the committee can see the progress and have a sense of what takes place with the application.

Councilor DiFazio asked about having a website for constituents to ask questions.

Mr. Langill stated that this has been created and there is an email: [MWRAwater@weymouth.ma.us](mailto:MWRAwater@weymouth.ma.us)

Mr. Luongo stated that a notice was sent out with the latest water bills.

Councilor Shanahan made a motion to have two members of the committee, to be determined by the Chair, work on the new measure together and have it ready for presentation not only to the administration to share with the MWRA but for discussion at the next Public Works Committee meeting to vote this out to the full Town Council. Councilor Heffernan seconded the motion. The motion passed 4-0 on a roll call vote as follows:

Councilor Mathews – YES  
Councilor Heffernan – YES

Councilor Shanahan – YES  
Councilor DiFazio – YES

Councilor Mathews asked Mr. Langill to supply the committee with information regarding the necessary language and then they could fine tune it.

Mr. Langill agreed to provide the information and stated that in the end it is about what the MWRA will approve.

At 7:30 p.m., there being no further business, Councilor Mathews made a motion to adjourn and was seconded by Councilor Shanahan. Motion passed 4-0.

Respectfully submitted by Janet P. Murray as Recording Secretary

Approved by Kenneth DiFazio as Chair of the Public Works Committee  
Voted favorably on 13 November 2023