

BOARD OF WATER COMMISSIONERS  
MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF  
JUNE 23, 2026

This meeting was conducted in the garage area of the Administrative Building to accommodate residents from the East Street area who wished to participate in the discussion regarding the proposed cell tower on the District's East Street parcel.

A quorum being present, Chairperson Boyd called the meeting to order at 5:06 PM.

He announced that the virtual version of the meeting was being recorded and requested those in attendance to state their name and title for the record by roll call:

**Board Members present in person:** Robert H. Sheldon, Commissioner – Present; Joshua M. Fox, Commissioner - Present; and Robert E. Boyd, Jr., Commissioner and Chairperson – Present.

**Others present in person:** Thomas S. Travers, Treasurer; Vincent Roy, Executive Director; Renee Adams, Executive Administrator; Karen Moretti, Assistant Treasurer; Michael Abbondanzio, Foreman; Lawson Williams, District Counsel; Ivan Pagecik, District's Wireless Communications Consultant; Michael Fenton and Brett Smith, Legal Counsels for Verizon.

**Residents from East Street neighborhood present in person:** Lisa Crane of 2 Briar Patch Lane; Stephen Thompson and Cindy Malia of 22 Briar Patch Lane; Theresa Phillips of 20 Hollow Oak Drive; Paul and Marijean Lamoureux of 25 Hollow Oak Drive; Emily Cooperman of 26 Hollow Oak Drive; Walter Parker of 12 Hollow Oak Drive; Douglas Hubbel of 5 Hollow Oak Drive; Robin Merrill of 35 East Street; and Diane Baxter of 2 East Street.

**Others present remotely:** Adam Silverberg of 5 East Street; Ronald Ragano of 15 East Street; Helga Tomala of 18 East Street; Yoni Dvorkis and Vera Yanovsky of 26 East Street; Joseph Albanese of 28 East Street; Sydney Merrill of 35 East Street; Janie Micco and Scott O'Hara of 36 Center Street; Nancy Gregory and Michael Miller of 18 West Street; Jason Silva of 20 West Street; and Laura Briggs of 94 Belcher Road.

**1. Review Proposed Plans from Verizon for Wireless Communications Tower on the District District's East Street Parcel**

Executive Director Roy introduced the representatives from Verizon, both of whom were attorneys providing legal representation for Verizon. The Verizon employee in charge of the project in Sudbury was scheduled to attend the meeting but was unable to make it. Michael Fenton, Verizon Legal Counsel, presented preliminary plans for a 120-foot monopole within a 60-by-60-foot lease area, including associated equipment. He stated that the proposed location was determined by Verizon's evaluation to be the most appropriate based on radio-frequency needs and minimal tree-removal requirements. Mr. Fenton explained that Verizon will require both a special permit from the Zoning Board of Appeals and dimensional and use variances, as the residential A1 zoning District imposes a 100-foot height limit and does not permit this use. The site was selected through a Request for Proposals (RFP) issued by the Water District in March 2025, and Verizon entered into a lease with the District in March 2026. Director Roy noted that the proposed tower would allow the District and Sudbury public safety departments to co-locate equipment on the structure, improving communications for residents as well as for the District, Sudbury Fire Department, and Sudbury Police Department. Mr. Fenton added that the project would require minimal maintenance visits and would comply with federal regulations, including NEPA and the Telecommunications Act. Several residents raised concerns about the tower's proximity to wetlands and about construction access routes through Water District Zone 1 areas. They questioned whether this would be acceptable to MassDEP.

### **Cell Tower Booster Discussion**

Commissioner Sheldon emphasized the need for a cell-tower booster at the plant for safety and radio communication, noting that if the current proposal does not move forward, the District will need to construct an alternative solution. He personally experienced no wireless signal at the new PFAS plant. The discussion also addressed concerns about an existing building's impact on the aquifer, with Director Roy explaining that containment measures such as tight tanks would prevent contamination of the aquifer.

Robin Merrill raised questions regarding the 1965 deed conveying the parcel to the District and whether Article 97 protections apply. District Counsel Williams confirmed that the deed contains no restrictions on property use and that no Article 97 protection language exists within the property deed. He also stated that the deed by itself established the conveyance of the property.

Vera Yanofsky asked about potential conflicts of interest in the RFP process and whether alternative technologies, such as Starlink, were evaluated.

### **Verizon Infrastructure Site Discussion**

Mr. Fenton explained that Verizon has a material and substantial need for infrastructure in the area and that the proposed location was identified as the best option after due diligence, though other locations on the parcel have not been entirely ruled out. He noted that Verizon would be required to consider less intrusive alternatives if requested, but relocating the site would require extensive additional evaluation.

Concerns were raised regarding tree removal and property-line setbacks. Mr. Fenton clarified that specific measurements to all abutting properties were not shown on the current drawings but could be provided.

### **Cell Tower Project Discussion**

Mr. Fenton explained that Verizon expressed an interest in this location to address communication coverage gaps in the area. Director Roy noted that the District signed the lease primarily to improve communications in the area, although that lease was contingent on project approvals from the Sudbury Zoning Board of Appeals and Planning Board. The lease's terms included annual payment of \$40,000 to the District.

Residents expressed concern about the lack of public notification in 2021 when a previous proposal was discussed. Director Roy acknowledged that the District had presented appropriate notification of the cell tower discussion in 2021 as part of agendas for meetings of the Board of Water Commissioners, but there was no direct communication with residents in the area.

Additional topics included potential camouflaging options, protection of existing water infrastructure, and tree-removal requirements. Mr. Fenton emphasized that the project remains in an early planning stage prior to formal submissions to the Planning Board. He said that the process of working with Town boards to get their approvals would take a few months. He also said that it was unusual to have a meeting such as this with residents at this early stage.

### **Previous Proposed Cell Tower Location Discussion**

The meeting also reviewed earlier attempts to site a tower in the area dating back to 2007–2008.

Commissioner Sheldon stated that it was his recollection that the previous proposal was rejected because the tower company moved the location closer to Well 3, which was not what the District and that company had originally agreed to. Robin Merrill of 35 East Street stated that the current proposal appears to be in the same location that was withdrawn in 2007.

### **Cell Tower Project Discussion (Closing)**

Commissioner Fox clarified that the District has a binding lease agreement.

The discussion concluded with a commitment to the next steps:

**District:**

- Collect and maintain an email list of interested residents for future notifications about project updates and public hearings.
- Review and, if feasible, implement improved notification/communication protocols for future project updates to abutters and residents (e.g., mailers, designated neighborhood contacts).
- Ensure all required public notices (including abutter notifications) are sent for upcoming Planning Board and ZBA hearings per Massachusetts General Law.
- Follow up with MassDEP regarding the use of a construction access route through Zones 1 and 2.

**Verizon (In preparation for Zoning Board of Appeals and Planning Board Meetings):**

- Michael Fenton/Verizon team: Provide alternative site analysis and constraints map to the Board and residents, showing why the current site was selected and what other locations were considered.
- Verizon team: Update site plans to accurately reflect private way status, locations of roads for construction and for maintenance, measurements to nearest abutters, required setback measurements (especially to closest abutters), and locations of water mains.
- Verizon team: Conduct tree canopy survey and provide information on tree removal required for the proposed cell tower and access road.
- Verizon team: Investigate and respond to concerns about construction and maintenance vehicle access through Zone 1 protected areas and compliance with MassDEP regulations; coordinate with Water District and MassDEP as needed.
- Verizon team: Provide written responses to all questions raised at the meeting (including those about radio frequency testing, tree removal, water main protection, and NEPA process status) before the next relevant public meeting.
- Verizon team: File necessary applications (special permit, variances, site plan approval) with the Zoning Board of Appeals and Planning Board within 1-2 months, including all required due diligence (photo simulations, radio frequency maps, etc.).
- Verizon team: Coordinate with Water District and Town of Sudbury radio frequency consultants to ensure space and appropriate location for public safety and Water District equipment on the tower.
- Water District (Vincent Roy, Commissioners): Follow up with MassDEP to clarify requirements and process for access through Zone 1 and any necessary permits/variances for construction in protected water supply areas.
- Verizon team: Appear at future Planning Board and ZBA hearings with full due diligence materials and be prepared to answer all technical and procedural questions from the Board and public.

Chairperson Boyd asked attendees if there were any questions or comments on the proceedings so far, to which there were no comments or questions.

**2. Review and Vote to Approve the Minutes from the Board of Water Commissioners Meeting held on June 9, 2026.**

The Commissioners reviewed the minutes for the June 9, 2026, meeting. Commissioner Sheldon moved to approve the minutes as amended. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Fox and approved by unanimous roll call vote:

Robert E. Boyd, Jr. - Commissioner and Chairperson - Aye  
Robert H. Sheldon, Commissioner - Aye  
Joshua M. Fox - Commissioner - Aye

**3. Review of the Director’s June 18, 2026, Bi-Weekly Report.**

Director Roy presented his bi-weekly report, covering the following topics:

Job Posting:

Chairperson Boyd asked Director Roy if the District had received any new applicants for the Water Distribution position job posting. Director Roy responded that the District has received two applications to date and that he posted the job opening on websites of the New England Water Works Association, Mass Water Works Association, as well as the District’s website. He has also extended the deadline for applications to July 15<sup>th</sup>.

No other items were discussed in the Bi-weekly Report

**4. Review June 12, 20126, Drought Notification Letter from MassDEP/Vote on Level 3/Emergency Drought Condition.**

Director Roy informed the Commissioners that he received notice from MassDEP on June 12th declaring a Level 3 Critical Drought Condition in the northeast region of the State. He further explained that the State’s language for drought level restrictions differs from the District’s Water Management Act (WMA) Permit, which was issued by MassDEP in 2020.

Director Roy stated that he has attempted to contact MassDEP for clarification and guidance on how to comply with the State’s declaration while also operating within the requirements of the WMA Permit. Commissioner Fox asked Director Roy to explain the restrictions associated with a Level 3 drought. Director Roy responded that no outdoor watering is permitted, including the use of hand-held devices.

Commissioner Sheldon moved to implement Level 3 Outdoor Water Use Restrictions, with the caveat that this matter would be re-evaluated at the next Commissioners meeting on July 7, 2026, after the District receives clarification from MassDEP regarding whether the State’s declaration constitutes a requirement or a recommendation. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Fox and approved by unanimous roll call vote:

Robert E. Boyd, Jr., Commissioner and Chairperson – Aye  
Joshua M. Fox, Commissioner - Aye  
Robert H. Sheldon, Commissioner– Aye

**5. Year-End Emergency Fund Transfer**

Treasurer Travers informed the Commissioners that a transfer of \$90,227.77 from the Emergency Reserve Account would be required to balance the FY26 accounts. Upon no further discussion, Commissioner Fox moved to approve the emergency fund transfer of \$90,227.77 to balance the FY26 accounts. The motion was duly seconded by Commissioner Sheldon and approved by unanimous roll-call vote:

Robert H. Sheldon, Commissioner– Aye  
Joshua M. Fox, Commissioner - Aye  
Robert E. Boyd Jr., Commissioner and Chairperson - Aye

**Conclusion of Open Meeting**

Chairperson Boyd moved to conclude the open public meeting session and not move into executive meeting session, The motion was duly seconded by Commissioner Sheldon and approved by unanimous roll call:

Robert H. Sheldon, Commissioner– Aye  
Joshua M. Fox, Commissioner - Aye  
Robert E. Boyd Jr., Commissioner and Chairperson - Aye

There being no further discussion, the meeting adjourned at 7:24 p.m.