

NORTH CHELMSFORD WATER DISTRICT

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The Monthly Meeting of the Board of Water Commissioners ("Board") of the North Chelmsford Water District ("District") was held on September 14, 2026, at the District's office. The meeting was convened at 4:02 PM with Commissioners Bruce Clark and David Irvine, Superintendent Aurora Bas, Treasurer/Office Manager Daysha Morell, and Office Assistant/Clerk Elsa Ramos.

Approval of Minutes

The Board reviewed the previous meeting minutes from August 3, 2026.

Commissioner Clark made a motion to approve the monthly meeting minutes.

Vote: Approved unanimously.

Water Conservation Levels & System Flushing

- Ms Bas reviewed summer water-conservation conditions and the resulting limitations on system flushing. Routine flushing was deferred during the Level 3 restriction and leak-detection activities. With the system now at Level 1, flushing operations can resume.

Legal and Engineering Matters

- The Board discussed current legal and engineering matters. No significant new matters were reported.

Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)

- The Board discussed changes to a proposed accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) Bylaw
- Ms Bas reported that several inquiries concerning ADUs had already been received.
- The Board discussed the proposed regulations and agreed that the language should be forwarded to legal counsel for review before adoption to ensure compliance with applicable regulations and requirements.

Abatement: 4 Grace St

- Ms Bas reported that no revised application had been submitted concerning the previously discussed abatement at 4 Grace St.
- The potentially eligible amount was approximately \$60; Ms Bas reviewed calculations with the applicant.

Water Treatment Plant Pilot Study

- The treatment plant pilot study remains ongoing.
- Representatives, including Nick Zessoules from Mass DEP, recently met with staff to review the pilot-study setup.
- The current treatment process being evaluated includes two ion-exchange media followed by granular activated carbon (GAC). Ms Bas reported that the meeting went well and that questions raised during the review were addressed.

Distribution System Improvements

- Ms Bas discussed several aging hydrants that should be replaced.

- A few older hydrants have 2 nozzles and are not gated, requiring a larger portion of the distribution system to be taken out of service during work. Ms Bas proposed completing gate insertions to minimize system disruption.
- The Board supported replacing the obsolete hydrants as part of normal system maintenance and upgrades.

Curb Box Repairs

- Ms Bas reported that significant work has been undertaken to repair curb boxes before winter.
- The objective is to complete as many repairs as possible before the ground freezes.

Continuous Consumption Notices

- Ms Bas has been actively monitoring the District's meter reading software for customers showing 14 or more consecutive days of continuous water consumption.
- Staff have been contacting affected customers to alert them to possible leaks or continuously operating irrigation systems.
- The program has resulted in several customers identifying and addressing potential problems. Customers have generally been appreciative of the notification.
- Ms Bas noted that continuous-consumption monitoring is more difficult for apartment buildings and larger complexes because multiple units may share a single meter.

Customer Shut offs and Payment Plans

- Ms Bas reported on efforts to follow up with customers who had previously entered into payment plans but failed to comply with the terms.
- Ms Bas & Ms Morell reported that the recent shutoff process resulted in significant collections and helped reduce outstanding balances.
- The Board discussed a potential amendment to the District's ordinance that would make customers who default on a payment plan ineligible for another payment plan in the future. Such customers would instead be required to pay the outstanding balance and applicable turn-on fee before service is restored.
- The Board expressed support for the concept, noting that repeated payment-plan defaults have occurred among some of the same customers.
- Ms Bas will work with legal counsel regarding the potential ordinance amendment.

Treasurer's Report

- Ms Morell reported that the District's annual audit is nearing completion.
- The auditor is awaiting additional documentation before issuing the final reports. A meeting is scheduled for October 5, 2026, for the auditor to review the District's financial statements with the Board.
- Ms Morell reported that free cash is expected to be lower than the prior year.
- The auditor indicated that using excess free cash for appropriate capital expenditure is a sound financial practice and reflects positively on the District's financial management, which the District has done.
- Ms Morell is also working with the Massachusetts Department of Revenue (DOR) to determine the treatment of approximately \$335,000 associated with prior-year grant revenue. The final free-cash figure may therefore be somewhat higher than the current estimate.
- Ms Morell also reported that two financial reports are due to DOR by September 30, 2026, including the statement of indebtedness and the cash-flow report reflecting cash and bank balances as of June 30, 2026.

Recognition of Staff

- The Board recognized staff members for their work during the summer, particularly their efforts relating to customer shutoffs, collections, system maintenance, and preparation for winter operations.

PFAS-Related Litigation

- The Board discussed receiving countersuit related to a PFAS class-action lawsuit.

- Ms Bas is working with the District's attorneys to determine the District's role and any required response.
- At this time, the matter remains under review by legal counsel, and no executive session was required.

Facility and Garage Improvements

- Ms Bas discussed the condition and capacity of the District's garage and storage facilities.
- Ms Bas reported that the existing garage is increasingly overcrowded, with one vehicle routinely being stored outside.
- Ms Bas discussed expanding or rehabilitating the garage, potentially including:
 - Additional garage space;
 - Multiple vehicle bays and doors;
 - Improved vehicle access and circulation;
- Removal or relocation of existing storage containers;
- Inspection and cleanup of the lower-level areas;
- Identification of potential building or health/safety concerns
- Development of a design and funding plan for rehabilitation.
- The Board discussed whether the property is subject to historical - preservation requirements and indicated that the building does not appear to be listed on the applicable historic register, although this should be confirmed before work proceeds.
- The Board also discussed the possibility of preserving an obsolete hydrant as a historical display and creating displays or framed materials documenting the history of the treatment plant and the District.
- The Board expressed support for improving the appearance of the facility and displaying certificates, awards, registrations, and historical information in a professional manner.

Adjournment

Commissioner Clark made a motion to adjourn at 5:15 PM. The vote was unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,



Elsa Ramos, Clerk