



# ABINGTON & ROCKLAND JOINT WATER WORKS

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## ABINGTON COMMISSIONERS

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## ROCKLAND COMMISSIONERS

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CO-CHAIRMAN  
RAY CAMPANILE  
SECRETARY  
WILLIAM T. LOW

## ABINGTON & ROCKLAND JOINT BOARD OF WATER COMMISSIONERS MEETING:

The Abington & Rockland Joint Board of Water Commissioners held a meeting in executive session on January 26, 2009 at 7:22 p.m. at the Abington Town Hall, 500 Gliniewicz Way, Abington, MA. Present were the following Commissioners:

Richard D. Muncey, Co-Chairman  
Robert Corvi Sr., Co-Chairman  
Ray Campanile, Secretary  
Steven D. Bradbury  
John E. Warner II  
William T. Low

Also:

Daniel F. Callahan, Superintendent  
JoAnne Hall, Administrative Assistant  
Susan Schwenderman, Office Clerk  
Teresa Manning, Office Clerk  
Debra Newcomb, Office Clerk  
Kristel Cameron, AFSCME Union Steward  
Karen Hathaway, AFSCME Union Staff Representative

Ms. Hathaway stated she was contacted by the ladies saying they are interested in joining the union. Ms. Hathaway stated the easiest way to accomplish that for them is to roll them into the existing contract. Ms. Hathaway stated AFSCME and the Commissioners would have to be in agreement to do that and that is why she was before the Board, to ask them if they would be in agreement to incorporate the three ladies into the existing contract. Mr. Muncey stated the existing contract would have to be opened. Ms. Hathaway stated no, it would not. Mr. Muncey asked why it would not have to be opened. Ms. Hathaway stated it would be impact bargaining and rolling them into the contract. Ms. Hathaway stated she reviewed the contract and very few things would have to be changed in the contract. Ms. Hathaway cited the recognition article to include them, adding a section to cover their hours of work, adding their job descriptions, adding a line item for their salary rates and not being eligible for the clothing allowance. Ms. Hathaway stated the guys get licenses but that is very specific to having those licenses and the ladies do not possess the licenses. Mr. Bradbury stated what would stop them from getting the licenses. Ms. Hathaway stated something can be added that says the clerical are not eligible for the license stipends. Mr. Warner asked how they can give something to one union member and not everyone. Ms. Hathaway stated there are lots of contracts with clauses that state articles do not pertain to clerical.

Mr. Bradbury asked how the clerical unions in Abington and Rockland will feel about them joining the AFSCME Union. Ms. Hathaway stated she is not sure about Abington but the Rockland Town Hall clerical is unionized. Ms. Hathaway stated the ladies approached them and that union was not very interested in taking them into their union and the AFSCME Union is a better fit because all of their benefits mirror the AFSCME contract such as longevity, vacations and holidays.

Mr. Campanile asked why a separate contract with the AFSCME union was not done when the current contract was negotiated. Ms. Hathaway stated they would have been rolled into this contract because she is not allowed to write a contract for three people. Mr. Muncey asked if there is anything that caused the ladies to want to join the union rather than their current contract. Ms. Hathaway cited the fiscal times and what is going on in the Town of Rockland. Ms. Hathaway stated her Rockland unit has not had a contract or a raise in two years. Mr. Muncey stated we are not the Town of Rockland. Ms. Hathaway agreed and stated but being in a union they are guaranteed their raises, right now they have no guarantee. Mr. Muncey stated of course they do, they have a contract with us. Mr. Low and Mr. Warner stated the ladies get the same raise as the guys. Mr. Muncey stated he has heard the girls in the water department are worried about the Town of Rockland telling the water department to get rid of them because the town does not need you. Mr. Muncey stated just to reassure you, the six Board members are the only ones that can make that decision. Ms. Schwenderman stated she has not heard that.

Mr. Bradbury asked what is the rush, why it can't this be done with the next contract. Ms. Hathaway stated this also has to be approved by the other union employees. Mr. Campanile stated he does not object but feels there is a lot that would have to be done with the existing contract, such as exemptions that would have to be added. Ms. Hathaway disagreed. Ms. Hathaway asked if this is a concept that the Board would be open to because this is the easiest way, she can do the paperwork to the labor board so they are included in this contract. Mr. Campanile stated he is surprised the ladies are not in a union. Mr. Muncey asked why the ladies did not want to do this one and a half years ago when they negotiated their contract. Ms. Schwenderman stated they tried it once before. Mr. Muncey reiterated one and a half years ago. Ms. Schwenderman stated it was her understanding everybody that worked there had to agree and there were three women and not everyone agreed one woman was opposed. Ms. Schwenderman stated she feels she may have issues she would like to have someone to talk to, someone to go to, to find out where she stands. Mr. Muncey stated only during the last contract negotiations did the clerical staff come before the Board. With prior contracts, after the Union settled their contract, the clerical staff wrote a letter stating we want what they got. Ms. Schwenderman stated because basically that is how it is; we were told we had to wait to see what the guys got. Mr. Muncey asked who told them they had to wait. Ms. Schwenderman stated she does not remember exactly, it was years ago. Mr. Campanile, Mr. Warner and Mr. Bradbury suggested joining the union be discussed during the next contract negotiation. Ms. Manning asked what the problem is with them getting into the union. Mr. Campanile replied, no problem. Mr. Bradbury questioned the timing, stating you are in the middle of a contract and now you want to get rid of that contract and join the union. Ms. Manning stated so when our contract expires the Board would have no problem with them joining the union. The Board agreed that at that time it would be negotiated. Ms. Schwenderman asked if the Board would have no objection to the ladies joining the union at the next contract negotiation. Mr. Campanile stated not at all. Mr. Muncey stated he would not have a problem now but he would need a word from counsel, that you can add people into a bargaining unit that has a sealed contract.

Ms. Hathaway stated what we would be doing is called impact bargaining and impact bargaining is for a particular issue and that would be to bring the ladies into the contract. Ms. Hathaway stated we would talk about only bringing the ladies into the existing contract and what that would entail. Mr. Muncey stated if that is the case, why do you need a vote of the body to let them come in? Ms. Hathaway stated because we are bringing them into the contract and if twenty nine out of thirty members say absolutely not, we do not want them as part of us, the union would not go forward. Ms. Hathaway stated she asked Ms. Cameron to check with people and see. Ms. Hathaway stated although Ms. Cameron did not talk with each and every member, the majority of them do not have a problem with the ladies joining.

Mr. Bradbury stated the ladies get the same benefits as the distribution and treatment crews but now you want to pay union dues. Ms. Schwenderman stated that is their decision. Mr. Campanile and Mr. Warner suggested waiting until the contract is open during negotiations. Ms. Hathaway and the Board discussed layoffs within the union. Ms. Hathaway stated there is language within the contract regarding layoffs. Ms. Hathaway stated clerical could not bump into water treatment or water distribution because you can only bump equal or lower class and you need to be qualified to bump into that class. Mr. Bradbury stated clerical could decide to get their licenses. Ms. Schwenderman stated years ago they were encouraged to get their license, if they chose to do so and she has not done that because she does not want a license and she does not think any of the other girls want a license. Mr. Bradbury stated someone else could decide to get their license. Mr. Muncey stated the Board just brought up a dozen issues. Mr. Campanile motioned that when contract negotiations are up and the contracts are expiring, we allow the clerical staff to join the union and participate in negotiations. Ms. Hathaway stated there are two ways to go about doing this, the easier of the two is to sit down and ask the Board is in agreement and we can move forward and do it, the other way being to file a partition with the labor board in Boston and go thru that process and it would not take until 2010 to get that thru the labor board. Ms. Hathaway stated she is going to speak to the ladies and if they want her to move forward, she will file a partition with the labor board and they will go the harder route rather than the easier route or the ladies may want to wait until June 2010. Mr. Bradbury seconded the motion and it was voted as follows; Mr. Bradbury yes, Mr. Warner yes, Mr. Muncey yes, Mr. Campanile yes, Mr. Low yes and Mr. Corvi yes.

The next scheduled meeting is February 10, 2009 immediately following the Rockland Board of Water Commissioners Meeting at 6:00 p.m. at the Abington Town Hall, 500 Gliniewicz Way, Abington, MA.

Mr. Campanile motioned to adjourn executive session at 7:46 p.m. Mr. Bradbury seconded the motion and it was voted as follows; Mr. Bradbury yes, Mr. Warner yes, Mr. Muncey yes, Mr. Campanile yes, Mr. Low yes and Mr. Corvi yes.

  
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Ray Campanile, Secretary

Date: 6/8/09