

Mr. Fox opened the January 4, 2022 meeting at 6:30 PM and announced it as audio and video recorded. He asked for a roll call attendance. Messrs. Jim Fox, Gary Yessaillian, Andrew Kara, Robert Lexander and John Miller announced their presence. Eric Merithew joined the meeting after the roll-call vote. Staff present included Blake Lukis, Elissa Cohen, Stephanie Costa, Steve Locke, Bob Marsh. John Bent, Matt Lanen, Rick Mosca and Tabitha Maccalous. Eileen Commane, consultant, was also in attendance. Mr. Fox complemented the work of outgoing chair John Miller for his work during a very challenging 2021. He asked for a motion to approve the slate of officers as presented. Mr. Miller put that motion forward and Mr. Kara seconded the motion. Mr. Fox asked if there was any discussion and hearing none he called for a roll-call vote. Messrs. Yessaillian, Kara, Merithew, Lexander, Miller and Fox all voted Aye.

MINUTES

Mr. Fox asked for any discussion or a motion to approve the minutes. Mr. Kara put forward a motion to approve the minutes of December 21, 2021 which Mr. Lexander seconded. Mr. Fox called for a roll call vote. Messrs. Yessaillian, Kara, Merithew, Lexander, Miller and Fox all voted Aye.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Financials and Warrants

Mr. Bent reported warrants numbered 92-95 for \$459,922.12. He noted that the Clean Water Trust Debt Interest and Administration payments had been paid today by wire as is required. He referred to the Treasurer's Report and the unreconciled bank balance of \$8,034,000. He noted that he had closed the Harbor One Bank and also an account at Dedham Savings that we no longer needed.

BUSINESS MANAGER'S REPORT

Mr. Marsh reported that he had filed the certification in December on the Risk and Resiliency Assessment and Emergency Response Plan as required. He noted that he is working to fill the front desk position so that the office can be reopened. He said that two interviews are scheduled this week for the Treasurer position. Next, he said that he is working on year end reports, W-2s and 1099s. He next referred to the November operating results indicating that we are right on Plan. He expects the year end position to still be a loss although a smaller loss than the budgeted loss.

SPECIAL PROJECTS ENGINEER REPORT

Mr. Locke reported that on December 28 the DEP passed inspection of the new chemical feed pumps at White Lodge. He noted that we are working on getting communications organized for the 72-hour shutdown scheduled for Tuesday January 11 to replace the main discharge pipe. He said that he and staff are reviewing the Draft Meter and Billing Evaluation Report by Weston and Sampson. He asked that the discussion on the report with the Board be deferred until February to give sufficient time to review the lengthy report. He said the regulatory, quarterly THM(Trihalomethanes) samples will be collected on Thursday. He noted that we have taken all

measures to return to compliance, but that this may not be possible. He said he will be meeting with Weston and Sampson tomorrow to evaluate power supply at all the water tanks needed for the new equipment. He is also meeting with the vendor on Friday to discuss the scope of work, THM reduction impact and budget. For the next Board meeting, he expects the Weston and Sampson six-month review of the Total Organic Carbon/THM study. Lastly, he noted a meeting on Thursday with Utility Cloud and Rostech regarding programming and integration and expects the paperless forms and the iPad rollout shortly. Mr. Lexander asked about installing mixing equipment in Fox Hill Tank #1 and Mr. Locke explained that the equipment would be relocated when a new tank is built. Mr. Fox asked about the status of automation. Mr. Lexander explained that it would be about a year to work through the alarms. Mr. Lukis added that in the capital budget, instead of a study, funds are committed to purchase and install required inline analyzers as well as working with Woodard and Curran, our SCADA integrators to identify equipment, communications, and programming necessary to operate the system automatically. Mr. Lexander added that its not just the Bridge St Treatment Plant but the operation of remote pump stations that need to be addressed as these are presently manual activities by a plant operator. Mr. Fox asked why Wright-Pierce wouldn't have addressed this as part of the Bridge St project. Mr. Lexander explained that they were only asked to design the Bridge St renovations to be able to operate it unmanned. Mr. Merithew added that it wouldn't make sense to run Bridge St in automatic mode while still having an operator present to make all the manual adjustments needed for facilities out in the distribution system. Mr. Fox asked if a timeline could be developed to better understand the process. Mr. Miller asked if we needed a consultant to assist with this and Mr. Lexander said that Woodard and Curran is the appropriate consultant. Mr. Lukis referred to the Weston and Sampson Report titled Bridge Street Automated Operations Evaluation presented in September 2021 and specifically to page 17 under conclusions, where he quoted "Bridge Street Treatment Plant automation is feasible but will require the District to make upgrades to the water system as a whole". Mr. Lukis then explained that if no operational changes were needed out in the distribution system that Bridge St can run automated but that typical operational changes such as turning booster pump stations off and on, opening or closing of the MWRA connections and the running of supply wells at Bridge Street currently require the operator to manually make those changes. Much of the instrumentation hardware for automation is already in place, he explained, and most of the work will include process description and programming design and then testing of all the components. For these reasons, Mr. Lukis said that the capital budget subcommittee concluded that rather than Weston and Sampson, Woodard and Curran, as our SCADA integrator, is best suited to assist us in this to determine everything necessary to automate the operation. Mr. Lukis indicated this process would likely take several years especially given present water quality challenges. He also reminded the Board that the current ability to run White Lodge partially unmanned was predicated upon the 24/7 manning at Bridge St. Mr. Miller asked that key milestones be included in the timeline.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mr. Lukis described the proposed rate increases and the supporting schedules that were reflected in the 2022 Budget. Schedules A and B, for usage rates and fire service charges are proposed for increase across the board of 2.5%. Next Mr. Lukis said that Schedule C; service fees increased in cost for a new 1" water service from \$800.00 to \$900.00 and that the Access Fees are proposed to increase by 13%, based on the last Engineering News Record Boston Construction Index,

which has been the basis of access fee increases for decades. Lastly, Schedule D, meter charges, is adjusted to reflect our actual cost for meters. Mr. Fox expressed concerns with impact of inflation and labor costs on future rates. Following discussion, Mr. Fox asked for a motion on the proposed rate changes. Mr. Lexander made a motion that The Dedham-Westwood Water Commissioners vote to amend the Schedule of Water Rates as presented herewith as Schedule A, Metered Rates; Schedule B, Fire Protection Rates; Schedule C, Other Charges including Access and Change of Use Fees; and Schedule D, Meter Charges. Amended rates shall be effective on February 1, 2022. Mr. Merithew seconded the motion. Mr. Fox called for a roll call vote. Messrs. Yessaillian, Kara, Merithew, Miller, Lexander and Fox all voted Aye.

Mr. Lukis said Eileen Commane expected to schedule a meeting with Representative McMurtry on January 18th. Mr. Merithew asked if there had been any feedback from the Towns on the proposed rate increase. Mr. Lukis responded that Chris Coleman, Westwood Town Administrator, had asked for our retained earnings figure and that along with providing the value of \$8MM, he explained the long-range capital budget of \$2.8MM. Next, he said that a mandatory mask policy had been implemented at our facilities as per CDC guidance. Next, he said that there would be a union negotiation meeting before the next board meeting. He asked that the Board consider appointing John Miller to continue serving as the Board liaison on the union negotiations team. Mr. Fox initiated a discussion and the conclusion made that no formal vote is necessary and thanked Mr. Miller for his willingness to continue serving in that role. Mr. Merithew asked when we might expect THM results, Mr. Lukis said that typically we get verbal results two weeks after the sampling date. He does expect the monthly THM results shortly, which will give a good prediction of where the regulatory figures will be. Mr. Merithew suggested that if additional PR assistance is needed following the test results it would be best get underway quickly. Mr. Lukis offered to bring forward a new proposal for the current year. He said he's accustomed to municipal accounting where typically such contracts are annually renewed. Following discussion, Mr. Fox concluded that any work could be covered under the current contract. Mr. Lanen asked that anyone seeing the shutdown advertisement in the Dedham Times or Westwood Patch let him know. Lastly, Mr. Lukis informed the Board that outgoing January and February bills would include a message announcing the rate increase effective February 1.

Mr. Fox called for a motion to close the meeting, which Mr. Lexander put forward and Mr. Miller seconded. Mr. Fox called for a roll call vote. Messrs. Yessaillian, Kara, Merithew, Lexander, Miller and Fox all voted Aye.