



DEDHAM-WESTWOOD WATER DISTRICT
General Business Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, May 17, 2022 | 6:30 PM
Via Teams Virtual Platform

Announcement of the Audio and/or Video Recording

The Chair, James Fox, called the meeting to order at 6:40p.m. and announced the meeting would be audio- and/or video-recorded.

Attendance

James Fox, Chair

Robert Lexander, Vice-Chair

Andrew Kara, Clerk

Eric Merithew, Member

Gary Yessaillian, Member

John Healy, Member

Blake Lukis, Executive Director

Bob Marsh, Business Manager

Pauline Donoghue, Treasurer

Steve Locke, Operations Manager

Introduction of New Commission Member, John Healy

Mr. Fox welcomed Mr. Healy to the Commission.

Approval of Minutes of April 26 and May 5, 2022

A motion was made by Mr. Kara to approve the minutes, as reviewed, for April 26 and May 5, 2022. The motion was seconded by Mr. Yessaillian. With no discussion necessary, a roll-call vote was taken.

Messrs. Fox, Lexander, Kara, Merithew, and Yessaillian all voted Aye; Mr. Healy abstained. Motion passes 5 For, 0 Against, 1 Abstention.

Financials and Warrant

Treasurer's Warrants

For the Board's review and approval, Ms. Donoghue presented Warrants 32-35 for April 25-May 10 activity. Warrant 34 includes the first annual loan payment to the MWRA.

Treasurer's Report

Ms. Donoghue highlighted:

Page 1 of the report is total reconciled cash balances from April 30, a decrease since March;

Page 2 reports the March reconciled cash balances;

Page 3 is the monthly summary cash receipts and disbursements through April;

Page 4 gives, for comparison, the monthly cash receipts and disbursements for Fiscal Year 2021.

Mr. Merithew posed a question regarding the on-call service warrant, which Mr. Locke answered. Mr. Merithew requested an outsourcing update.

Business Manager Report

Business Operating Reports

On the topic of the permit and zoning process for the garage behind 50 Elm Street, Mr. Marsh had confirmed by Dedham legal counsel that Dedham-Westwood Water District was created by a legislative act and therefore is immune to local municipal planning and zoning laws. The district does not have to go before the town planning or zoning boards. The design and planning phase now begins. Mr. Fox informed Mr. Healy of the decision to use the garage for additional storage.

Mr. Marsh relayed that the security project was restructured since bids were difficult to obtain because of supply chain issues, vendor commitments size-reduced, costs, etc. Ideally, another bid will be out by early-July, for updated security around the high-risk facilities of White Lodge, Bridge Steet and 50 Elm Street. When Mr. Yessaillian asked if insurance policies should be reviewed, Mr. Marsh answered that cyber security coverage is carried by the district.

Mr. Marsh informed that an audit draft copy was received, which the management team must review and analyze for changes to be incorporated. The final audit will be presented by our auditors, Melanson, to the Board in June before public publishing.

Mr. Marsh reported April income statement results were completed and forwarded to the management team. The results were consistent with YTD March, with MWRA water usage less. Results will be published to the Board after further review.

Mr. Fox asked Mr. Marsh when Norfolk County's assessment will be received. Mr. Marsh confirmed the bill is usually received by this time, so he will follow up.

Relative to the Elm Street garage, Mr. Fox suggested considering offering abutters buffering.

Operations Manager Report

Pumping and Operational Report

Mr. Locke reported pumpage has increased up to a high of five million gallons a day, somewhat expected while flushing, averaging over historical. The leak detection survey has been completed, with the loss found to be a reasonable amount, including five main leaks and in-process hydrant flushing.

Update on New and Existing Projects

Mr. Locke reported:

- The 2021 water mains pay reconciliation has been completed. Remaining funds will be transferred to the General Fund.
- The new remote site Viper radios project is halfway completed, awaiting remaining devices.
- The THM reduction systems and tank maintenance program documentation was received, with corrections made for final draft. Proposal submissions will be received in June.

- Innovative real-time production, meter, and leak-detection technology to control nonrevenue is being reviewed. Some calibrations on nonrevenue have been done, with customer consumption apparent and losses/meter deficiencies reviewed. The aspects and costs of real-time collectors were explained. A minimal-cost comprehensive pilot study is suggested. Mr. Locke and Mr. Lukis answered Members' questions regarding this technology; Members offered input, including the positive customer service aspect.

Executive Director Report

Contracts Executed by Executive Director

Mr. Lukis reported contracts approved since the last meeting:

- Weston & Sampson siting study for tank resilience and system hydraulics, for a cost-benefit analysis and then design.
- Woodard & Curran for White Lodge Treatment Plant MCC replacement design.
- Tighe & Bond Production Department White Lodge office renovations space options for covid measures.

Action on Well Rehabilitation Contract

Mr. Lukis confirmed the contractor acknowledged Addendum 1 does not change his scope or price. Tighe & Bond recommends award to Maher Services.

A motion was made by Mr. Merithew that the Dedham-Westwood Water Commissioners vote to approve the Well Redevelopment and Repair Services contract with Maher Services of Reading, MA, for a three-year term in the total annual amount of \$241,873.50. Further, that the Executive Director be authorized to execute the contract. The motion was seconded by Mr. Yessaillian.

With no discussions necessary, a roll-call vote was taken.

Messrs. Fox, Lexander, Kara, Healy, Merithew, and Yessaillian all voted Aye.

Motion passes unanimously.

Action on Peer Review of Weston & Sampson's Cost Analysis

Mr. Lukis informed that an engineering firm to complete a peer review has been found. After discussion, decision was made not to delay motion until after the subcommittee meeting.

A motion was made by Mr. Merithew that the Dedham-Westwood Water Commissioners vote to approve the Professional Engineering Consulting Services associated with completing a peer review of Section 5 Cost Analysis of the Bridge Street Automated Operations Final Report proposal between H2Olson Engineering, Inc. and the Dedham-Westwood Water District for the contract price of \$6,500. Further, that upon this approval, the agreement and contract shall be executed by the Executive Director.. The motion was seconded by Mr. Lexander. Discussion took place regarding the benefits and scope of this financial-analysis review, and a roll-call vote was taken.

Messrs. Fox, Lexander, Kara, Merithew, and Yessaillian all voted Aye; Mr. Healy abstained.

Motion passes 5 For, 0 Against, 1 Abstention.

Action on Acceptance of MGL Chapter 200A, §9A

Mr. Lukis acknowledged that this action may have been previously voted on by the Board, but that the results are not found on-record.

A motion was made by Mr. Merithew that the Dedham-Westwood Water Commissioners vote to accept the provisions of Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 200A, § 9A, relative to the District's disposition of abandoned funds. The motion was seconded by Mr. Kara. Discussion took place regarding the details of this law relevant to processes for returning or accepting held money, and a roll-call vote was taken.

Messrs. Fox, Lexander, Kara, Healy, Merithew, and Yessaillian all voted Aye.

Motion passes unanimously.

Update on Rate Structure Changes

Mr. Lukis reviewed the points of his proposed rate structure changes for generating revenue and giving back to customers for unused water. Mr. Lukis offered slides reviewing the current rate structure for year-round residential and commercial customers, stating commercial properties benefit from a single-rate structure. In the proposed changes, municipal users remain single-rate, residential remain three-tier, and commercial changes to two-tier. The proposed revenue increase was reviewed, including a lower monthly meter fee for reduced usage. Via a slide, Mr. Lukis indicated how individual commercial ratepayers would be impacted by this change.

Discussion ensued regarding the details of this proposal, with Mr. Lukis answering questions.

No motion was made since this topic was not listed as such on this meeting's agenda.

As an action item, Mr. Lukis will run a financial analysis and compare to a similar community. This will be added as an agenda item for the next meeting.

Update and Potential Action on Communications Position

Mr. Lukis informed he has changed and retitled the position description in order to justify additional salary and to alleviate the need to hire contractors. Incorporating a communication aspect involves the employee being pro-active by adding website pages and managing social media, with prospects requiring a higher level of education and experience. Mr. Lukis requests the Board's salary approval to move forward with filling this position.

A motion was made by Mr. Merithew to authorize the Executive Director to create a Communications Coordinator position and to advertise for hiring at a salary to be determined. The motion was seconded by Mr. Lexander. A roll-call vote was taken.

Messrs. Fox, Lexander, Kara, Healy, Merithew, and Yessaillian all voted Aye.

Motion passes unanimously.

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Old/New Business*

Mr. Fox initiated the topic of Mr. Lukis receiving a post-signing bonus or salary increase. It was determined a review process would be completed.

In response to Mr. Merithew asking if the Operations budget is available on the dashboard, Mr. Lukis directed him on where to find the budget.

Mr. Fox suggested notifying customers of the projected rate change via newspapers, with Mr. Lukis mentioning additional avenues.

It was determined the next meeting date is June 7, with the following June 21.

Executive SessionCollective Bargaining Agreement Negotiation Strategy

No Executive Session was held. The next negotiation meeting will be June 1.

A motion was made by Mr. Healy to adjourn the meeting, and Mr. Lexander seconded it. A roll-call vote was taken.

Messrs. Fox, Lexander, Kara, Healy, Merithew, and Yessaillian all voted Aye.

Motion passes unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:41pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Kathy Travers Reynolds
Recording Secretary

DOCUMENTS

- 04262022 Regular Session Minutes.doc
- 05052022 Regular Session Minutes.doc