



DEDHAM-WESTWOOD WATER DISTRICT
General Business Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, July 12, 2022 | 6:30 PM
Via Zoom Virtual Platform

Announcement of the Audio and/or Video Recording

The Vice-Chair, Robert Lexander, called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. and announced the meeting would be audio- and/or video-recorded.

Attendance

Robert Lexander, Vice-Chair
Andrew Kara, Clerk
Eric Merithew, Member
Gary Yessaillian, Member

Blake Lukis, Executive Director
Bob Marsh, Business Manager
Pauline Donoghue, Treasurer
Steve Locke, Operations Manager

Absent

James Fox, Chair
John Healy, Member

Roll-Call Attendance

Messrs. Lexander, Kara, Merithew, and Yessaillian, Present; Messrs. Fox and Healy, Absent.
Mr. Lexander confirmed a quorum present.

Approval of Minutes of June 21, 2022 and June 30, 2022

Mr. Lexander called for a motion to approve the meeting minutes for June 21, 2022 and June 30, 2022. A motion was made by Mr. Kara to approve the minutes, as reviewed, for June 21, 2022 and June 30, 2022. The motion was seconded by Mr. Merithew. With no discussion necessary, a roll-call vote was taken.

Roll-Call: Messrs. Lexander, Kara, Merithew, and Yessaillian all voted Aye.
Motion passes unanimously.

Financials and Warrant

Warrant

For the Board's review and approval, Ms. Donoghue presented Warrants 45-49 for June 21 to July 7 activity, calling attention to Warrant 49 which includes the annual principal and interest for the Massachusetts Clean Water Trust bond.

Treasurer's Report

Ms. Donoghue highlighted:

- Unreconciled cash balances at June 30 are down from May, with June including the retirement payment.
- Cash has been reconciled to May 31.
- Monthly summary of reconciled cash and disbursements is current through May 31.

- Monthly summary of reconciled cash and distribution for prior year.

Ms. Donoghue informed that after the treasurer's report was released, Dedham Savings Bank notified that the savings account rate basis points would be increased to 125 as of July. Additionally, the Bank of Canton and other institutions are being reviewed for Treasuries purchases.

Business Manager Report

Business Operating Reports

Mr. Marsh reported the June financial results are being compiled, with ten-year plans being formulated internally. Technology and furniture outfitting of the Board room and the two new-employee cubicles is nearly complete.

Mr. Merithew asked if the Communication and two Customer Service new hires have committed. Mr. Marsh responded the current employee was unable to commit to a date, but that the offers to the Customer Service Representative and the Communication Coordinator have been accepted.

Operations Manager Report

Pumping and Operational Report

Mr. Locke stated pumpage increased this past week because flushing had ended a few weeks ago.

Update on New & Existing Projects

Main and Service Breaks Report – There were no leaks, and all leak repairs from the leak-detection report are complete. Only five hydrant leaks remain. All was completed with little Pacella assistance. The Customer Service Department ran 359 backflow tests in June, with backflow compliance confirmed for 36 meters; workflow timing was not affected by employee vacations.

Viper Radios – The radios have been installed and the bugs worked out.

Mr. Locke listed some individual chemical cost increases, which affect long-range planning. The Board discussed the bid process.

Mr. Locke reported June TTHM's look good, feeling optimistic for July compliance samples. After stating TTHM reduction bids are being received, he listed reduction goals.

Regarding the 2011 dump truck mechanical and bed concerns, Mr. Locke stated the quoted repair costs; and the Board discussed details of the issue. Mr. Locke confirmed he will keep the Board informed of the options evaluation.

Executive Director Report

Contracts Executed by Executive Director

Mr. Lukis reported no new contracts have been executed.

June PFAS Results

Mr. Lukis informed that two graphs were posted to Basecamp to detail the to-June PFAS sampling results trend. Stating Well 5 yielding has increased and PFAS levels are reduced, he voiced concern of eliminating its usage if river flows are not increased, with the next sampling scheduled for August. Discussion was held regarding the possible resulting MWRA usage.

Non-Union Vacation Policy

Mr. Lukis reminded the Board of a memo he circulated yesterday regarding non-union vacation policy changes based on the union contract. Based on his discussion with the human resources consulting firm, the current trend is to offer three weeks' vacation for incoming non-union staff. Mr. Lukis proposes three weeks' vacation time given to new employees, increased to four weeks after 5 years of employment and five weeks at 15 years of employment, eliminating the six-weeks-of-vacation level. With the memo sent just yesterday, Mr. Lukis requests Board consideration for next-meeting discussion.

Mr. Lukis informed of the preparation to implement a mandatory water ban, consisting of two days a week for each community, based on the Office of Environmental & Energy reporting that the southeast region is in a Stage 2 drought, and may extend further. The Neponset River reduced flows result in Well 5 close to shutting down, per the Water Management Act permit and the Interbasin Transfer Act approval for use of the well. If the well is shut down, mandatory water restrictions would be implemented.

Mr. Lukis relayed that no extensions have been passed for the open meeting law for full-remote participation. Based on this, the Board should plan to meet in-person for the August 9 meeting, where a quorum would be needed of two Members from each Community plus the Chairman; Mr. Lukis recommended remote public access. Mr. Lukis added that the in-person meeting would allow the Board to view the technology updates and new furniture in the Board room.

Mr. Lukis reminded the Board he will be taking two weeks' vacation at the end of the month.

Old/New Business*

Mr. Yessaillian commended Mr. Lukis on his excellent job performance, documented as the Board transitioning from reactive to proactive in all areas, including union negotiations. Mr. Alexander added his similar thoughts. Appropriate compensation for Mr. Lukis will be discussed.

Mr. Yessaillian added, with Mr. Alexander agreeing, that a more casual meeting attire is acceptable for the Board staff, as demeanor and work output are professional.

Mr. Lexander requested a motion for meeting adjournment. A motion was made by Mr. Yessaillian to adjourn the meeting, and Mr. Merithew seconded it. A roll-call vote was taken. Roll-Call: Messrs. Lexander, Kara, Merithew, and Yessaillian all voted Aye. Motion passes unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:01pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Kathy Travers Reynolds
Recording Secretary