



**DEDHAM-WESTWOOD WATER DISTRICT**  
**General Business Meeting Minutes**  
**Tuesday, November 22, 2022 | 6:30 PM**

**Hybrid Meeting**  
**In-Person Attendance at 50 Elm Street in Dedham, MA 02026**

**Announcement of the Audio and/or Video Recording**

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

**Attendance**

Robert Lexander, Vice-Chair

Andrew Kara, Clerk

Eric Merithew, Member

Gary Yessaillian, Member (remote)

John Healy, Member

Blake Lukis, Executive Director

Bob Marsh, Business Manager

Pauline Donoghue, Treasurer

Steve Locke, Operations Manager

**Absent**

James Fox, Chair

**Roll-Call Attendance**

Messrs. Lexander, Kara, Merithew, Yessaillian, and Healy Present.

Mr. Lexander confirmed a quorum present.

**Approval of Minutes of November 1, 2022**

Mr. Lexander called for a motion to approve the meeting minutes for November 1, 2022. A motion was made by Mr. Kara to approve the minutes as reviewed for November 1, 2022; the motion was seconded by Mr. Merithew. With no additional discussion necessary, a roll-call vote was taken.

Roll-Call: Messrs. Lexander, Kara, Merithew, and Yessaillian voted Aye; Mr. Healy abstained.

Motion passes.

**Review and Action on Fiscal Year 2023 Operating Budget –**

Review 2023 Operating Budget as reviewed and modified by the Operating Budget Subcommittee in their public meeting held on November 1, 2022 and recommended to be brought forward to full Board of Water Commissioners for action.

Mr. Lukis shared his screen, displaying the Operating Budget Assumptions. Mr. Marsh confirmed this was presented to the Operating Board Subcommittee with a 5% rate increase suggested by Chair James Fox. Mr. Marsh stated a balance with a surplus at the revenue line was the yearly tier impact, requiring extra review to balance. Mr. Marsh reviewed all line

entries, including the two-year-average billed water, the cellular agreement, investment income, the union-settled 3%-increase labor budget, office and bonus plan budgets each increased 3%, the insurance cost estimate, the average-based MWRA purchase, and amortized pension. Stating expenses will increase by an estimated 4%, Mr. Marsh attributes the greatest increase to electrical cost. The deposit & amortization is based on projects out. The budget forecast details profit & loss asset management, depreciation, and capital expenditures for late-in-year borrowing. Mr. Marsh relayed that the cash balance at 9/30/2022 is projected to year-end 2023.

Mr. Kara remarked on the statement of the budget being balanced for the first time in five years. Mr. Healy commented on the workers compensation insurance expense amount being a validation of supervisors' focus on safety. Mr. Lukis answered additional questions related to gas usage, water purchase, and Board voting.

### **Review and Action on Fiscal Year 2023 Capital Budget –**

2023 Capital budget as reviewed and modified by Capital Budget Subcommittee in their public meetings held on October 27, 2022 and November 10, 2022 and recommended to be brought forward to full Board of Water Commissioners for action.

Mr. Lukis advised that the Capital Budget inflation & delays relates to 2022 projects, and 2023's budget increase is due to the water main project being more expensive than budgeted in 2022 and the Brookfield & Beacon project coming in higher than projected, with pipe purchase out to bid. The PFAS budget is up significantly; pilot tests for design are planned, and future construction costs will be for plants' treatment systems.

The proposed Capital Budget is broken down by 2022 Budget, 2022 Forecast, and 2023. Mr. Lukis detailed the line items of routine capital items, water source & supply, water treatment & quality, and miscellaneous special projects; and welcomed discussion. Added to the \$7M 2023 Capital Budget request is the \$2M 2022-approved and carried forward to be paid in cash. Mr. Lukis notified of a change to capital budgets paid for with depreciation rolled to Capital and excess revenue over retained earnings, with all else bonded. Mr. Lukis explained that when the increased rate is brought forward in January 2023, the revised long-term plan – five-year and ten-year Capital program – will show online treatment plan affects with operating expense.

Mr. Lukis voiced his intent to present the approved budget to the Select Boards, acknowledging the driving forces as well as current and future regulations.

Mr. Lexander requested a motion to approve the proposed 2023 budget. A motion was made by Mr. Healy to approve the proposed Fiscal Year 2023 Operating, Maintenance, and Debt Services Budget in the amount of \$11,628,153. The motion was seconded by Mr. Kara. With no additional discussion necessary, a roll-call vote was taken.

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

Mr. Lexander requested a motion to approve the additional proposed 2023 budget. A motion was made by Mr. Merithew to approve the proposed Fiscal Year 2023 Capital Budget in the amount of \$7,044,400. The motion was seconded by Mr. Healy. With no additional discussion necessary, a roll-call vote was taken.

Roll-Call: Messrs. Lexander, Kara, Merithew, Yessaillian, and Healy voted Aye.

Motion passes unanimously.

## **Financials and Warrant**

### Warrant

Ms. Donoghue presented approved Warrants 80-84 for October 31 to November 17 activity.

### Treasurer's Report

Ms. Donoghue highlighted:

- Unreconciled cash balance at October 31, increased from September.
- Reconciled cash balance at September.
- Monthly summary of reconciled cash and disbursements through October 31.
- Monthly summary of reconciled cash and disbursements for prior year 2021.

Ms. Donoghue notified that the purchased-water bond with interest payment is scheduled.

## **Operations Manager Report**

### Pumping and Operational Report

Mr. Locke informed that pumpage did not reduce for the first time in eight weeks. With the High Rock booster station pumping 28 gallons a minute even through the night, the issue will be looked into.

### Main and Service Break Report

Mr. Locke reported that three one-inch service breaks were found, two in Westwood and one in Dedham; one was hit by a contractor, and the others were copper lines on the customer side.

### Update on New & Existing Projects

Mr. Locke reported:

The Beverly and Hillcrest water mains have been installed and services transferred over. Residents report being pleased with the increased volume. The change order is completed for paving next year.

The insurance claim payment for the damaged generator was \$8,278.

Well Rehabilitation Project – University Avenue Well 4 is online

The Veterans Road water main bid closes November 30. Details of the project were discussed.

The Brookfield & Beacon piping bid is due November 29.

### **Executive Director Report**

#### Contracts Executed by Executive Director

No contracts were signed since the last meeting.

Reminding the Board that the Capital Budget security upgrades project went out to bid three times, resulting in the bids received well over budget, Mr. Lukis informed that materials and installation methods were changed to reduce the cost of the contract but that the result is still higher than anticipated. The project will be brought back to the Board for approval.

Having previously updated the Board on the lien process, Mr. Lukis reported the November 17 lien list supplied by Customer Service is greatly reduced, the remaining mostly Dedham residential. Westwood payment was received, and payment is anticipated from Dedham.

Mr. Lukis confirmed that the SL Environmental agreement is fully executed and that the complaint will be available for review at the next meeting. Closed sessions will be planned for future meeting agendas.

#### **Old/New Business\***

Mr. Healy relayed his experience with having an engineer on staff, mentioning money saved and staff training assistance. Acknowledging this was brought up at the last meeting, Mr. Lukis suggested a cost-benefit analysis performed, and confirmed the employee would not design and bid District projects but would be useful for project upgrading. Discussion regarding aspects of this staff position were discussed. Mr. Lexander suggested the Board review at a future meeting and look at timing of studies.

The next meetings will be held December 6 and 20.

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

Roll-Call: Messrs. Lexander, Kara, Merithew, Yessaillian, and Healy all voted Aye.

Motion passes unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:37p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Kathy Travers Reynolds  
Recording Secretary