



**DEDHAM-WESTWOOD WATER DISTRICT**  
**General Business Meeting Minutes**  
**Tuesday, February 7, 2023 | 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 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, Chair

Gary Yessaillian, Vice-Chair (remote)

Eric Merithew, Clerk

Mark Phillips, Member

Blake Lukis, Executive Director

Bob Marsh, Business Manager

Pauline Donoghue, Treasurer

Steve Locke, Operations Manager

**Absence**

James Fox, Member

John Healy, Member

**Also in Attendance**

Weston & Sampson – Michael Warner, P.E. – Team Leader

Allie Goldberg, P.E. – Senior Project Engineer

Sara Francis, EIT – Engineer 2

Jacob Ducharme, P.E. – Senior Project Engineer

**Roll-Call Attendance**

Messrs. Lexander, Yessaillian, Merithew, and Phillips Present.

Mr. Lexander confirmed a quorum present.

**Approval of Minutes of January 10, 2023**

Mr. Lexander called for a motion to approve the meeting minutes for January 10, 2023. A motion was made by Mr. Merithew to approve the minutes as reviewed for January 10, 2023; the motion was seconded by Mr. Phillips. With no additional discussion necessary, a roll-call vote was taken.

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

Motion passes unanimously.

**Presentation of Treatment Alternatives Report**

Presentation from Weston & Sampson on the final report for Treatment Alternatives for Sodium, PFAS, and TTHM Reduction

After the presentation, some discussion was held regarding.

Thanks were given, and the Weston & Sampson representatives exited the meeting.

## **Financials and Warrant**

### Warrant

Ms. Donoghue presented Warrants 3-8, for January 10-30 activity.

Mr. Merithew questioned if there was another 5/8-meters bill. Mr. Lukis answered that he had reviewed the invoices and gave explanation regarding orders placed.

### Treasurer's Report

Ms. Donoghue highlighted:

- Unreconciled cash balance at January 31, increased from December. Dedham Savings Bank increased the business account interest rate to 3%, effective January 5.
- Reconciled cash balance as of December 31.
- Monthly summary of reconciled cash and disbursements year-end December 31, 2022.
- Monthly summary of reconciled cash and disbursements for prior year 2021.

Ms. Donoghue reported the cash balance at the end of December increased from the beginning, attributed reduced construction costs, benefitting from the tier program, and interest income. The plan is to purchase additional T-bills at approximately 4% interest. Discussion was held regarding interest rates.

Ms. Donoghue reminded that approval was not received from some Commissioners.

Discussion regarding 5/8-meters was held.

Ms. Donoghue reported a check for 2021 liens was received from Dedham.

## **Business Manager Report**

### Business Operating Reports

Mr. Marsh informed that the audit is being prepared, the first draft available for the Board in approximately ten days, with timing consistent with past timeframes. Other items are also progressing, including budgets, reporting setups, operating information, and programs such as the approaching benefits renewal as well as HR and IT programs. Mr. Marsh will have reports to apprise the Board.

## **Operations Manager Report**

### Pumping and Operational Report

Mr. Locke informed that pumpage for the last three weeks was approximately 3.6 million gallons a day until Monday, which was 3.781 million a day, and Sunday, at 4.179 million gallons per day. A 1” service line leak was found today and is being repaired. The anticipated large leak is still being sought. Discussion took place regarding leakage, temperature fluctuation, and tank filling.

Mr. Locke reported a comprehensive leak detection study was put to bid, and three were received via email. With bid results expected Friday, the award will be made.

Discussion took place regarding bid term, pricing, bid frequency, contractor & subcontractor history, the DWWD being a tight system, and meter calibration, evaluation, and installation. Mr. Lukis explained that the DWWD reads for the MWRA usage are used on the production reports but that Accounting uses the MWRA monthly reports.

Mr. Locke stated two (2) 1” service line leaks were found since the last Board meeting, and 13 fire and residential service frozen-pipe calls were received last weekend.

### Update on New & Existing Projects

#### Security Project

Mr. Locke reported that the White Lodge and Bridge Street office wiring is progressing, adding that Verizon is bringing a fiber line to White Lodge to upgrade connectivity within a month, after an under-highway line was losing connectivity.

#### Review of information around Eversource Subcontractor and illegal use of hydrant near Weatherbee Avenue from April 18, 2018

Mr. Locke forwarded a letter regarding 271 Weatherbee Drive, referencing a report done five years ago. Mr. Lukis reported there were two service breaks in the past six months, but that service is up and running. Mr. Yessaillian asked a question regarding the on-street hazard during repair, and Messrs. Lukis and Locke confirmed they would review.

## **Executive Director Report**

### Contracts Executed by Executive Director

No new contracts were executed.

### Action on Cellular Antennae Lease

Mr. Lukis referred to a lease agreement with New Cingular Wireless from an RFP out last summer, netting one response, from AT&T. Attorneys have reviewed the five-year lease with extensions including percentage escalators. A discussion was held regarding the plan.

Mr. Merithew motioned that the Dedham-Westwood Water Commissioners vote to enter into a Lease Agreement with New Cingular Wireless PCS, LLC of Delaware for a telecommunication antennae and related equipment to be located on Fox Hill Tank #1 and adjacent ground space. The initial term of the lease will be for five (5) years, with the ability to extend the agreement up to three (3) additional five(5)-year terms, for a total of 20 years. The first annual lease payment will be in the amount of \$33,225 for the first year with a 3% annual escalator. Further, that the Executive Director be authorized to execute the lease agreement. The motion was seconded by Mr. Phillips.

Mr. Yessaillian asked a question regarding other lease agreements and for clarification of this agreement; Mr. Lukis answered regarding other carriers' terms and the proposed agreement details. With no additional discussion necessary, a roll-call vote was taken. Roll-Call: Messrs. Lexander, Yessaillian, Merithew, and Phillips voted Aye. Motion passes unanimously.

#### Action on 2022 Bonus Allocation

Mr. Lukis reported that the annual non-union performance evaluation system is nearly finalized. The finalized memo will be on BaseCamp. He has received comments that employees are pleased with the system. Based on feedback from last year's discussion around bonuses, this year the recommendations is based on percentages of pay. He took the average of the past two years for management and non-management for consideration, 3.5% and 2.5%, respectively. Mr. Lexander feels this is a reward for work done to let the crew know their hard work is appreciated. Mr. Merithew asked about the budget, and Mr. Lukis stated this allocation falls below budget.

Mr. Merithew made a motion to approve the Year 2022 bonus allocation as outlined in the February 7, 2023 recommendation. Mr. Phillips seconded the motion. With no additional discussion necessary, a roll-call vote was taken. Roll-Call: Messrs. Lexander, Yessaillian, Merithew, and Phillips voted Aye. Motion passes unanimously.

Mr. Lukis stated that with the new performance evaluation process and the bonus allocations being percentage based, next year he will be putting forward a request to perform all the evaluations and bonuses as a management team with the Board approving the process in advance. Mr. Phillips asked if licenses are required, and Mr. Lukis informed of which positions require licenses.

#### Update on January PFAS and TTHM Sampling

Mr. Lukis displayed the PFAS sampling chart, stating the three-year period is approaching, so consecutive data may reveal trends. Messrs. Merithew and Phillips asked questions regarding well production and PFAS levels, which Mr. Lukis answered. Discussion was held regarding history, Neponset River limits, water management permits, well drilling, and the DEP.

Mr. Lukis informed that he had attended a seminar in January and learnt that the PFAS draft would be in March and the finalized in October. Once regulations are finalized, it will be in effect in at least three years and may be extended up to two more years, to have treatment in place for new the regulation's compliance.

Mr. Lukis spoke with a DEP employee who reviews pilot testing applications. It is hoped that the notifications will be out by February 17, but additional applications are being received and if they are from systems currently out of compliance they will jump ahead of our applications. Discussion regarding resolution data and testing was held.

With Far Reach Road having a TTHM sampling of 88.2, Mr. Lukis used an average to show in-compliance but stated using the DEP formula for OEL shows that if we get the same level in the next quarterly sample we will be in non-compliance at that location. Discussion ensued regarding samples taken and service size, age, & locations.

Mr. Lukis informed that a DEP OEL report would be filed to be in-compliance. Samples will be taken in February and two to three weeks later, as we make adjustments to determine if further action is required. Mr. Locke stated auto-flushing will also occur, and discussion was held regarding flushing in general.

#### Update on Transition to BaseCamp 4

With BaseCamp 4 upgrade becoming available, Mr. Lukis stated transition will take place. Version 3 is active now, and uploads will be made to both during transitioning. One aspect of BaseCamp 4 is the ability to view documents on mobile devices.

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

Mr. Lexander asked about an architect on the garage project. Mr. Lukis stated he is in receipt of a preliminary quote and is inquiring with two more firms. This project may fall under the States Designer Selection Law because it is vertical construction and the design and construction meet the thresholds. Under this law, proposals are sought from architectural firms and must be awarded based on qualifications rather than price. Mr. Lukis explained the review stipulations and that a cap may be placed. After a discussion regarding prior-used architects, Mr. Lukis confirmed he will investigate the law's details.

#### **Next Meeting Dates**

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

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

Motion passes unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:23p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Kathy Travers Reynolds  
Recording Secretary