



DEDHAM-WESTWOOD WATER DISTRICT General Business Meeting

Hybrid Meeting

In person attendance: 50 Elm Street, Dedham, MA 02026

Monday, October 23, 2023 | 6:30 PM

Announcement of the Audio and/or Video Recording

The Chair, Robert Lexander, called the meeting to order at 6:32p.m. and announced the meeting would be audio- and video-recorded.

Robert Lexander, Chair

Gary Yessaillian, Vice-Chair (remote)

Eric Merithew, Clerk (remote)

John Healy, Member (remote)

Mark Phillips, Member (remote)

Louis Kustwan, Member (remote)

Blake Lukis, Executive Director

Pauline Donoghue, Treasurer

Steve Locke, Operations Manager

Also Present

Representatives of Aquarian Water Company -

Adan Simonsen - Director of Business Development

John Walsh - Vice President of Operations (MA & NH), Water Quality, & Environmental Management

Roll-Call Attendance

Messrs. Lexander, Merithew, Healy, Phillips, and Kustwan Present.

Mr. Lexander confirmed a quorum present.

Public Participation

Mr. Lexander welcomed the public attendees; Mr. Lukis requested the attendees raise their hands if interested in speaking.

Mr. Richard Irving introduced himself as from 235 Common Street in Dedham and referred to the 2022 CIP report for Westwood regarding increased contamination and excessive sodium due in part to development, asking what legislation of tools are available to leverage to ensure a better future for Bridge Street in Dedham. Mr. Lexander ensured that the District is working with the State on sodium levels at Route 95, having done a sodium study years ago, and spoke with State Representatives. He further informed that other means are used, including MWRA water to reduce sodium, which has been being addressed since 1997-98. Mr. Lukis confirmed Bridge Street has no contamination concerns besides PFAS; Westwood has increased levels because of Route 95. Mr. Irving informed that he lives near the Charles River and the Bridge Street wells, and the CIP report mentions development in the University Avenue area. He is concerned with the past PFAS and TTHM incident and with the effect of salt and chemicals, wanting to ensure the Charles River and aquifer remain healthy in an environmentally correct

way, beginning now rather than when contaminated. Mr. Lukis stated the Aquifer Protection Overlay District has been secured in both communities, confirming the increased sodium levels are a direct correlation to Route 95, since University Avenue areas do not use sodium; and that Route 95's salt reduction is a matter of public safety. Mr. Irving feels it would be helpful to expand the APOD to ensure the Bridge Street well is not subject to salt with large-scale development.

Mr. Lexander requested Mr. Irving make an appointment with Mr. Lukis for a meeting to focus on this one issue. Mr. Irving offered his appreciation for the time and attention, and the job done; Mr. Lexander relayed his appreciation for Mr. Irving's time.

Approval of Minutes of October 3, 2023

Mr. Lexander called for a motion to approve the meeting minutes of October 3, 2023. A motion was made by Mr. Kustwan to approve the minutes as reviewed for October 3, 2023; the motion was seconded by Mr. Merithew. With no additional discussion necessary, a roll-call vote was taken.

Roll-Call: Messrs. Lexander, Merithew, Phillips, and Kustwan voted Aye; Mr. Healy abstained. Motion passed.

Aquarion Water Co. of Dover, MA

- Discussion with Aquarion water of Dover on potential of interconnection

From Aquarion Water Company, Mr. Adan Simonsen - Director of Business Development - introduced himself and Mr. John Walsh - Vice President of Operations (MA & NH), Water Quality, & Environmental Management - and shared his presentation slides. He explained this meeting is for introduction only, brought to the Commission for possible options for the Dover system. He provided background on Aquarion Water Company, explaining the Dover system was acquired two years ago and serves almost 700 customers with four active well fields. Options are being reviewed for water quality cost-effectiveness.

Mr. Walsh further described the well field area, usage, and contamination issues; keeping one well field in service, discussion regarding interconnection is sought. Mr. Lexander asked a question regarding the well field service, and Mr. Walsh answered regarding pumpage and potential pumpage. Mr. Walsh answered Mr. Lexander's question, stating the well field is within a neighborhood, adding that the Company is not sure of the quality change for long-term summer and winter full-demand service. Regarding well depth, Mr. Walsh informed Mr. Lexander that the well is 40-50 feet deep, with another well needed for both summer and winter needs because of the quality change when pumpage increases; Mr. Simonsen confirmed multiple sources are needed.

Understanding that the DWWD is in the early stages of the Burgess Avenue pump station planning and with Aquarion pressure zone mains at a distance, Mr. Walsh stated Aquarion would contribute to PVR and vault installation. Mr. Lexander shared details of the Burgess Avenue pumping station. Mr. Walsh mentioned hydrants, and Mr. Simonsen relayed that the cost of

interconnection is preferable to manganese treatment. Mr. Lexander confirmed this proposal will be reviewed.

Mr. Healy asked if Hartford Street in Dover properties all have wells; Mr. Walsh informed that there is a mix of private water even where mains are available. Mr. Merithew asked if the proposal is for water purchase only, without support; Mr. Lukis confirmed support is not being offered, that the installation of the water main in Westwood would be at Aquarion's expense to then transition to the District through the meter at the town line, with Aquarion responsible for the meter and infrastructure; Mr. Walsh confirmed this layout, with the DWWD having to decide how to read the meter.

Mr. Phillips asked about the conversations Aquarion had with neighboring Medfield and Walpole; Mr. Walsh confirmed Aquarion spoke with Medfield a year ago regarding a temporary interconnection for additional flow, not pursued because the process would take a fair amount of time and effort. Mr. Simonsen noted the advantage of the DWWD tied to the MWRA; they envision a wholesale water contract for covering marginal cost, plus incentive. Mr. Locke asked if fire pumps would be required; Mr. Walsh confirmed fire pumps and a new line would be wanted. Mr. Locke informed that the District is in the process of finding a new location and described the current plan. Mr. Lukis spoke about placing information regarding the current location, and that a hydraulic analysis would be needed, resulting in a design change. Working with Weston & Sampson was discussed.

Mr. Lukis said it must be determined if working with Aquarion makes sense for the District, requiring analysis, site study, and then contract; Mr. Simonsen stated this is a reasonable approach. Mr. Phillips asked how the study cost would be paid for; Mr. Lukis stated the DWWD would pay for the study if in-scope and that Aquarion would cover if additional scope. Mr. Locke asked about chlorine being included; Mr. Lexander answered that chlorine would be included at a point. For the Aquarion representatives, Mr. Locke detailed the chlorine concern. Some discussion was held regarding details of usage. Mr. Lukis said next steps would be discussions and then to votes. Mr. Lexander relayed that he would not be opposed to the proposal.

Messrs. Simonsen and Walsh thanked the Committee as they exited the meeting.

Mr. Yessaillian joined the meeting.

Financials and Warrant

Treasurer's Report

Ms. Donoghue presented Warrants 68-73, for October 2-19 activity, adding that the RNS Corporation invoice for the Brookfield and Beacon project was included.

Ms. Donoghue highlighted:

- Unreconciled cash balance at September 30th, increased from August.

- Reconciled cash balance as of August 31st.
- Monthly summary of reconciled cash and disbursements through December 31, 2023.
- Monthly summary of reconciled cash and disbursements for prior year 2022.

Ms. Donoghue noted that a large cash balance exists because Capital projects are still in-process. She also informed that an account has been opened with South Shore Savings Bank for an eventual dual system.

Mr. Merithew asked of usage versus actual billed amount for MWRA water usage; Mr. Lukis answered that usage is per calendar year, so the District currently paying 2022 usage which began in July 2023 and will be paid for ten months. Mr. Merithew asked if a lag is seen for significant water usage; Mr. Lukis confirmed that is correct. Mr. Marsh further explained that each month's usage accrues on the balance sheet, a year in arrears; Ms. Donoghue added that this year is larger payments.

Business Manager Report

Action on Privacy Policy

Mr. Marsh, with Town counsel, recommends the Board review the Privacy Policy approved in 2017, currently unchanged, to be updated annually. He informed of the history for before and after the audit for preparation of website posting; new-employee training will be implemented.

Mr. Lexander requested a motion to accept the online privacy policy. When asked, Mr. Marsh reiterated that the only change is the date. Mr. Merithew motioned to accept the online privacy policy; Mr. Healy seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Roll-Call: Messrs. Lexander, Merithew, Phillips, and Kustwan voted Aye; Mr. Healy abstained. Motion passed.

Review of Long-Range Plan

Mr. Lukis shared his screen, and Mr. Marsh outlined the two long-range plan scenario payment options, the result of summarizing much data. Yearly expectations are planned as budget and forecast out to 2028 based on assets, anticipated borrowing, and increasing money in the bank. Mr. Marsh also highlighted labor contracts, benefits, MWRA, borrowing interest, rates (5% this year, 6% needed next year, planned to 2028 for a 10-year-period big bubble), and capital assets (projected spending listed with large projects including PFAS treatment, resulting in rates and borrowing increased).

Mr. Yessaillian asked if the possibility of cash infusion has been considered in these scenarios; Mr. Lukis answered that this model does not include cash possibilities but that an application for zero-percent interest on a project may be made to the State. Mr. Lexander mentioned the media replacement cost for PFAS removal upgrades.

Mr. Marsh listed planned project costs, causing spikes and rate increases. The determined recommendation is utilizing an alternate funding source where rates can flatten the bell curve.

The revenue-based debt fee would be a separate fixed-rate customer bill for specific projects' principal and interest recovery. Mr. Lukis added that this scenario is similar to how Dedham, Westwood, and other communities deal with debt overrides rather than raising general rates; rather, a separate fee until the debt is gone. This is seen as a way to potentially flatten rates. A rate-study group as a sub-committee of the Board is recommended.

Mr. Lexander responded with his approval of the fee broken out rather than rates increased. Mr. Marsh further described the scenario aspects. Discussion was held regarding the positives of the scenarios and transparency. Mr. Merithew asked if the calculations include split-rates; Mr. Marsh confirmed the calculations are consistent. Mr. Merithew asked of the possibility to shift burden to commercial customers rather than on residents; Mr. Lukis confirmed that is the intent, for the rate sub-committee to review with information from other communities and public outreach, to determine how to structure rates and pay for debt.

Mr. Lukis voiced the intent to keep the end-of-year cash balance increasing. The target had been \$5 million (was 50%); but the cash balance must increase as the budget grows, including the cash stabilization fund.

Operations Manager Report

Mr. Locke reported:

Pumping and Operational Report

- Pumpage – Three pumpage have been run since the last meeting:
 - October 8th – 4.335 million gallons per day
MWRA average daily usage was 1.48 million gallons
 - October 15th – 4.132 million gallons per day, decreased ~200 gallons per day
MWRA average daily usage was 0.854 million gallons.
 - October 22nd – 3.896 million gallons per day
MWRA average daily usage was .523 million gallons.
- Main & Service Lines
 - Brookfield & Beacon – Contractor hit a temporary main
 - October 6th at 3pm, a motorist hit a hydrant, causing an 8-foot longitudinal break for a water-hammer effect of second and third 8-foot longitudinal breaks and a ¾-inch service line break. Crews worked 36 hours. Customer Service staff manned the office until 7pm. All areas were repaired. Unitec was hired to garner the motorist's police record and to work with their insurance carrier for subrogation. The cost of materials and labor for this incident totaled \$100K.

Mr. Yessaillian asked if any residences were impacted; Mr. Lukis answered that one whole-house infiltration system and one meter were affected.

Mr. Lexander voiced that the cast iron pipe breaks may have occurred because of weakened seems. Discussion was held regarding age of pipes and towns paving schedules.

- October 9th, a 12-inch circular break

Update on New & Existing Projects

- Bridge Street Security Fencing
Complete fencing – Gates will be installed this week
- Brookfield/Beacon/Washington Street Water Main Replacement
 - Water main installed, except tie-in on Washington Street;
 - Completed on Beacon;
 - Brookfield is almost halfway complete.Totals 1,400 feet
Culverts must be worked around this week.
- PFAS Pilot Study
A meeting will be held this week.
 - Preliminary data suggests the ionic stain filters are outperforming GAC;
 - TOC is being removed but breaking through the filter meter at a faster rate than PFAS;
 - PFAS sample collection will be changed.
- Route 128 Crossing Easement
Meetings took place with both Westwood and Dedham conservation committees regarding the transmission main.
 - Negative determination of applicability;
 - No notice of intent to conduct work;
 - Allowed exemption for repair/replacement without the NOI process;
 - Required 100-foot buffer zone in resource area.A meeting with Westwood is planned to confirm location options.
- White Lodge Treatment Plant Filter Meter Replacement
The bid invitation will open October 24 at 1pm.

Mr. Lukis informed that four filters will be replaced, this being the first total bid project completed inhouse by part-time engineer Ashley Dunn. Mr. Lukis offered kudos to the Board for understanding the benefits, already being seen, of bringing an engineer onboard.

Mr. Lexander asked about the cost of constructing the bid; Mr. Lukis answered the complete cost was \$30-40K.

Discussion on Brookfield & Beacon Updated Communication Plan

Mr. Locke commented on the tight quarters for the communication plan. Communications Coordinator Allyssa Jewell updated residents and received their feedback. Going forward, pre-construction neighborhood meetings will be implemented. A call log will be maintained for tracking and addressing. For upcoming water main installation bids, weekly or bi-weekly contractor will be held.

Mr. Yessaillian asked of the project completion percentage; Mr. Locke answered that the project is 60-70% complete after 3-4 weeks, with more known after this week.

Mr. Lexander voiced his appreciation of the staff's hard work over the holiday weekend.

Executive Director Report

Contracts Signed by Executive Director

No contracts were signed by the Executive Director since the last Commission meeting.

Review of Schematics for Vehicle Storage Facility

Mr. Lukis shared his screen to display the schematics of the planned 50 Elm Street vehicle storage facility. The staff has narrowed the design options to two, which are more residential and cost-effective. The facility location will be on the wooded parcel behind the current facility.

Details include:

- Heat and electric only
- 4K square feet to fit tandem vehicles
- No finalized colors

First Option – Barn-style – Displayed the façade, roofline, windows, 14-foot doors, mezzanine

Mr. Lukis confirmed for Mr. Yessaillian that the Team does like this option.

Mr. Lexander asked if solar is planned; Mr. Lukis informed that the roof is structurally designed to hold solar panels.

Second Option – Team favorite - Roof mirrors current building

Mr. Yessaillian commented on canopies being over only two doors; Mr. Lukis will address.

Mr. Merithew asked if the building height is similar to the neighbors'; Mr. Lukis confirmed it is.

Mr. Lukis recommends Option 2, and will show a full rendering with all features and neighboring house angles. A neighborhood meeting will be held before construction. Vertical tongue and groove, as seen on houses and garages, will be used. The schematic displays the interior height and storage.

Mr. Lukis confirmed for Mr. Merithew that the lot has no street frontage. A retaining wall will be required, and some natural foliage will be kept. If requested by neighbors, screening or fencing will be added.

Mr. Lukis will inform the Board when the neighborhood meeting is scheduled; if three Members attend, it will be posted as a public meeting.

TTHM Update

Mr. Lukis shared his screen with the results of the fourth quarter compliance samplings, stating all readings were good after the staff worked through water-quality issues. He detailed the operational changes made, with many departments involved. Monthly sampling will continue to reduce numbers.

Mr. Healy voiced his appreciation of the monthly proactiveness to invest in the safety of water and its quality; Mr. Kustwan concurred. Mr. Phillips asked if there are plans to reduce MWRA usage, and some discussion was held.

October PFAS Results

September – Bridge Street, 15.2

White Lodge, 14

October – Bridge Street, 10.1

White Lodge, 12.2

Include six PFAS contaminates
Results over proposed limits

Update Department of Labor Standards

Mr. Lukis informed that he, with Messrs. Marsh and Locke, met with HazCompliance Inc., a safety consultants for steps to move forward with the safety plan based on the facilities' safety hazards. The plan would be available online and in books, with initial and monthly trainings. An annual inspection would update the plan to maintain compliance, for employees and the public.

Old/New Business*

Mr. Merithew stated formal updates to town meeting articles would be useful; Mr. Lukis answered that a draft has been started, which will be out for review once its form is decided. Mr. Merithew requested the Dedham Commissioners bring their requests before the Board to be addressed and receive their input.

Next Meeting

Mr. Lukis will schedule the next Board meeting via email.

Executive Session

Pursuant to MGL c.30A Sec. 21(a) Exemption 3 - To discuss strategy with respect to litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the public body and the chair so declares.

Mr. Lexander requested a motion to move to Executive Session and stated Open Session will not resume after. A motion was made by Mr. Merithew to adjourn to Executive Session; the motion was seconded by Mr. Yessaillian. A roll-call vote was taken.

Roll-Call: Messrs. Lexander, Yessaillian, Merithew, Healy, Phillips, and Kustwan voted Aye. Motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Lexander thanked the customers of DWWD for coming forward and bringing forth concerns, adding that he looks forward to seeing all soon at a future meeting. He voiced that he truly believes in a good working-together relationship.

The Open Session moved to Executive Session at 8:25p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Kathy Travers Reynolds
Recording Secretary