



## DEDHAM-WESTWOOD WATER DISTRICT General Business Meeting

### Hybrid Meeting

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

**Wednesday, August 14, 2024 | 6:30 PM**

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

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

#### **Attendance**

Mark Phillips, Chair

Eric Merithew, Vice-Chair

Louis Kustwan, Clerk (remote)

Gary Yessaillian, Member (remote)

Robert Lexander, Member (remote)

Blake Lukis, Executive Director & Assistant Treasurer

Bob Marsh, Business Manager

Pauline Donoghue, Treasurer

Steve Locke, Operations Manager (remote)

#### **Absence**

John Healy, Member

#### **Roll-Call Attendance**

Messrs. Phillips, Merithew, Kustwan, Yessaillian Present.

Mr. Phillips acknowledged a quorum was not met.

#### **Public Participation**

No public participants were present to address the Board.

Mr. Phillips stated a motion to accept the July 10, 2024 meeting minutes will be tabled until a meeting quorum is present.

#### **Financials and Warrant**

##### Treasurer's Report

Ms. Donoghue presented Warrants 50-57 for activity from July 8<sup>th</sup> to August 5<sup>th</sup>, 2024, informing that larger expenses were noted in order to bring to the Board's attention. Mr. Phillips had a previous question regarding a homeowner's repairs; Mr. Lukis reiterated the explanation, and he and Ms. Donoghue expanded on what was included in the June Operations Manager Report. Mr. Yessaillian will approve the warrants, as requested. Mr. Phillips commented that the cash balances are reduced; Ms. Donoghue answered that the monthly cash reports which include July will account for the reduced funds.

Mr. Lexander joined the meeting remotely.

Mr. Donoghue highlighted cash receipts:

- Reconciled cash balance to April 30, 2024, decreased from March;
- Reconciled cash balance to May 31, 2024, increased from April;
- Unreconciled cash balance at June 30, 2024, reduced from May;
- Unreconciled cash balance at July 31, 2024, reduced from June;

Bond payment of principal and interest as well as payment for White Lodge Treatment Plant media filters are included.

- Monthly summary of reconciled cash and disbursements for January through May 2024;
- Monthly summary of reconciled cash and disbursements for Prior Year 2023.

Ms. Donoghue acknowledged cash balances are reduced because of funded projects which the District will be bonding; Mr. Marsh commented further.

### **Approval of Minutes of July 10, 2024**

With a quorum now present, Mr. Phillips requested a motion to approve the meeting minutes of July 10, 2024. A motion was made by Mr. Lexander to approve the minutes as reviewed for July 10, 2024; Mr. Merithew seconded the motion. With no additional discussion necessary, a roll-call vote was taken.

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

Motion passed unanimously.

### **Business Manager Report**

#### Business Operating Reports

Mr. Marsh notified that June YTD results have not yet been reviewed by the Management Team. He commented that closing is about a month behind because others are covering for Payroll & Accounts Payable Administrator Shanyn Dunn having left the District's employ; the hiring process for her replacement has begun.

Mr. Marsh informed that District accounting systems have been upgraded, with new features being added to payroll and general ledger/accounts payable areas; he described the updates and their purposes.

Mr. Phillips asked how revenues are projecting now. Mr. Marsh stated the year's first half is on-plan/a little over, and explained why. July numbers are being sorted, and the volume is reduced; hopes are that August and September will be back on-track.

To Mr. Kustwan's inquiry regarding short-term administrative assistance, Mr. Marsh responded that the search is for a full-time hire for the detailed-work position.

### **Operations Manager Report**

Mr. Locke stated he provided the report in advance, reiterating:

## Pumping and Operational Report

Pumpage – Peaked at the end of July

Starting to drop approximately 500K gallons since two weeks ago

Main & Service Lines – Three main breaks and four service line breaks

Mr. Locke gives kudos to the Team having installed 200 feet of two-inch water main on Hartford Street in Westwood in extremely hot weather; he further detailed why a new main was needed at the installed proper level.

## Update on New & Existing Projects

- The new Customer Service Representative begins training Monday;
- The Distribution candidate's held licenses were listed; he will begin after Labor Day;
- The air towers bid opening is scheduled for August 22<sup>nd</sup> to allow for more bidders;
- Leak Detection - All leaks have been completed.

Mr. Merithew asked if the Hartford Street in Westwood main helped with pressure issues. Mr. Locke answered that it has, since there were probably numerous hard-to-pinpoint leaks in the 1940 2.5" iron pipe ten feet underground; he further described the repair.

Mr. Phillips asked if a recent TTHM sampling had been taken; Mr. Locke answered that results were higher than hoped. Tomorrow, he will meet with the Water Quality Production Superintendent and Mr. Lukis to plan strategy. There was an auto-flusher battery issue at Dedham Medical. The 2023 strategy will be referred to; he listed the process. TTHM levels of 93-95 at two locations would exceed the MCL, similar to in 2023. Mr. Lexander responded that TLCs must be removed from the Bridge Street plant. Conversation was held regarding options, 2023's timeline notes, Weston & Sampson's water-age study, and taking multiple samples. Mr. Lukis stated the two elevated-level sites were Dedham Medical with a reading of 110 - where because of a dead battery replaced, tested, but not program-tested, proactive measures are now followed - and Getty Gas; details were discussed. Mr. Lexander asked if the Production Department has been involved and described a possible plan.

Mr. Merithew asked about Highland Street in Dedham. Mr. Locke detailed the location as having an old infrastructure with water main start on August 19<sup>th</sup>, adjusted gates, completed proofing and checked values, test pits on Monday, and Town-requested project delay and District reasons cannot. Martin Bates Street in Dedham will be addressed next.

## **Executive Director Report**

### Contracts Signed by ED

A contract was signed for Weston & Sampson's Phase 2 directional flushing program design.

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

Mr. Lukis relayed that the storage facility bid was cancelled mid-July after a sub-bid electrical contractor posed a question regarding breakers. Also in July, the requirement of a second-building restroom was found to be a possible requirement; submission for determination was made to the Board of State Examiners of Plumbers and Gas Fitters. Advertising will begin next week for the September 10<sup>th</sup> bid date and September 24<sup>th</sup> final sub-bids date. In answer to Mr. Yessaillian's question, Mr. Lukis stated that if the restroom is a requirement, it would be a contract add-on. Building details were discussed.

The Green Sand Plus Media Replacement Phase 2 project for aquifer filters was included in the Operations Manager Report. The July 19<sup>th</sup> hearing protest was denied, so work will move forward.

Action on Task Order 154

– Replacement Above-Ground Burgess Avenue Booster Pump Station Design and Bidding Services

Mr. Lukis stated that no action on the Burgess Avenue booster pump station must be taken tonight since no final task order was received; the order will be made available to the Board when delivered. The reason for delay was incorporating Aquarion Water Company's potential design requirements. Mr. Lukis provided a brief overview for approximately 29% of design and construction costs to be paid by Aquarion; additional information will be posted on Basecamp.

Mr. Lukis reported that an update discussion was held with the 1446 High Street in Westwood property owner and attorneys; the project is moving forward. Two requests were made by the owner and representatives:

- 1) District to pay the property owner's attorney fees – This was previously agreed to;
- 2) Permanent and temporary easement total compensation for the grown footprint and resulting prevention of sub-dividing into two equal lots – Approval will be sought from the Board.

The results of this agreement will be an above-ground station, met safety concerns, and ability to house a permanent generator. Discussion held included regarding the diesel or propane generator, Aquarion's shared costs once water approval, MWRA usage with Aquarion water fee add-on, task order agreement, and pipe size. Board approval of phases will be requested.

Mr. Phillips asked about Burgess Avenue's agreement timing, and Mr. Lukis answered that it should be in September. Mr. Lexander inquired about the MWRA process, and Mr. Lukis described why the process is time-consuming. Mr. Lukis confirmed for Mr. Lexander that construction will begin in 2025, to go online Spring 2026. Mr. Merithew suggested placing a cap on the amount to be paid for the property owner's attorney costs. Mr. Lexander asked how the old Burgess Avenue booster station will be dealt with; Mr. Lukis explained that the contractor will remove the innards, cut down, and fill, using a design incorporating all needed to remove the old infrastructure. Mr. Lexander asked about new electrical lines, and Mr. Lukis confirmed new lines will drop from across the street.

Mr. Lukis relayed that Northeastern University Civil & Environmental Engineering Assistant Professor Dr. Kelsey Pieper is working with the Georgia Institute of Technology with an EPA grant; the presentation is posted on Basecamp. Dr. Pieper will forward the proposal, at no cost to the District; in turn, the District will provide samples – Mr. Lukis described the process, culminating in receiving a free report, while assisting two educational institutions. Weston & Sampson sampling from the Bridge Street plant could also be provided. Mr. Phillips asked a question about Weston & Sampson, and Mr. Lukis relayed that the task order has been signed and background work is being done.

Mr. Merithew will forward information to Mr. Lukis regarding the Clean Water Mixers seminar being held tomorrow.

Mr. Lukis has scheduled with the District Counsel for he and Mr. Marsh to meet to discuss late-September Union contract negotiations; the Board will meet in Executive Session during this process. Discussion took place about the negotiations format not including a Commissioner in attendance.

Mr. Merithew asked about Burgess Avenue information distribution, and Mr. Lukis stated email will be used.

Mr. Lukis relayed that the receipt of bonding funds will be delayed to October because spending requirements start once the money is made available; he explained the process. Cash account balances are being monitored.

### **Next Meeting**

The next District Board hybrid meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, September 11<sup>th</sup>, at 6:30pm.

Mr. Phillips requested a motion to adjourn the meeting. A motion was made by Mr. Lexander to adjourn the meeting; the motion was seconded by Mr. Merithew, and a roll-call vote was taken. Roll-Call: Messrs. Phillips, Merithew, Kustwan, Yessaillian, and Lexander voted Aye. Motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:32p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Kathy Travers Reynolds  
Recording Secretary