



# DEDHAM-WESTWOOD WATER DISTRICT

## General Business Meeting

### Hybrid Meeting

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

**Thursday, May 15, 2025 | 6:30 PM**

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

The Chair, Eric Merithew, called the meeting to order at 6:30p.m.

#### **Attendance**

Eric Merithew, Chair

Louis Kustwan, Vice-Chair

Jennifer Perkins, Member (remote)

Robert Lexander, Member

Mark Phillips, Member

Blake Lukis, Executive Director & Assistant Treasurer

Bob Marsh, Business Manager

Pauline Donoghue, Treasurer (remote)

Steve Locke, Operations Manager

#### **Absence**

John Healy, Clerk

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

Mr. Merithew, Mr. Kustwan, Ms. Perkins, Mr. Lexander, and Mr. Phillips Present.

A quorum was confirmed.

#### **Public Participation**

No public participants were present to address the Board.

Mr. Merrithew announced the meeting would be audio- and video-recorded.

#### **Approval of Minutes for April 16, 2025**

Mr. Merithew requested a motion to approve the meeting minutes of April 16, 2025. A motion was made by Mr. Lexander to approve the meeting minutes as reviewed for April 16, 2025;

Mr. Kustwan seconded the motion. With no discussion necessary, a roll-call vote was taken.

Roll-Call: Mr. Merithew, Mr. Kustwan, Ms. Perkins, and Mr. Lexander voted Aye;

Mr. Phillips abstained.

Motion passed.

#### **Financials and Warrant**

##### Treasurer's Report

Ms. Donoghue presented Warrants 30-36 for activity from April 17<sup>th</sup> to May 9<sup>th</sup>. Large amounts are listed at the bottom of the summary page of each accounts payable warrant.

The monthly cash report was also forwarded to the Commissioners.

- Unreconciled cash report at April 30<sup>th</sup>, decreased from March
- Unreconciled cash report at March 31<sup>st</sup> included a chart to track BAN spending, reducing to October's finish.

Mr. Merithew commented on the table with breakout being helpful; Ms. Donoghue confirmed it presents the ability to see that the operating account is staying stable.

### **Business Manager Report**

#### Business Operating Reports

Mr. Marsh reiterated that the audits are being completed, on schedule for June presentation to the Board.

Mr. Merithew relayed that conversation which took place after Dedham's recent Water Resource Advisory Committee meeting included that a meeting regarding projects is typically held with the Select Board. Interest was voiced in having a more financially based meeting about District rates and as follow up to audit completion. For Mr. Merithew, Mr. Lukis confirmed the District Annual Report is completed in March and the audit in June. Mr. Merithew will follow up with members of the Water Resource Advisory Committee to determine what information is requested and the best form of distribution. Mr. Lukis added that to assist with communication, bi-annual meetings are planned with the Town Manager and Administrator rather than bringing directly to the Select Board.

### **Operations Manager Report**

Mr. Locke relayed:

#### Pumping and Operational Report

Pumpage – For the last two weeks, pumpage has been up approximately 250 million gallons per day.

A drought advisory meeting will be held May 19<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Phillips asked if any calls have been received regarding the drought guidelines; Mr. Locke answered that some calls about the original advisory were received during the catch-up phase.

#### Update on New & Existing Projects

##### Completed Projects

- MWRA Booster Station & High Rock Booster Station insulation completed
- Stoughton Road water storage tank is back in service.

### Ongoing Projects Nearing Completion

- Air Towers Media Replacement – All media replaced in both towers - Some leaks to be located for repair on Monday – Towers will be alternated when repairs are necessary.
- East Street Water Main – Tying in lateral mains this week, finished next week – Then starting water services on Phase 1 project – Laterals tying in now relate to bypass temporary hydrants – Town has issues regarding road condition and job delay – Mill and overlay patching may be required.

Mr. Lukis added that the actual deadline is the end of September.

Discussion took place regarding the Project timeline and the contractor.

Mr. Lukis confirmed production should be back on-track after the space concerns and challenges with production and delays, when night work was not allowed and detouring was denied. The process/sequence had been slow.

Mr. Locke informed that he had a discussion with the contractor last week; the next part of the project is to tie in services to the new main.

Mr. Merithew asked about the cost of Town requirements. Mr. Lukis stated the District was just informed, and Mr. Locke added that information will be received tomorrow.

- Garage Construction – Building to be erected by the end of June – Potential Project completion at the end of July, probably August
- Sensors – 164 installed
- Burgess Avenue Pumping Station– Planning Board Meeting June 17<sup>th</sup> – CBA meeting June 18<sup>th</sup> – Conservation Committee meeting May 28<sup>th</sup>
- Lead Service Line Inventory – Extension to September 7<sup>th</sup>

### Upcoming Projects

- White Lodge Treatment Plant – Resin filter building bidding
- Leak Detection – A few days missed – Some hydrant leaks found
- Well Rehabilitation – Pre-construction meeting May 21<sup>st</sup> – Related motion to be introduced later in this meeting.

- Milk Street Water Main Replacement – Bid tomorrow – Satisfied with the engineering cost of Apex Engineering – Apex provided a Project cost estimate – Project was described.

Lien funds have been received from both Towns. In answer to posed questions, Mr. Lukis described timing.

A workshop roundtable meeting with Weston & Samson was held regarding future steps for the Bridge Street Treatment Plant. Mr. Lukis informed that three general directions for treatment options were projected during the preliminary discussion. In response to Mr. Phillips' question, Mr. Lukis stated that W&S believes the PFAS pilot study failed because of clogging of iron bacteria.

Mr. Phillips asked about THHMs; Mr. Locke answered that readings are good except for Getty Gas at approximately 65. Mr. Phillips asked if the recent rain has had impact; Mr. Locke answered that non-compliance tests have been fairly consistent, retested with DEP's quick method after samples had been lab-contaminated. Mr. Lukis shared his screen with the recorded compliance samples results for January 2025.

Mr. Lexander asked about the hydrant auto-flusher; Mr. Locke explained that they are not yet in since one Customer Service and two Distribution employees are out on Workmen's Compensation. Prompted by Mr. Lukis' question, Mr. Locke described the WC payment process.

#### Action on Change Order 1 for Well Redevelopment and Repair Annual Services Contract

To expedite the Bridge Street Plant pump inspections process, accepting a Maher Services' change order is suggested rather than putting out for bid. Mr. Phillips asked if new or reinstalled pumps will be used. Mr. Lukis answered that the existing pumps will be reinstalled; Mr. Locke added that the wells will be cleaned and repaired, as is being done for the wells also.

Mr. Lexander read Motion 1- Bridge Street Plant Pump Inspections – to move forward: The Dedham-Westwood Water Commissioners vote to approve Change Order No.1 in the amount of \$64,400 to the Well Redevelopment & Repair services contract with Maher Services which will utilize Maher Services to remove, inspect and reinstall Bridge Street Treatment Plant pumps.

NOTE: This work is already funded in the Capital Budget with a different fund (30450) than the Well Rehabilitation Fund (30460) for \$65,000.00. There are 4 Vertical Split Case Pumps & 4 Low Lift or Back Wash Pumps that can be serviced at an average cost of \$8050 each for a projected total cost of \$64,400. Exact numbers are documented in Maher Proposal MS-5665. This Change Order will allow for work to be completed without the need for an additional public bid process.

Mr. Phillips seconded the motion.

Mr. Phillips asked if capital should be considered when considering well ages. Mr. Locke answered that this has not been budgeted for this year, and Mr. Lukis added that the work is being capitalized because it is life-extending. Mr. Merithew asked what the rehabilitation cost was last time; Mr. Locke stated he believes it was a similar amount.

Roll-Call: Mr. Merithew, Mr. Kustwan, Ms. Perkins, Mr. Lexander, and Mr. Phillips voted Aye; Motion passed unanimously.

Action on Design of Riverside Drive Water Main Replacement Design, Bidding, and Construction Services

Mr. Lexander read Motion 2 - Design of 2026 Water Main Replacement Project for Riverside Drive in Dedham – to move forward: The Dedham-Westwood Water Commissioners vote to approve the Professional Engineering Services Agreement for the Design, Permitting, Bidding, and Construction Administration Services for the replacement of the Riverside Drive water main in Dedham between Apex Companies, LLC and the Dedham-Westwood Water District for the not to exceed price of \$174,700.00. Further that the Executive Director be authorized to sign the agreement.

NOTE: This engineering service proposal includes Design, MassDOT and Wetland Permitting, Bidding Assistance, Construction Administration, Record Drawings, and As-Built GPSing. An optional task but included in the \$174,700.00 Motion is Field Work, Surveying, and Base mapping. This task costs \$26,600.00 and was included but only performed if authorized by DWWD. The District requested an additional proposal from Tighe & Bond, whose proposal was \$197,300.00 (which did not include Wetland Permitting- \$14,700.00). DWWD allocated \$200,000 in the Capital Budget in Fund 30100 therefore funding has already been approved.

Mr. Kustwan seconded the motion.

The contractor was discussed.

Roll-Call: Mr. Merithew, Mr. Kustwan, Ms. Perkins, Mr. Lexander, and Mr. Phillips voted Aye; Motion passed unanimously.

**Executive Director Report**

Contracts Signed by ED

No new contracts have been signed by the Executive Director.

Mr. Lukis reminded that the ongoing potential change orders for the Garage Building Project are being tracked – Bold lines are finalized change orders – Listed to the right is the date the order was first brought to the Board. For the Project, most excavation is completed, with some re-

excavation being done now. Additional change orders are not anticipated once the building is erected. The Project change orders have totaled 2.8% of the total contract amount.

### Review of White Lodge PFAS Treatment Bid Results

#### Review and Action on Additional For White Lodge PFAS Project

Mr. Lukis informed that bidding has opened for the White Lodge Treatment Plant PFAS Project. High bids have been received from two of the seven prequalified contractors. Consultants Tighe & Bond and Weston & Sampson learnt from bidders that the market is saturated with many ongoing projects and that the size of the site with many utilities may be a concern.

For Mr. Kustwan, Mr. Lukis explained that seven contractors have been prequalified and no bids may be accepted from contractors who did not take part in the qualification process.

RH White Construction Company submitted a bid over the estimated cost. This Project is funded through the SRF, the Clean Water Trust loan program; additional funding would have to be requested. The bid breakdown was compared to Weston & Sampson's estimate. The increased cost is still less expensive than the cost of purchasing MWRA water.

The Consultants posed the option of rebidding with an aspect removed from the contract, but there is nothing of significant value to remove; the six-months prequalification process would have to be redone; SRF funding could be used if no extension past the end of June 2025.

Mr. Lukis shared his screen showing the two contractors' bids' line items. Pro's and cons of the rebidding process were discussed.

Mr. Merithew asked how much the design is dependent on particular MCL goals. Mr. Lukis answered that the EPA announcement states rollback will not be accepted, other PFAS chemicals are being reviewed for repealing, and compliance may be pushed to 2031. SRF funding is changing – This loan is 0% interest with anticipated 25% principal forgiveness; funding in 2025 has already changed.

Mr. Phillips asked if a delayed start would save costs. Mr. Lukis answered that the EPA understands the building timeline; the District's consulting engineers' recommendations are to appropriate additional funding to move forward with the Project. White Lodge appropriations from last year and January of this year include a bid amount contingency; or a contingency different from the 5% would be appropriated but not included with SRF funding.

Mr. Phillips read in the motion to move forward: That the District appropriates \$3,651,000 to pay additional costs of designing and constructing a new PFAS treatment facility at the White Lodge Treatment Plant, which shall include, without limitation, construction of a new treatment building, new filters, PFAS removal media and all other costs incidental and related thereto, and that to meet this appropriation, the District Treasurer, with the approval of the Water Commissioners, is authorized to borrow said amount under and pursuant to G.L. c. 44, §8(4) or any other enabling authority, and to issue bonds or notes of the District therefor.

These funds shall be expended in addition to all other amounts previously appropriated to pay costs of this project. All, or any portion, of the amount authorized to be borrowed by this vote may be obtained through the Massachusetts Clean Water Trust (the “Trust”) and in that regard, any appropriate official of the District is authorized to execute and deliver any and all documents and agreements that may be required by the Trust, or by the Department of Environmental Protection of The Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Mr. Lexander seconded the motion.

The chosen bidder, their history with the District, and the bidder agreements were discussed.

Mr. Merithew asked about subcontractor pricing; Mr. Lukis answered that filed sub-bid trades are predefined.

Roll-Call: Mr. Merithew, Mr. Kustwan, Ms. Perkins, Mr. Lexander, and Mr. Phillips voted Aye; Motion passed unanimously.

Answering Mr. Kustwan’s question regarding the voting process, Mr. Merithew explained that additional discussion will be held when questions are raised or nays are entered. Mr. Lukis added that he spoke with Board Clerk John Healy, who is in favor of moving forward.

#### Review and Action on Award of White Lodge PFAS Project

Mr. Phillips read the motion to move forward: The Dedham-Westwood Water Commissioners vote to award the White Lodge Water Treatment Plant PFAS Treatment to R.H. White Construction Co., Inc. of Auburn, MA for their bid amount of \$14,916,000.00. Further that the Executive Director be authorized to execute the contract.

Mr. Lexander seconded the motion.

Roll-Call: Mr. Merithew, Mr. Kustwan, Ms. Perkins, Mr. Lexander, and Mr. Phillips voted Aye; Motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Lukis commented on these decisions keeping the Project on-track with SRF funding and for moving ahead to be online at the end of 2026.

#### Action on Request for Water Connection Fee Waivers

Mr. Lukis referred to a letter received from Blue Hill Development LLC. The District worked with this firm to relocate a District water main which ran along Blue Hill Drive. The main traverses across private property through an easement, goes underneath Route 128, and into the Green Lodge neighborhood. As the line was found to be outside of the easement path, the relocation was necessary. Blue Hill Development is requesting waiving of the three houses’ water-connection fees; justification is that the moved main rather than a bidding process saved the District money. Mr. Locke outlined the significant fees saved. Mr. Lukis requested the Board vote on the request.

Mr. Phillips voiced concern with setting a precedent. Mr. Lukis confirmed this is a unique circumstance, adding that the language also allows for contractors to place a main and then gift it to the District in lieu of paying access fees; this scenario is somewhat similar.

Mr. Merithew motioned that for this special-case basis, the District approve the waiving of the water connection fees for proposed houses at 326, 350, and 360 Blue Hill Drive in Westwood; Mr. Lexander seconded the motion.

Roll-Call: Mr. Merithew, Mr. Kustwan, Ms. Perkins, Mr. Lexander, and Mr. Phillips voted Aye; Motion passed unanimously.

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

Mr. Lukis suggested the Commissioners be assigned District email addresses to provide an opportunity to communicate with constituents, as such a communication is public record.

Additionally, Mr. Lukis suggested each Commissioner be provided a District iPad. IT will be consulted and a timeframe relayed to the Board.

**Next Meeting**

The next hybrid DWWD meeting will be held Tuesday, June 24<sup>th</sup>, beginning at 6:30pm.

Mr. Merithew asked if any feedback has been received concerning the new commercial rate structure; Mr. Locke answered that some businesses have contacted Customer Service.

Mr. Merithew requested a meeting adjournment motion to move to Executive Session, with no plan to return to open meeting. Mr. Lexander motioned to adjourn the meeting to Executive Session; the motion was seconded by Mr. Phillips.

Roll-Call: Mr. Merithew, Mr. Kustwan, Ms. Perkins, Mr. Lexander, and Mr. Phillips voted Aye. Motion passed unanimously.

The open meeting was adjourned at 7:56pm.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Kathy Travers Reynolds  
Recording Secretary

**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