



# DEDHAM-WESTWOOD WATER DISTRICT

## General Business Meeting

### Hybrid Meeting

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

**Tuesday, June 24, 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 (partially remote)

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

#### **Also in Remote Attendance**

Elissa Cohen, DWWD Accounting Supervisor

Michael Lowney, resident of 284 Canton Street in Westwood

Erica Olobri, CBIZ CPAs Managing Director

Steven Manning, The Segal Group

Michael Warner, Weston & Sampson Senior Team Leader

Allie Goldberg, Weston & Sampson Project Manager

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

Roll-Call Attendance

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

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

A quorum was confirmed.

#### **Public Participation**

Mr. Michael Lowney of 284 Canton Street in Westwood joined the meeting regarding an addition he plans to build on his property. A Dedham-Westwood Water District easement has been found on the property, with an eight-inch pipe. The addition is not planned to be built over the pipe but is encroaching on the easement. Mr. Lowney's request of the Board is to release the

inactive easement or to allow him to build the addition without the release, given that the pipe will not be disturbed.

Mr. Lexander described this placement of the now-inactive asbestos pipe, seeing no reason for stipulation. Mr. Lukis shared his screen and offered that his belief is that, when the pump station was decommissioned, the intent was to also decommission the easement. Messrs. Locke and Lukis have reviewed the easement location.

Mr. Lukis asked how far onto the easement the additional would be encroaching. Mr. Lowney responded that the plans would be for the pipe to be, at its closest, two feet from the addition, 5.5 feet into the easement.

Mr. Lukis stated the issue is that the pipe is asbestos and, if broken, would have to be removed and remediated; he explained why this must be the course. Mr. Merithew asked if the easement is released, would the District have to remove the pipe, and Mr. Kustwan asked if the easement land must be given to the resident. Mr. Lukis informed there are two possible options, to release the easement or to authorize building into the easement; District Counsel would review.

Mr. Kustwan asked if the easement was not released, would a subsequent property owner have to go before the Board and potentially receive a different outcome? So this situation would not arise, Mr. Lowney requested a letter of authorization. Mr. Locke described a similar situation.

Discussion was held regarding the easement.

Mr. Lukis will consult with Counsel and present a recommendation at the next Board meeting so the homeowner could be presented a letter of outcome. Mr. Phillips asked, if the easement was relinquished, would there exist any liability by the District if the contractor disturbed the asbestos pipe. Mr. Locke offered that he spoke with Counsel, who does not yet have an answer regarding District liability.

Discussion regarding the pipe details took place.

Mr. Lowney exited the meeting.

Mr. Lukis confirmed this topic will be on the next meeting's agenda and recommended approval of the last meeting's minutes be moved to after the upcoming presentations.

## **Review of 2024 Audit**

Presentation of 2024 Audit by CBIZ

Mr. Marsh welcomed Ms. Erica Olobri, Managing Director of CBIZ, who will take the Board through this year's audit, shared on the screen: DWD Financial Statements and Requested Supplementary Information for the Year-End December 31, 2024.

Ms. Olobri introduced herself and thanked the District financial Team for filling CBIZ's information requests, reviewing and explaining:

- Table of Contents
- Independent Auditors' Report
- Management's Discussion and Analysis
- Basic Financial Statements
- Notes to Financial Statements
- Requested Supplementary Information
  - o Pension
  - o Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB)
- Independent Auditors' Report on Internal Control over Financial Reporting and on Compliance and Other Matters Based on an Audit of Financial Statements Performed in Accordance with *Government Auditing Standards*
- Communication Letter on how Audit went – 'To the Board of Water Commissioners, Dedham-Westwood District'

Mr. Lukis clarified that the leases referred to are the cellular leases.

Mr. Marsh voiced his appreciation of working with the auditors, and Mr. Lukis gave a shoutout to the District financial Team for coordinating with the auditor, including Ms. Elissa Cohen, who is remotely present during this meeting.

Mr. Phillips joined the meeting.

### **Review of OPEB Valuation**

Presentation of 2024 OPEB Valuation by Segal

Mr. Marsh introduced Mr. Steven Manning of The Segal Group, who conducted an evaluation report on post-employee benefits held at the Rockland Trust Company.

Mr. Manning shared his screen to display the Dedham-Westwood Actuarial Valuation and Review of Other Postemployment Benefits (OPEB). This evaluation is run every other year for comparison of retiree health benefits liabilities to trust assets, this current report as of December 31, 2024.

- Highlights of Valuation
  - o District has an overfunded position of 110% versus prior 91%
    - Explanation of how attained

Mr. Marsh asked for confirmation of the Dedham-Westwood Water District being the only fully funded municipality. Mr. Manning confirmed the District is the first 100%-funded client he has seen. When a liability is unfunded, a plan is devised to fund the liability. Since the District is overfunded, the Trust is used to pay premiums.

- Trust investment returns record
  - o Two years favorable
- Scenarios to keep District at 100%-plus funded

Mr. Marsh further explained the Scenario 1 schedule and suggested funding scenario for at least the next two years, consistent with as has been done the last two years. Mr. Phillips asked if the schedule must be reassessed in the next few years; Mr. Manning confirmed the benefit of assessing the schedule every two years. Mr. Marsh added that reviews are also made with the Rockland Trust Company.

Mr. Manning summarized Scenario 2.

Funding and scenario comparisons were discussed.

Mr. Lukis highlighted the effect on the operating budget.

Mr. Manning thanked the Board for their time; and Mr. Marsh, Ms. Cohen, and Team for their provided requested information.

All Presenters exited the meeting.

### **Review of Bridge Street TP Evaluation**

#### **Presentation of the Bridge Street TP Feasibility Study and Evaluation**

Mr. Lukis welcomed Weston & Sampon Senior Team Leader Michael Warner and Project Manager Allie Goldberg, who will summarize what was learned through sampling and investigation, in order to review options and estimated costs.

Mr. Manning thanked the Board for allowing time for this presentation, and Ms. Goldberg shared her screen displaying Bridge Street Evaluation and Optimization:

- Meeting Goals
- Summary of Results
  - o Total & Dissolved Iron
    - Graph
  - o Total & Dissolved Manganese
    - Graph

Mr. Phillip asked about the increased manganese, which Ms. Goldberg confirmed she will cover later in the presentation.

- o Total Organic Carbon
  - Graph

Mr. Merithew asked why the first set is distinct from the other two; Ms. Goldberg explained that samples were collected when worse-case scenario. Mr. Phillips commented on this being the case for the total iron also; Ms. Goldberg answered that both total iron and manganese were worse-case scenarios during the sampling event, a seasonal impact versus an operational impact. Mr. Lexander asked if any samples were taken when all wells were on; Ms. Goldberg stated collection was during typical operations.

- o pH

- Graph
- Bacteria, Polymer, KMnO4
  - Biological screening results table

Mr. Lukis clarified the difference between White Lodge and Bridge Street regeneration. Mr. Phillips asked if proliferation of bacteria was seen on all or just one sample; Ms. Goldberg explained that two samples were taken, with results indicative of same.

- Summary of Results
- Recommended Treatment Options

Mr. Lexander asked if rechlorinating after the settling tank and before goes through the filter; Ms. Goldberg referred to the posted process schematic. Mr. Lukis stated chlorination remains at prefiltration as it exists today. For Mr. Phillips, Mr. Lukis confirmed potassium permanganate powder is used.

Discussion was held regarding green sand, chlorination, and permanganate powder mixing.

Mr. Merithew asked for confirmation green sand does not require filter vessel changes; Ms. Goldberg answered that conversations are still ongoing for clarity regarding upgrading.

Discussion regarding aeration during backflow of filters took place.

For Mr. Merithew, Ms. Goldberg confirmed chlorination is used in pretreatment.

- Bridge Street modifications
  - Option #1 Chloramines
    - Options 1a & 1b

Mr. Phillips asked if these are the same footprint; Ms. Goldberg answered that they are a very similar footprint with different media. Mr. Phillips asked if media disposal is an issue; Ms. Goldberg responded that the Bridge Street media is handled similar to White Lodge's, slurring in and out to replace. Regarding Mr. Merithew's reference to vessels parallel, Mr. Lukis confirmed, adding that water runs through Filter 1 to Filter 2 so reduced run times on Filter 1.

Water cascade was discussed.

- Bridge Street modifications
  - Option #2 Chlorine
    - Options 2a & 2b

Mr. Merithew asked if water treatment plants within the area are doing this; Ms. Goldberg answered that a plant in Maine is doing well using resin to remove TOC's. Mr. Merithew asked if resin is a solution for TOC, whether a need to use a specific product, and if the resin has been used for a while or is relatively new; Ms. Goldberg responded that this is relatively new to the Maine plant and that a few communities are working to install now. PFAS resin is single-

stream; Ms. Goldberg explained. TOC removal is a more regenerative process, not a single-pass process. Mr. Merithew asked about the footprint associated with using resin; Ms. Goldberg stated the footprint is approximately 4,500 square feet and informed that the Maine plant manager is still being consulted. In response to Mr. Merithew's question, Ms. Goldberg confirmed the TOC removal process in Options 2a & 2b is the same. Mr. Phillips asked how this process works, using what equipment; Ms. Goldberg answered that it is through the vessel. Mr. Lukis explained resin ion exchange, and Ms. Goldberg stated equipment is added for the same flow's waste stream. Mr. Phillips asked if regeneration is with acid or base; Ms. Goldberg informed that a brine mixture is used. Mr. Merithew asked if there are certain types of TOC in these cases; Ms. Goldberg answered that there are specific species of TOC. Mr. Merithew commented on there being few results on TOC removal through filters since sometimes resins work with one type and not another; Ms. Goldberg responded that she will get more information on TOC media and options. Mr. Phillips asked about TOC removal and regeneration, and waste drain; Ms. Goldberg answered that she does not know of the concentration of the anticipated waste stream.

Discussion regarding waste took place.

- Option #1 Considerations
  - Discharge of plants confirmed through MWRA as an integral part of determination with required sampling and water backwash from plants to MWRA

Mr. Merithew asked if Option 1 does not resolve TTHMs because of chlorination during the treatment process; Ms. Goldberg responded that Option 1 will resolve TTHM formation in the distribution system, but formation must be monitored within the treatment process.

Further discussion was held.

- Proposed Pilot Configuration

Mr. Phillips asked about the flow rate; Ms. Goldberg answered that the flow rate would probably be lower, and further explained that it will be at a scale to full treatment. Mr. Merithew commented on the flow rate being the scale of last time and Ms. Goldberg agreed. Mr. Phillips asked if Weston & Sampson does the sampling and testing; Ms. Goldberg explained subcontractor Blue Leaf is used for sampling and testing, with samples collected once every three weeks and sent to the lab, and flows and head loss monitored weekly. Mr. Merithew asked if the chloramine is preferred at Bridge Street, and whether there is an additional pilot for White Lodge or rather logistical layout challenges. Ms. Goldberg confirmed logistical layout challenges on getting the four log at White Lodge from a capital perspective; if convert to chloramines, a one-year demonstration study would be needed to prove-out the system for DEP. Mr. Merithew asked if anything must be looked at ahead of time; Ms. Goldberg responded that required White Lodge improvements would be reviewed. Mr. Lexander asked if this is longer than with chlorine; Ms. Goldberg confirmed this is not as effective as chlorine so is a longer loop, with a deeper dive for White Lodge options. Mr. Lexander asked if a stand pipe would be needed; Ms. Goldberg stated the flow may run back to the plant, or will look into UV.

- Cost Considerations

- Option 1 - Chloramines
- Option 2 - Chlorine

Answering Mr. Kustwan's question about the pricing range, Mr. Lukis stated may be White Lodge costs associated with Chloramines is impacting the gap. Mr. Kustwan asked why this pricing ranges cannot be tighter; Ms. Goldberg informed that many unknowns exist, so a pilot will be used to look closer at the White Lodge steps to reduce ranges - Contingencies are needed to keep in the range. Mr. Phillips asked what Bridge Street's design flow rate is; Ms. Goldberg answered that it is up to 1.9, typically operating at 1.7. Mr. Phillips asked if operating expenses may be estimated for this; Mr. Lukis informed 2023 operating expenses were shared.

- Cost Considerations/Operations

Mr. Merithew asked which assumption is used for the scenario; Ms. Goldberg informed that a 30% increase operationally was assumed. Mr. Merithew asked if it was factored for the chloramine scenario, where a blending would be required at White Lodge, that water purchase would be needed; Ms. Goldberg stated it had not. Mr. Phillips asked if extra personnel would be needed at Bridge Street.

Discussion was held.

Ms. Perkins referred to the third block of the slide, asking if it relates to the 2023 annual costs, with a net savings of \$1.3M because of staffing; if Bridge Street closes, would have to increase White Lodge staffing but could have a reduction by one plant operator. Mr. Lexander suggests maintaining an extra mechanic. Mr. Merithew commented on current costs providing an idea of expenses. Mr. Lukis confirmed 2023 numbers indicate how much stays with and how much would drop off; the last time this analysis was done internally, it was shared with the Board. Mr. Kustwan asked if there is an option to buy water from MWRA or to do a PFAS treatment; Mr. Lukis confirmed the options. Mr. Kustwan asked if approximately \$1M would be saved from using the treatment; Ms. Goldberg confirmed that is the estimated savings. Mr. Kustwan asked about the time to recoup the investment versus buying; displayed page shows years in Capital.

Further discussion took place.

Mr. Phillips asked how long a pilot takes to complete; Ms. Goldberg relayed that a six-month operational pilot is usually undertaken as this area takes approximately that time to get a pilot approved and at least a year for pilot completion including data evaluation. Mr. Merithew asked if the six-month pilot window is specific to how the plant behaves; Ms. Goldberg confirmed that within six months, seasonal variations are seen, to capture the water-quality variations. Mr. Merithew asked if routine work on wells is planned for before or after the pilot so rehabbing is not being done during; Mr. Lukis confirmed rehabbing would be operationally planned outside of the pilot window. Ms. Goldberg added that worst-case and typical conditions should be seen during the pilot.

Mr. Lukis thanked the Weston & Sampson Team, especially for attending many evening meetings.

### **Approval of Minutes for May 15, 2025**

Mr. Merithew requested a motion to approve the meeting minutes of May 15, 2025. A motion was made by Mr. Lexander to approve the meeting minutes as reviewed for May 15, 2025; Mr. Phillips seconded the motion. With no discussion necessary, a roll-call vote was taken.

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

Mr. Kustwan left the meeting and later signed on remotely.

### **Financials and Warrant**

#### Treasurer's Report

Ms. Donoghue forwarded for review and approval, Warrants 7-48 for activity from May 15<sup>th</sup> to June 19<sup>th</sup>. Larger expenditures in each accounts payable are recorded on a separate page.

The monthly cash report was also forwarded to the Commissioners.

- Unreconciled cash report at May 31<sup>st</sup>, decreased from April
- Unreconciled cash report at April 30<sup>th</sup>
- Chart of unreconciled cash for the year showing total operating cash and BAN cash, reduced due to spend-down of BAN funds.

Ms. Donoghue is working with the District's banks for better returns on savings accounts. As of June, bank rates are better than Treasury Bill returns, so funds are being redirected. Mr. Lukis informed that Ms. Donoghue is spearheading researching best-return rates.

### **Business Manager Report**

#### Business Operating Reports

For Mr. Marsh, Mr. Lukis shared his screen, showing Dedham-Westwood Water District Statement of Revenues and Expenditures - District 2025 from January 1, 2025 through March 31, 2025. Mr. Marsh reviewed line items, with nothing over-budget surprising given the amount of recent rain. The total-year forecast has not changed, kept on schedule as appropriated, resulting in a good financial position.

Excess of Revenue over Expenses is a loss versus budget, at a favorable variance, mostly on the revenues side. Mr. Lukis reminded of the interest income. Mr. Marsh explained that BAN spending was delayed but cannot utilize to go back to the balance sheet; correction will be made in second quarter. Mr. Lukis added that this is why it appears the annual goal was almost met in the first quarter.

### **Operations Manager Report**

Mr. Locke relayed:

## Pumping and Operational Report

Pumpage - The highest-usage day of the year was last week, with almost 5.4M gallons June 20<sup>th</sup>.

Three employees are on workmen's compensation, and one position is unfilled.

## Update on New & Existing Projects

### Completed Projects

- Air Towers Media Replacement Project
- Leak Survey
  - Found zero main breaks and 4 service line breaks

Mr. Lukis informed that these are the lowest numbers in years.

### Ongoing Projects

- CCRs were sent out
- Some income and inquiries for ADUs
- East Street
  - Phase 2 is beginning with a temporary main
  - Mill and overlay are planned for the winter
- Garage Building Project
  - Framing is completed
  - Roof panels and walls being placed next Thursday
  - There was flashing for the roof that was never delivered and being resolved shortly.
- Sensors
  - All 650 sensors installed
  - Software continually updated
    - Correlation will assist in finding leaks real-time
  - Sensors also found two of the service leaks from the leak survey

Mr. Phillips asked how many hydrants are within the District; Mr. Locke answered that the total is approximately 1,500.

- Burgess Avenue Booster Station
  - With Weston & Sampson, presented to the Westwood Conservation Commission and the Zoning Board of Appeals

- Fire Chief Lund also present
- Received verbal agreement

Mr. Merithew commented on it being good to work with the Towns for approval through their process.

- Well Rehabilitation
  - Started on Bridge Street wells J, K, and L
- Water Main Project
  - Milk Street
    - New contractor we have never works with K&K Excavation
    - APEX design engineers

### Upcoming Projects

- Schoolmaster Lane in Dedham
  - Connecting
    - Many residents approve
    - Some properties for sale
    - Contractor plans to pave the street in approximately two weeks
    - Checking legalities
    - Favorable price for installation

Mr. Phillips asked how much resident acceptance is needed; Mr. Locke informed that he met with Counsel, who is researching, believing approval from one customer at each end of the street is required. Mr. Lukis added that, legally, a customer has the right to extend public utilities along a private way to access their house. Mr. Merithew asked if the plan is within a public way; Mr. Lukis answered that must be in a private way. Mr. Merithew asked if delay is possible; Mr. Lukis confirmed delay may take place since the same contractor is paving.

Mr. Lukis added that, if procurement laws will allow this to move forward, follow-up will be posted on Basecamp rather than waiting until the next Board meeting.

### **Executive Director Report**

#### Contracts Signed by ED

No new contracts have been signed by the Executive Director.

#### Building Project Change Orders

Mr. Lukis informed that as of yesterday, three additional finalized change orders were signed; these had previously been brought before the Board as estimates. To-date, change orders total 3% of the Project. One contractor is requesting delay for two reasons, delay by the Town and because of unsuitables, with an already signed change order with zero time extension. Minor

requests may be added. Presently assessing if last three seamless rain gutters will be brought to the drainage system so all downspouts hitting impervious surface will be underground.

#### Action on Financial Evaluation Proposal

Mr. Lukis informed that Raftelis, a financial firm that works with utilities on financial modeling, will be running financial analyses:

- Bridge Street versus MWRA
  - Build model with Capital improvements versus without and with only MWRA
    - To determine how impacts rates, etc.
    - Include return-on-investment analysis

Mr. Merithew asked if tonight's presentation will be used; Mr. Lukis confirmed it will be for Bridge Street

- Other assumptions include White Lodge blending
- Breakeven point will be provided

Mr. Kustwan asked of Weston & Sampson's idea of duration of the system; Mr. Lukis answered that different building components will have different life expectancies, giving an example for one component. Mr. Merithew asked if Raftelis will factor in depreciation or just operation costs; Mr. Lukis responded that depreciation will be based on the information provided by the District, which Weston & Sampson did not have.

- Analysis to determine what to potentially charge for as wheeling fee for Aquarion Water Company of Dover if the union comes to fruition, as a sound-logic starting point.

Mr. Phillips commented on this being best for rate payers and asked of the status with Aquarion; Mr. Lukis confirmed he will cover this topic later in the meeting.

Mr. Merithew read the motion:

The Dedham-Westwood Water Commissioners vote to approve the Professional Engineering Services Agreement for the Financial Feasibility and Cost of Service Study for the financial analysis of the investment in the Bridge Street Treatment Plant and the costs associated with the potential of wheeling MWRA to Aquarion Water Co. of MA (Dover) between Raftelis Financial Consultants, Inc. and the Dedham-Westwood Water District for the not to exceed price of \$40,000.00. Further that the Executive Director be authorized to sign the agreement.

Mr. Phillips motioned to approve the Financial Feasibility and Cost of Service Study; Mr. Lexander seconded the motion. Mr. Lukis informed that he will post the updated proposal with timeframe to Basecamp. With no additional discussion necessary, a roll-call vote was taken. Roll-Call: Mr. Merithew, Mr. Kustwan, Ms. Perkins, Mr. Lexander, and Mr. Phillips voted Aye; Motion passed unanimously.

### Update on Aquarion of Dover

Mr. Lukis relayed that Aquarion Water Company of Dover is currently going through the MEPA process. His intent was to communicate with the Towns' Administration when the partnership was to begin, but an email notifying of the relationship was sent from Aquarion's engineer consultant to all Town Administration for both communities. Mr. Lukis has been in contact with both Towns to apologize for the change to his intent of timely formal notification, including that points of impact, especially DWWD's ability to serve our customers, will not change because the amount of available water will remain the same. Aquarion and their consultant were apologetic.

Further, Mr. Lukis stated now is the time for discussion of the Aquarion agreement and costs so will be in place when permitting is complete in six to nine months:

- Financial Piece
- Find experienced counsel to negotiate with Aquarion on an inter-municipal agreement

Mr. Phillips asked if Aquarion has been responsive; Mr. Lukis answered that the company has always been responsive.

Mr. Lukis informed that a financial analysis will be run for Bridge Street to determine which option is viable. Responding to Mr. Phillips' question regarding new wells, Mr. Lukis explained the Sustainable Water Management Initiative would likely prevent any new source wells from being permitted within the system.

### Update on Board Email Addresses

Mr. Lukis relayed that he has the Members' email addresses for use with the iPads which will be purchased by the next meeting. Meeting packets may then be compiled into one labeled PDF document.

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

Mr. Lukis reminded that additional funding for the White Lodge Project was previously appropriated by this Board. SRF had previously approved the full estimated amount of \$13.545 million, but since the bid had come in higher than the estimate a request was made to the SRF to approve the new amount of \$17.2 million. But last Friday, the request was denied; the District would then have to cover the difference of over \$3.6 million. Mr. Lukis remembered having received a Trust document dated January 15, 2025, stating approval of \$15.55 million was given. The DEP and the Trust confirmed the \$15.55 million amount will be forthcoming if counsel receives documentation timely. DEP has extended to July 31, 2025 to sign paperwork because of this administrative change.

Mr. Lukis explained the Trust allotment to the DEP and how the only portion of the project that will not be funded is the MWRA water that will be used when the plant is shut down. Mr. Healy, serving as DWWD Board Clerk, will sign the documentation for submission.

Discussion was held regarding available and changing funding.

**Next Meeting**

The next DWWD meeting will be held remotely on Monday, July 14<sup>th</sup>, at 6:30pm.

Mr. Merithew requested a meeting adjournment motion. Mr. Lexander motioned to adjourn the meeting; 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 meeting was adjourned at 9:26pm.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Kathy Travers Reynolds  
Recording Secretary