

As voted by the Board of Trustees and in accordance with the notice of the meeting, the Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Portland Water District was held at the Jeff P. Nixon Training Center, 225 Douglass Street, Portland, Maine, on Monday, February 28, 2022. Attending from staff were Messrs. Kane, Crovo, Firmin, Wallace and Mses. Lewis, Katsiaficas, Demers and Walker.

The meeting was convened by President Douglas at 6:04 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence.

ROLL CALL

The roll was called by the Clerk. Trustee Garrison was absent.

ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

Trustee Levinsky made a motion to accept the minutes of the Regular Meeting of January 24, 2022, seconded by Trustee Cote. Voted all in favor.

Trustee Rich made a motion to accept the minutes of the Workshop Meeting of February 14, 2022, seconded by Trustee Cote. Voted all in favor.

Trustee Garrison joined the meeting at 6:08 p.m.

INVITATION FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

None

REPORTS

Operations Committee

Trustee Shattuck-Heidorn provided a summary of the Operations Committee meeting on February 14, 2022. Staff made a recommendation to amend the engineering contract with Wright Pierce for application engineering and integration services of the new network infrastructure associated with the Wastewater Network #2 Upgrade Project. This will be taken up under new business. Staff also provided an overview of the District's water pressure zones and began a review of distribution system operations and maintenance. Due to time constraints this presentation will be continued at a future meeting.

Planning Committee

Trustee Siviski provided a summary of the Planning Committee meeting on February 14, 2022. Paul Hunt and Donna Katsiaficas provided overview and history of the railroad corridor that run adjacent to the lake within the 2 mile limit. They provided an update on the Mountain Div. Rail Use Advisory Council work to date. They noted that there is still strong advocacy from trail enthusiasts to allow the trail to be built along the railroad through the corridor but the District and MDOT have clearly noted that the MDOT have no legal rights to build the trail along this stretch of the railroad. The District has proposed redirecting the trail away from the lake along this stretch and has noted that the District is open to utilizing some its land to accomplish this. Staff noted that it might be helpful to walk the area that might be utilized for the trail and Trustee Beck and Trustee Lunt noted they would like to participate. Staff reviewed the proposed 2022 Committee Work Plan and noted that if any Committee members wanted anything on the work plan or to add anything on the monthly Committee agenda to just reach out to the Committee chair.

Administration and Finance Committee

Trustee Cote provided a summary of the Administration and Finance Committee meeting on February 14, 2022. Staff presented a motion establishing Juneteenth a holiday for non-union employees. This will be taken up under new business. Staff presented a motion authorizing the issuance of a \$7.8M water bond. The bond would finance 2022 water main renewal projects throughout the service territory. This will also be taken up under new business. Eric Sawyer, Safety Specialist, provided an overview of the 2022 safety program. At the December 2021 committee meeting, the Committee approved a cost-of-living increase for current pensioners and requested additional information on what other entities provide for annual pension increases. The Committee reviewed the information at their January 2022 meeting. It was noted that the District provides an increase of up to 50% of inflation. The Committee requested to know the estimated loss of value in pension benefits of not providing an adjustment of 100% of inflation. Staff provided that information at the meeting. Staff will continue to review the plan.

General Manager's Report

Ms. Lewis reported the water rate increase (3.7%) and the imposition of late fees on delinquent accounts goes into effect on March 1. Water main leak repairs have been keeping the staff busy – there have been 46 leaks repairs this year so far, with staff putting in 1,698 overtime hours. Helen Newman received the GM award for 2021 for her leadership, teamwork and work ethic.

NEW BUSINESS

Public Hearing authorizing the issuance of water bonds.

President Douglas opened the public hearing for comments. No one from the public was in attendance. President Douglas closed the public hearing.

Resolution 22-003, authorizing issuance of up to \$7,800,000 in water bonds to finance the installation and renewal of water mains and related infrastructure.

The approved 2022 Capital Improvement Plan includes \$10,610,000 of water distribution system upgrade projects being financed through the issuance of a \$7,800,000 bond and \$2,810,000 in withdrawals from the renewal and replacement fund. The bond will finance water main and related infrastructure improvements throughout the service territory.

At least \$2,000,000 of the projects will be projects listed on the System Infrastructure Assessment report filed with the PUC and, therefore, the projects' debt service costs are eligible to be funded from the capital reserve fund. That \$2,000,000 will be financed over 10 years with the remaining \$5,800,000 financed over 20 years.

It was moved by Trustee Cote and seconded by Trustee Beck.

It was Voted and unanimously,

RESOLVED, the issuance of up to \$7,800,000 in water bonds to finance the installation and renewal of water mains and related infrastructure is hereby authorized. The full form of the Resolution attached hereto is hereby approved and shall be attached to and incorporated as part of the minutes of this meeting.

Order 22-007, authorizing the addition of Juneteenth to the list of paid holidays.

Pursuant to state Law, 1 M.R.S. §150-H, “The Governor shall annually issue a proclamation designating the 3rd Saturday in June as Juneteenth Independence Day to commemorate the day freedom was proclaimed to all slaves in the South by Union General Gordon Granger in 1865, 2 1/2 years after the Emancipation Proclamation was signed”. The State of Maine began recognizing this holiday with a first proclamation in 2019.

Pursuant to state Law, 5 M.R.S. §59, “the State designates June 19th of each year as Juneteenth and as a state holiday. All nonessential state offices must be closed on Juneteenth.” This law was signed into law in June, 2021. Under state policy, when a paid state holiday falls on Saturday, it is celebrated on Friday; when it falls on Sunday, it is celebrated on Monday.

Given the significance of the holiday at the federal, state and local level, I propose to include Juneteenth on the list of paid holidays for Portland Water District employees, following the State’s policy. The paid holiday would be provided to non-union employees upon approval of the Board of Trustees; receipt of the paid holiday by union employees will be governed by the collective bargaining agreement.

It was moved by Trustee Cote and seconded by Trustee Garrison.

It was Voted and unanimously,

ORDERED, that Juneteenth is hereby added to the list of paid holidays for Portland Water District employees not covered by the Collective Bargaining Agreement with Teamsters Local 340; the Collective Bargaining Agreement shall govern the list of paid holidays for all employees covered by said Agreement.

Order 22-008, authorizing the General Manager to execute a service contract amendment with Wright Pierce.

The PWD’s SCADA system utilizes four individual radio networks to communicate data from remote sites to the SCADA servers. As the network hardware is approaching the end of its lifecycle, the District is in the process of upgrading each network over time. This CIP project includes upgrading Wastewater Network #2 which services a regional area including Windham, Gorham, Westbrook, and Cumberland.

As approved by Board resolution in May of 2020, the comprehensive method for procuring engineering services was approved for use on this project, allowing the same firm to be utilized for preliminary and final design as well as construction services. A contract for design services with Wright-Pierce was approved by Board resolution in August of 2020. The design was completed in December 2021.

This project is expected to be completed by the end of 2022, depending on equipment lead times.

The PWD project team is recommending that Wright-Pierce’s design contract be amended to include performing the application engineering and integration services of the new network infrastructure. The fee for this work will be \$136,911.

It was moved by Trustee Shattuck-Heidorn and seconded by Trustee Cote.

It was Voted and unanimously,

WHEREAS, the Board authorized the comprehensive method of engineering services for the Wastewater Network #2 Upgrades in May of 2020 (Project); and

WHEREAS, the Board authorized a service contract with Wright Pierce in August of 2020 for the Project,

ORDERED, the General Manager is hereby authorized to execute a service contract amendment with Wright Pierce in the amount of \$136,911 for application engineering and integration services of the new network infrastructure associated with the Wastewater Network #2 Upgrade Project (CIP 2020 – 177/3126).

Resolution 22-004, appointing representatives to the Standish Steering Committee.

The Standish Steering Committee has requested to meet. One of the items they would like to discuss is using a piece of PWD property for parking. The Steering Committee has 3 representatives who are Trustees of the Water District. Trustee Cote and President Douglas have agreed to serve on the Committee along with Trustee Lunt.

It was moved by President Douglas and seconded by Trustee Garrison

It was Voted and unanimously,

BE IT RESOLVED that the Trustees Cote, Lunt and Douglas will serve as representatives of the Portland Water District on the Standish Steering Committee.

OTHER BUSINESS

It was moved by Trustee Siviski, seconded by Trustee Rich to add one more item to the business agenda. Voted all in favor.

Order 22-009, authorizing the issuance of “Green Bonds”.

The Board approved the issuance of water bonds at the February 28, 2022 meeting. The bonds will provide funds to finance the installation and renewal of water main improvements and other related infrastructure upgrades and improvements. These are environmentally beneficial projects designed to ensure safe drinking water for the public in the State in accordance with State, Federal and local standards. Therefore, the bonds can be designated as “Green Bonds”.

It was Voted and unanimously,

ORDERED, that the \$7.8 million water bonds authorized on February 28, 2022 are designated as “green bonds”, with the proceeds used for “green” purposes.

SECOND INVITATION FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

None

TRUSTEE COMMENTS

President Douglas asked the Trustees to forward suggestions for an HR consultant to help with the search for a new GM. She also advised the Board that in March, they will have an opportunity to elect a new President and Vice President of the Board, and that they should consider if they want those positions.

Trustee Lunt let the Board know that he had been in touch with the Town of Standish and is waiting for them to send a list of possible dates and times for the Steering Committee to meet. He will let the Board know when they have a confirmed date and time.

Trustee Cote told the Board that he had testified at the legislature today on a bill affecting the water reclassification of the lower Presumpscot River. He thanked the staff for acting quickly on the bill and for pulling together materials that were used to present PWD's case to the legislators.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

None

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 6:47 p.m.

Submitted by,

Donna M. Katsiaficas
Clerk