

As voted by the Board of Trustees and in accordance with the notice of the meeting, the monthly Workshop Meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Portland Water District was held in the Nixon Training Center at the general offices of the District, 225 Douglass Street, Portland, Maine on June 14, 2021. In attendance from staff were Messrs. Crovo, Kane, Wallace, Firmin, and Mses. Lewis, Katsiaficas, Demers and Walker. President Douglas convened the Workshop at 6:36 p.m.

All Trustees were present except Trustee Siviski.

1. COVID Return to Workplace Update

Carrie Lewis, General Manager, discussed the current plan to return remote workers to offices.

Ms. Lewis welcomed the Trustees back to the first in-person meeting in 15 months. She then explained the challenge of bringing staff back to work in the buildings. The target is to have all employees back to their pre-pandemic schedule by Labor Day. This gives employees time to reorganize their lives and take vacations. Those who are eager to get back to the office have started to return already. Information Services is making one-hour appointment with staff before employees come back to review their work station set up. There is significant interest in continuing to work remotely as an option. She is aware that are significant pressures on recruitment and retention to have some kind of hybrid work available.

Trustee Willey strongly encouraged all to get vaccinated. Ms. Lewis stated new hires are coming in vaccinated.

2. Legislative Update

Donna Katsiaficas, Corporate Counsel, and Scott Firmin, Director of Wastewater Services, discussed the status of bills being monitored in the present legislative session, and how those bills could affect the District's budget.

Ms. Katsiaficas started the presentation explaining the challenges of this legislative session. Hearings and workshops on current bills took place until the end of May and nothing was passed. Sessions have been long and the goal is to adjourn by June 16. Many of the bills are in limbo. All bills passed, that do not have an emergency preamble, by June 16 will go into effect 90 days after adjournment.

The current State of Emergency in Maine will end on June 30. Remote meetings will be allowed until July 30. LD 32 – looks like it will pass. A policy will need to be written for the Board to govern how people who are not present at the meeting can participate. There is no requirement to allow remote public meeting participation but if the Board wants to allow it, a policy must be written.

Ms. Katsiaficas spoke on the 3 labor law bill that we have been following. The majority have been postponed to the next legislative session. If LD 677 goes forward, it is expected the Governor will veto the bill.

Mr. Firmin took over the presentation and spoke regarding PFAS and Solid Waste Disposal. In the last 2 years our costs to dispose of biosolids will have gone up by a million dollars. LD 1600 was passed and signed by the Governor. This bill allows a charge of \$10 per ton on any disposal of “municipal sludge”; impact to PWD is expected to be \$237,400/yr.

Ms. Katsiaticas resumed the presentation and discussed the Freedom of Access Law changes. There are 2 bills that will have minor changes. The first bill has been passed and limits the fee charged for copies to 10 cents a page. The second bill has not passed but is expect to. This change will allow 2 hours of free research and a \$25 per hour charge after that. The current FOAA policy will need to updated to reflect these changes.

The bill proposed as LD 672 has been completely changed and approved. The original proposed was to look at a paved recreational trail, a portion of which is on PWD land. The Legislature revamped it completely and is now directing MDOT to review the Mountain Division Rail Corridor potential for nonrail uses through a rail advisory council. We will participate with MDOT and make them aware of our concerns.

A copy of the presentation has been attached to these minutes.

3. Other Business

Ms. Lewis led a power point presentation highlighting Trustee Lunt's 25 years of service. The presentation included highlights of Trustee Lunt's career at PWD, and highlights of what has happened since his tenure on the Board.

Trustee Lunt was presented a PWD chair in recognition of his service.

Trustee Cote presented Trustees Lunt and Libby with a pen he had made out of a piece of 1850 wood pipe. He has enjoyed his time serving with Bill and Gary.

Trustee Lunt commented he has great people to work with and enjoys the work.

4. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

Submitted by,

Donna M. Katsiaticas
Clerk