

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 Tuesday, October 15, 2019. In attendance from staff were Messrs. Crovo, Kane, Firmin, Wallace, Johnson, and Mses. Lewis, Katsiaticas, Jackson and Demers.

Trustees Garrison and Douglas were absent.

President Cote convened the workshop at 6:42 p.m.

1. Sebago Clean Waters and PWD and Other Business.

Ms. Lewis reminded the Board that 2 contributions in the amount of \$20,000 each were approved by the Board in 2018 to support Sebago Clean Waters. Marketing for the organization is ramping up. Larger projects are coming through with larger dollar amounts involved.

The marketing brochures of SCW are describing PWD as a partner in the endeavor. PWD is the only entity listed as a partner, however PWD is not the only partner. PWD is one of 9 partners.

There is an implicit connection between SCW fundraising and PWD contributions. Given the SCW conservation goals of 35,000 acres over the next 15 years, PWD's contributions will be expected to be 9 million dollars. In addition, if properties around the lower bay become available for purchase, PWD will be required to put funds into buying those as part of PWD's priority for purchasing those properties.

SCW has been receptive to making changes to its marketing brochures. Ms. Lewis asked if the Board was comfortable contributing up to 9 million dollars.

President Cote asked if PWD had money to contribute towards the 9 million today. Mr. Kane said no.

Trustee Willey asked who the 9 partners are. Mr. Paul Hunt identified the partners. They include the Nature Conservancy, Open Space Institute and Loon Echo Land Trust. Trustee Willey asked which partners have money to contribute. Mr. Hunt provided a history as to how we have arrived to the place where we are today as far as contributions and the direction being taken for conservation. Trustee Willey noted that this effort is different than conservation efforts taking place in lower bay; he recognized that it is still important to do. Mr. Hunt noted that SCW must raise 41 million dollars for their conservation efforts. Trustee Willey cautioned against looking like the "heavy" by acquiring a lot of property in an area not in the immediate watershed. He noted acquisitions needed to be spread out in time and geography. Mr. Hunt said they are reaching out to five towns to discuss the effort. He detailed many issues which are being discussed and under consideration, including response from the towns and the level and detail of fundraising.

Trustee Levinsky noted that infrastructure needs to be updated, and there is only so much that can be done at a time. He sees this as different, as if the full 41 million dollars were available, much could be accomplished at once.

Trustee Rich asked about educating the public and felt public education was good. She asked about contributions already made by PWD. She agrees with the direction being taken by staff.

Ms. Lewis noted that the brochures target municipalities and businesses. Trustee Rich asked if the brochures tell the story that PWD is contributing some funding, not a majority or all. Mr. Hunt responded that PWD has consistently said that it needs partners. He noted however that the partners all come with their own needs, views and boards. PWD loses an element of control of the message when it has partners. Ms. Lewis said she wanted to get on the record that PWD match is not a guarantee of future funding. The brochures are not clear on that point. The Trustees agreed that a match is not a guarantee and suggested that the brochures and message be revised.

President Cote cautioned that infrastructure fixed costs are already at a million dollars; with ongoing commitments, it would be possible to have a rate increase of 4% without doing anything. In actuality, he recognized that as Mr. Kane said, only if there is a surplus is there money put into this type of contribution.

Mr. Hunt said that the partners know there is no guarantee, but the partners do expect the PWD to contribute. He noted that 17,000 acres have recently been put on the market; much of it is not in the watershed.

Ms. Lewis confirmed with the Board that staff should continue in the direction it is moving, giving context to the Board when contributions are solicited from PWD. Trustee Willey responded that ultimately land purchased with our contributions will not be developed, which is of benefit to PWD. The areas upstream of the lake are lower priority, although still important.

Mr. Hunt offered to review the algorithm for PWD contributions at a future point. Trustee Rich said she wanted to make sure there is public buy in. Mr. Hunt reminded the Board he is looking for confirmation the Board is comfortable with SCW goal.

Trustee Lunt stated that over 15 years, the 9 million dollar contribution may need to go up due to increasing land costs. He noted that today PWD can't bind future Boards.

Trustee Libby said the reason to do this is to maintain the waiver of filtration. Building a filtration plant is more expensive. It is in the self-interest of PWD to consider making large contributions and he is comfortable doing so.

The General Manager reminded the Board that PWD could lose the waiver of filtrations at anyway due to political reasons.

Other business was discussed, including that October 23 is imagine a day without water day.

Trustees are invited to attend the sewer assessment meetings in their town if they so desire.

2. PWD Focus on Safety. Mary Demers, Director of Employee Services, provided the 2019 safety update to the Board.

Ms. Demers described PWD's goal of having well trained and satisfied employees. PWD employees do believe they are working in a safe environment per the employee survey of 2017.

PWD undertakes many safety and training initiatives through departments. PWD does it because it is required to by law, and also because it is the right thing to do. Some of the best initiatives undertaken by PWD are often at the suggestion of employees; these include the purchase of new gas detectors and defibrillators.

New Developments in Safety: PWD employees are using new air purifying respirators. Defensive driving class has been offered. Personal Protective Equipment has been added to the stock room. When a heat advisory is issued by NOAA, based on job assignment, employees can wear shorts. Fall field uniforms added Carhartt warm jackets for the winter.

A Safety Committee meets quarterly and discusses relevant safety topics. Employees feel safe reporting hazards.

In 2020, more safety training will occur. More will happen with the departments at monthly meetings. Whenever an accident occurs, Donna Libby investigates and shares information.

President Cote asked if there is PWD liability if a PWD employee sees an unsafe situation with respect to a contractor's operations. Staff responded that PWD employees do not direct a contractor's operations, but do tell a contractor to inspect their own operations if PWD sees something that is not safe.

3. Employee Suggestions. Carrie Lewis, General Manager, provided the Board with an overview of suggestions to improve PWD that were provided by employees earlier this year.

Ms. Lewis provided a handout to the Board of employee suggestions and responses to those suggestions. The handout is attached to these minutes.

She noted a big issue was paid time off. She also explained the adjustment in vacation accruals and why the change was done. Employee recognition programs will be reviewed.

One big issue coming up is sustainability. Right now, people needed for the effort are working on the ABC project. Once that project is completed, they can be freed up to work on sustainability efforts. Trustee Willey noted that a policy should be developed if PWD is to spend money on sustainability issues, as right now expenditures are aimed at water and wastewater. Ms. Lewis noted that a strategy and a plan and approach will be developed over time.

She offered to provide more info to the Board on the items presented as requested.

Trustee Willey said he didn't understand the solar item presented to him in the Finance and Admin Committee. He wants information provided to the Trustees to discuss it.

Ms. Lewis explained PWD is looking to partner with Portland and South Portland in a project where PWD would get energy credits back. RFP's are being put out to developers to build the solar development. PWD has agreed to invest \$10,000 at this point to participate. Trustee Willey stated the Board should have been consulted. Ms. Lewis noted that it is within her signing authority. He asked about PWD's total commitment and Ms. Lewis said she would provide information; right now, PWD's only commitment is the \$10,000.

Trustee Lunt asked about solar projects in PWD's territory. Mr. Kane stated PWD would never own any part of a project. In order to get full federal and state credits, a developer needs PWD's electric load. PWD is helping the state meet its new goals by reaching 50% renewable energy.

More info will be provided. Trustee Lunt asked for a workshop to get into this a little deeper. The financial benefit needs to be explained to the Trustees and the Board.

Ms. Lewis explained how the ABC project is large, complex and taking up staff resources. It is scheduled to go live in October, 2020. She is insisting that the staff not be distracted from the project for sustainable energy initiatives at this time.

4. Adjourn.

The meeting adjourned at 7:48 p.m.

Submitted by,

Donna M. Katsiaficas
Clerk