

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 Monday, December 9, 2019. In attendance from staff were Messrs. Crovo, Kane, Firmin, Wallace, Johnson and Meses. Lewis, Katsiaficas and Demers. Mr. Charlie Agnew of Competitive Energy Services was also in attendance. President Cote convened the Workshop at 6:48 p.m.

All Trustees were present.

1. Nutrient Optimization Discussion.

Scott Firmin, Director of Wastewater Services, provided an update to the Board on Nutrient Optimization.

PWD's goal is to protect Casco Bay. EEWTF permit requires weekly Nitrogen testing from May – October of each year – the period when the water is at its warmest. The permit also requires nutrient optimization.

In 2019, Nitrogen output was higher than in the spring of 2018. PWD discharges an average of 873 pounds of nitrogen per day during denitrification season. Mr. Firmin described the efforts of his staff to reduce nutrient output and said he was pleased with the continuing improvement in the results of their effort and operations. PWD is participating in the City of Portland Integrated Planning process. It is also part of the Casco Bay Estuary Nutrient Council with a final report completed in 2019. These efforts show PWD's engagement in the process of coming up with a strategy and successfully implementing nutrient reduction.

Trustees asked questions including about financial impacts. Mr. Firmin said last year the impact was about \$35,000 in power costs. The primary cost challenge is the cost of training staff. Mr. Firmin explained the aeration project and the impacts.

Ms. Lewis complimented Mr. Firmin on his efforts and noted he is a leader in this area.

Mr. Firmin's presentation is attached as part of the minutes.

2. CES Solar Project.

David Kane, Director of Administration, provided a conceptual description of the renewable energy procurement that is being explored. Charlie Agnew from CES was in attendance.

Mr. Kane began by giving an overview of past efforts by PWD to become more energy efficient. The Net Energy Billing Credit is another effort to promote Green and reduce energy costs. Effective September 2019, a new law took effect allowing larger projects to be eligible. Financial credit will be based on the standard offer price. Credits will be financial and not kilowatt hours.

Mr. Kane then provided an example of how the net energy billing credit works.

CES has created a group of organizations – a consortium – to bundle demand. They issued an RFP to potential renewable energy producers. Consortium members would enter into a contract with each renewable energy producer. The contract would be for a period of 20 years.

Mr. Kane then provided a list of potential benefits and risks of such an arrangement. (See attached presentation).

Mr. Agnew described the political risks, noting that by including many different types of business in the consortium, it mitigates the risk. The consortium includes public, educational, retail and large industries.

Trustees asked varying questions about the risk to PWD. Trustee Garrison noted that technology changes and even better incentives could pose a risk and if technology improves, if PWD is locked into a long term contract, PWD would be affected. Mr. Agnew also responded to his concerns.

A project timeline was provided to the Board. More information will be provided to the Board in January.

Mr. Agnew explained the process CES is going through to review the projects that were bid through the RFP process.

The Trustees had a discussion about energy and subsidies and the cost of green energy. Several Trustees requested additional information in order to evaluate the proposals being made.

3. Freedom of Access Training.

Donna Katsiaticas, Corporate Counsel, provided training to the Board on Maine's Freedom of Access Act.

Ms. Katsiaticas reviewed Maine's Freedom of Access Act with the Board and the Trustees played a version of Jeopardy FOAA.

4. Other Business.

None

5. Adjourn.

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Submitted by,

Donna M. Katsiaticas
Clerk