

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, May 9, 2022. In attendance from staff were Messrs. Crovo, Kane, Firmin, Wallace and Meses. Lewis and Demers. Vice-President Lunt convened the Workshop at 6:30 p.m.

Trustees Beck, Garrison, Levinsky and Douglas were absent.

1. 2021 Audit Report

Representatives from Wipfli LLP, the District's auditor, presented the 2021 audit report.

Christian Smith, Wipfli Audit Partner, presented to the Board. An unmodified opinion was issued by the auditors - the best kind of letter that could be issued. No material weaknesses or deficiencies were identified.

Key Financial Ratios and Results

All Funds Combined	2021	2020
Current Ratio	2.20	2.65
Debt Coverage Ratio	1.74	1.68
Change in Net Position	\$7,221,174	\$7,629,871

PWD has a AA bond rating.

2. Corporate Giving

Michelle Clements, Public Relations Manager, reviewed popular PWD community relations programs and presented recommendations and solicited feedback for program modifications and enhancements.

The Portland Water District's Community Relations Program focuses on being a resource to the community to expand our positive image and support our community in a meaningful way that connects to our mission and purpose. Our approach is modest as appropriate for a public utility.

Community engagement activities involve hosting and participating in special events, providing speakers and resources, lending a portable water fountain, donating water related items, as well as sponsoring related events through advertising. But the two main programs which continued uninterrupted through COVID and are most visible are the DiPietro Scholarship and the Water Bottle Filling Station Grants.

The Portland Water District has administered the DiPietro Scholarship for 18 years and in that time has given out 21 scholarships totaling \$30,000 in awards. Generally one is given out a year, but a few years we have given two. The scholarship was established in memory of long-term trustee Joseph DiPietro. The scholarship is given to a local student who is pursuing a degree in a related field. Over the last few years the program has increased reach to the trade programs out of SMCC at the committee's request.

This year's recipient, Dylan Anderson, was disappointed he could not come to the last meeting to accept the award, but Westbrook High School will happily present the plaque and scholarship to him at their class night June 8.

Trustees were asked if they had any feedback on the program after 18 years of administration as well as thoughts on expanding the program to further encourage the development of future water/wastewater industry employees by creating a second scholarship that would directly target individuals who are pursuing a career in the water/wastewater industry as indicated by involvement in our field. Trustee response was varied and in general did not seem to support a second scholarship. Some interest was expressed in increasing the scholarship from \$1,500, which it has been since inception. Other suggestions were to partner with others, provide a forum on the bill for customers to donate to the scholarship, and Engineers Without Borders.

The water bottle filling station grant program was established in 2013 after a successful partnership with the PWM Jetport to install two units in the terminals. Over eight years, PWD has awarded \$43,500 to support the installation of approximately 32 fountains. We have had a maximum award limit of \$7,000 since the program was established, prices have increased slightly over the years. Due to the pandemic, trustees approved \$12,950 in the maximum awards for 2022 as a way to support and respond to community needs. So far, three of the seven recipients have purchased their units and one, Memorial Middle School decided they could not accept the award. Trustees were solicited for feedback and asked if they were interested in increasing the maximum award limit amount to \$10,000 a year permanently. Trustees praised the program's impact and those in attendance expressed interest in raising the annual limit to \$10,000. They requested that the increase be highlighted over and above increasing the line item in the budget.

3. Other Business

- The Board can expect to see under "Other Business" at the upcoming business meeting, a request to add a position of "Lead and Copper Coordinator" outside of the budget process. The job description was not finalized in time for the Admin & Finance Committee to hear it tonight. The position is essentially a project manager needed to ensure PWD's full compliance with the Lead and Copper Rule Revisions, which involve a complete inventory of the material types of public and private water services, implementing a new water sampling strategy including sampling at schools and child care facilities, and public outreach, among other things. The position could be filled by a person with a public health, scientific, or technical background.
- At the upcoming business meeting, the Board will also be asked to ratify the General Manager's signing of an agreement to comply with the 2022 rules for a loan and principal forgiveness for the North Windham sewer system. The agreement was due to the state on May 6. Given the Board's support of the project and this funding mechanism, Ms. Lewis signed the agreement prior to getting formal board approval to do so.
- Ecomaine is exploring creating a regional solid waste program and has reached out to PWD as a possible billing agent. This is highly conceptual and years away from implementation. This could be a source of revenue for PWD, and it appears that it could be implemented with the District being "invisible" in the process. We will keep the Board up to date if and when this continues to develop.

4. Executive Session

Pursuant to 1 M.R.S. §405 (6)(D) labor negotiations, the Board went into Executive Session to discuss the status of labor union contract negotiations with Teamsters Local Union #340.

A motion was made by Trustee Cote and seconded by Trustee Siviski to go into executive session to discuss the status of labor union contract negotiations with Teamsters Local Union #340. Voted all in favor.

The Executive Session began at 7:01 p.m. and ended at 7:35 p.m. Motion to come out of Executive Session and adjourn made by Trustee Cote, second by Trustee Siviski. And approved unanimously.

5. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

Submitted by,

Carrie E. Walker
Assistant Clerk