

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 April 10, 2017. In attendance from staff were Messrs. Crovo, Kane, Firmin, Rodriguez, Wallace, Johnson and Mses. Lewis, Demers and Katsiaficas.

All Trustees were present with the exception of Trustees Garrison and Douglas.

President Lunt convened the meeting at 6:38 pm.

1. Fire Protection Increase.

Carrie Lewis, General Manager, reviewed the fire protection rate increase and provided background on activities that ensure adequate fire protection in the communities served by PWD.

Ms. Lewis explained that there was an error on the rate sheet that was originally given to the Board in March. She explained that the Insurance Service Office (ISO) issues a rating based on the quality of fire protection. South Portland has a rating of 1 because of the excellent service provided by PWD. She explained that PWD has 5,048 public hydrants in the service area of PWD and they are inspected every year. She detailed how inspections were conducted.

Trustee Siviski asked about the density of hydrants and why South Portland had a higher ISO rating. President Lunt said one of the criteria used is the fire load - it is calculated for the area. If there is more fire load, there is more water that must be available. This is taken into account when doing the ISO rating.

Hydrant repairs peak in the winter. The components in the fire protection rate are the number of hydrants and the inch feet of main. Cumberland led the growth of inch feet of main and the number of hydrants between 2005 and 2015.

Six percent of PWD's revenues go towards public fire protection.

Ms. Lewis then provided a chart showing the current and proposed fire protection charges broken down by community.

President Lunt commented on private fire hydrants and explained that private hydrant owners could enter into an agreement with PWD to have PWD inspect them. He indicated that private hydrants were not always reliable; fire fighters used public hydrants first, and private hydrants last.

Jim Wallace, Director of Water Operations, explained the inspections that were conducted of private hydrants. He could not comment as to how many private hydrants were out there that were not inspected by PWD. A private hydrant is not attached to a public main, and is not in a public right of way. Examples are hydrants in a mall or at Sappi.

2. Westbrook/Gorham/Windham Regional Treatment Plant – Aeration System Discussion.

Scott Firmin, Director of Wastewater Services, and Paul Rodriguez, Senior Project Engineer, lead a discussion regarding the aeration system at the Westbrook Regional Wastewater Treatment Facility.

Mr. Firmin began the presentation with an explanation of the operational problems that recently occurred at the Westbrook treatment plant. The violation occurred on March 7th. Solids were not settling well in the clarifier. The Sludge Volume Index increased in a week to over 700.

The Environmental Services group of PWD was called in to assist in assessing the problem. Filaments appeared to be a problem; they affected the settling of the sludge. By knowing the type of filament, the number and a number of other filament characteristics, PWD can begin to address the settling issue.

Mr. Firmin detailed how the operators of the plant responded to the situation. Aerator speeds were increased, chlorine was added and sludge wasting was increased. Recovery can take 2-3 weeks. Mr. Firmin provided pictures of the filaments to show the Board what the filaments looked like.

Filaments grow in low dissolved oxygen conditions (DO). PWD is not required to monitor DO by its permit.

The plant has since returned to normal. Six violations of TSS and BOD occurred during that one week period where filaments were a problem.

Moving forward, the process will continue to be monitored more closely. There will be operational challenges - every time a change is made, something different can occur. He complimented the team of employees who worked on the issue from AMAP, the Lab, Operations and Maintenance.

Trustee Swinton asked about using chlorine. Mr. Firmin stated that it is only added when it is needed. It is not being added now that the situation is under control.

Trustee Willey asked about the reporting of the violation. Mr. Firmin stated within 24 hours PWD provides notice to DEP of the violation. Within 5 working days an incident report is provided to DEP. The report provides significant detail about cause and what PWD has done to remedy the situation. In this instance, DEP showed concern about the violation. Staff worked with DEP openly and honestly about the problem. A favorable inspection report was issued by DEP as a result of an inspection that occurred after the incident.

Paul Rodriguez, Senior Project Engineer, then took over the presentation. He discussed the Aeration System Evaluation conducted at the Westbrook plant. The Westbrook plant went online in 1978. Mr. Rodriguez explained the configuration of the aeration system and how it worked. He explained the nature of improvements that would be desired to the present system to improve it. Using his slide presentation, he explained the technology analysis that occurred at both Westbrook and the East End Plant. The Evaluation recommended that loading continue to be monitored. Consideration of potential regulatory changes (nutrient removal) should be eventually planned for.

The Aeration System Upgrade should begin to be planned; there will be an investment of \$7.15 Million Dollars, if construction is in 2021. The aeration upgrade is a 3 year project.

President Lunt asked if DEP would give us consideration regarding violations if we are working on the system upgrade. Mr. Rodriguez said they would work with PWD if PWD was moving forward and making some progress.

Loading to the plant is increasing, although the loading is not exceeding the Westbrook plant capacity.

Trustee Libby asked about the acceptance of septage in Westbrook. Mr. Firmin said Westbrook does take in more than the Portland facility. It is not causing the operational issues at the plant. Westbrook is accepting 40% of the septage that PWD's permit allows.

Trustee Libby asked if there would be odor complaints if half of the facility is closed to do the aeration project. Mr. Rodriguez indicated complaints could occur; the project will be a major challenge.

3. Other Business.

Ms. Lewis mentioned the Southern Maine Regional Water Council annual meeting occurring on April 27. She asked that the Trustees notify Carrie Walker if they wished to attend and transportation could be arranged. President Lunt urged Trustees to attend.

She also reminded the Board that clothing orders are due on Friday.

Trustee Willey will not be at the business meeting.

President Lunt mentioned the new Standish beach and said the Town had done a good job on the beach.

4. Adjourn.

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

Submitted by,

Donna M. Katsiaficas
Clerk