

As voted by the Board of Trustees and in accordance with the notice of the meeting, the Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Portland Water District was held at the Jeff P. Nixon Training Center, 225 Douglass Street, Portland, Maine, and via Zoom, on Monday, November 25, 2024. Attending from staff were C. Crovo, S. Firmin, J. Wallace, E. Archibald, D. Katsiaficas, M. Clements, and C. Cote. Michael Shaughnessy of Westbrook was also in attendance.

President Lunt convened the meeting at 6:01 p.m., with the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence.

ROLL CALL

The roll was called by the Clerk. All Trustees were present.

DECLARATION OF ELECTION RESULTS AND INAUGURATION FOR THE TRUSTEES REPRESENTING CAPE ELIZABETH/SOUTH PORTLAND AND WESTBROOK ELECTED ON NOVEMBER 5, 2024

Trustee John Voltz, representing Cape Elizabeth and South Portland, was sworn in as he began his five-year term. Trustee Malory Shaughnessy, representing Westbrook, was sworn in as she began her five-year term.

ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

Trustee Willett made a motion to accept the minutes of the Regular Meeting of October 28, 2024, seconded by Trustee Crockett. It was voted all in favor.

Trustee Crockett made a motion to accept the minutes of the Workshop Meeting of November 12, 2024, seconded by Trustee Willett. It was voted all in favor.

INVITATION FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

None

REPORTS

Operations Committee

Trustee Shattuck-Heidorn provided a summary of the Operations Committee meeting on November 12, 2024.

Staff shared an update on a draft Memorandum of Agreement with ecomaine to pursue the location of a possible regional biosolids facility at ecomaine.

The Wastewater and Water Services Departments presented their respective 2025 budgets. Highlights of each department's operational budgets include the following:

- Wastewater Services highlighted the final 2025 recommended budget in the six communities that PWD serves. The overall budget increase was \$959,713 or 6.9%. The majority of the increase related to anticipated increases in wages and benefits, chemicals, contracted services and purchased power. The budget was within the municipal expectations for each of the wastewater communities.
- Water Services reviewed accomplishments from 2024 and noted some of the initiatives planned for 2025. The overall budget increase was \$698,080 or 6.3%. The majority of the increases are in the areas of wages and benefits, contracted services, materials and supplies and purchased power. There was also discussion of how strategies implemented over the past couple years have helped with recruitment and retention.

Planning Committee

Trustee Crockett provided a summary of the Planning Committee meeting on November 12, 2024.

Managers in the Asset Management and Planning Department, which is comprised of Environmental and Engineering Services, presented their respective budgets as described in the 2025 Comprehensive Budget Report. In particular, the presentation focused on pages 198-235.

Greg Pellerin, engineering services manager, presented an overview of the Asset Engineering and SCADA Services budgets. Josh Hudak, Facilities Manager, presented the budget for facilities. Paul Hunt, Environmental Manager, presented the environmental services budget. Each described their overall focus for the year, itemized some key budgetary and staffing changes, and then listed some of the goals and initiatives for 2025.

The Asset Engineering budget includes a 13.7% increase, driven in part by the addition of two positions. One was formerly in IT, and the other is a newly created engineer position to help deliver capital projects. Much of the remaining increase is from increases in wages and benefits for existing staff.

The SCADA Services budget is increased by 4.1%.

The Facility Services budget is up 3%, driven by salary and wage increases and increased cost of transportation. There are no additional staff positions in Facilities.

The Environmental Services budget, comprising both Source Protection and Water Quality Programs, including the laboratories, has an 8.4% increase. The two increases that make up the bulk of the change are wages and benefits for existing staff and increased costs for required laboratory analyses. There are no additional staff positions in Environmental Services.

Administration and Finance Committee

Trustee Willett provided a summary of the Administration and Finance Committee meeting on November 12, 2024.

The administrative departments' managers presented their respective budgets. Overall, the departments are requesting \$7,488,234, a \$120,047, or 1.6%, increase. Each manager provided an explanation of their budget request and a summary of their 2025 goals. Staff responded to a number of questions. The Committee made no requests to change the proposed budget.

General Manager's Report

Mr. Crovo noted to the Trustees that in their table packets tonight, there is a copy of the Strategic Plan and a copy of the brochure for people who go on tours to the wastewater plant.

Michelle Clements, Communications and Public Relations Director, discussed the launch of a new QR code and online permitting process for our visitors to the Sebago Lake Land Reserve. A video was created showing the new process and was shown. She also mentioned the media attention over the last month. We are currently working with WCSH 6 on a spot that will likely run next week on lead and our completion of the lead service line inventory, and our certification that we don't have any lead service lines. Last week you may have seen we also had a segment run with Paul Hunt talking about fluoridation, and that was also on WCSH 6. Lastly, a segment with Chad Davis being interviewed about cybersecurity was built into a longer feature.

NEW BUSINESS

Order 24-028, adopting the 2025 Budget and Wastewater Assessment.

PWD staff prepared the 2025 Comprehensive Budget Report and presented the report to the Board at the October 28, 2024 meeting. The Administration and Finance, Operations, and Planning

Committees reviewed their respective areas of the budget at the November 12, 2024, Committee meetings. Incorporated in the proposed budget, the assessment amounts included provide funding to fully support the 2025 budgeted expenses.

It was moved by Trustee Willett and seconded by Trustee Levinsky.

ORDERED, that the 2025 Budget and Wastewater Assessments as presented by the General Manager at the October 28, 2024, Regular Board meeting are accepted and adopted and shall be filed with the minutes of this meeting; and pursuant to Section 12 of the District’s Charter, to assess for 2025 the participating municipalities for wastewater related costs as follows:

Town of Cape Elizabeth	\$2,474,052
Town of Cumberland	\$1,428,456
Town of Falmouth	\$314,112
Town of Gorham	\$1,712,484
City of Portland	\$17,609,172
City of Westbrook	\$4,111,872
Town of Windham	\$1,307,652

and to assess non-participating municipal corporations for billing-related costs as follows:

City of South Portland	\$248,760
Scarborough Sanitary District	\$18,348

Order 24-029, authorizing the final rate schedule for the water rate increase.

The proposed 2025 Budget assumes a water rate adjustment with an average adjustment of 5.9% effective January 1, 2025. The adjustment includes a rate differential between residential and commercial/industrial rates resulting in an increase of residential customer rates by 5.5%, commercial customers by 6.7%, and industrial customers by 7.4%. Fire protection charges are increasing by 5.2%.

Pursuant to Board rules, a public hearing was held on November 12, 2024. All customers received notification of the meeting to review the proposed rate adjustment. Supporting documentation was posted to the District’s website.

It was moved by Trustee Willett and seconded by Trustee Siviski.

It was Voted and unanimously,

ORDERED, that the final rate schedule for the water rate adjustment, attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference, is hereby adopted with an effective date of January 1, 2025.

Order 24-030, approving the revisions to the District’s Terms and Conditions.

The Water Terms and Conditions (T&C) are reviewed annually as part of the budget process, and the fees are updated to reflect actual costs. The last fee update was approved on November 27, 2023 (Order 23-040). Because the District was granted a waiver from the Public Utilities Commission from rate-related filings, the T&C changes need only Board approval.

The changes being proposed include the following:

- Updating fees to current costs. All fees include a new fee to cover supervisor and office-related costs.

- New Section 370: Ground wire attachments not allowed
- Section 340: A monthly fee for use of hydrant meter would be imposed.

It was moved by Trustee Willett and seconded by Trustee Siviski.

It was Voted and unanimously,

ORDERED, that the revisions to the Portland Water District’s Terms & Conditions of water service, attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference, are hereby adopted with an effective date of January 1, 2025.

Order 24-031, authorizing revisions to the Fee Schedule for Non-Water Tariff Services.

Starting in 2022, PWD reviews the Fee Schedule for Non-Water Tariff Services annually and updates the fees to reflect current costs as part of the budget review. The Fee Schedule for Non-Water Tariff Services schedule of fees outlines miscellaneous fees not included in the Water Schedule of Rates and Terms & Conditions. Staff is requesting no changes except for a 4% increase in the septage fee and a \$1 increase in the submeter fee.

It was moved by Trustee Willett and seconded by Trustee Crockett.

It was Voted and unanimously,

ORDERED, that the revision to the Fee Schedule for Non-Water Tariff Services, attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference, is hereby adopted with an effective date of January 1, 2025.

Order 24-032, adopting the 2025-2029 Capital Improvement Plan.

PWD staff prepared a detailed five-year capital plan (see pages 271 to 378 of the 2025 Comprehensive Budget Report). At the November 12, 2024, Board workshop, the Board of Trustees received a presentation outlining the proposed projects and recommended funding. The five-year total is over \$201M.

It was moved by Trustee Willett and seconded by Trustee Crockett.

It was Voted and unanimously,

ORDERED, the 2025-2026 Capital Improvement Plan is hereby adopted and the General Manager is authorized to solicit bids or proposals for the 2025 projects; except CIP# 182, project 3241\North Windham Wastewater system, and to authorize the General Manager to award contracts for approved projects to the lowest bidder if the bid is within the project budget and meets qualifications; and

BE IT FURTHER ORDERED, the General Manager shall solicit bids or proposals and partner with municipalities, Maine Department of Transportation (MDOT), and developers for the replacement and extension of water mains, services, valves, and hydrants as outlined in the Water Distribution Systems Program and to authorize the General Manager to award and enter into contracts if the bid or partnering proposals are within the overall program budget.

Resolution 24-014, declaring the Board’s intent to issue debt to reimburse costs incurred for the Water fund, and the Wastewater funds for Cape Elizabeth, Cumberland, Portland, Westbrook, Gorham, and Windham projects identified in the 2025 CIP.

The proposed 2025 Budget includes over \$54 million of capital projects. In compliance with Internal Revenue Service (IRS) regulation, an ‘intent to borrow’ motion must be approved by the Board before

expenditures are incurred on a project that may be financed with tax-exempt financing. Resolution 24-014 indicates the intent to borrow motion for all funds. Before a bond is actually authorized or issued, a public hearing will be held. Subsequent to the hearing, the Board will consider authorizing the bond.

It was moved by Trustee Willett and seconded by Trustee Crockett.

It was Voted and unanimously,

RESOLVED, the Board of Trustees hereby declares its intent to issue debt to reimburse costs incurred by the Portland Water District for the Water fund and the Wastewater funds for Cape Elizabeth, Cumberland, Portland, Westbrook, Gorham, and Windham projects identified in the 2025 CIP. The full form of the resolution is attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference, and shall be part of the minutes of this meeting.

Order 24-033, authorizing a Memorandum of Agreement with ecomaine.

The Portland Water District has been actively seeking a long-term biosolids management strategy in the wake of the challenges presented by recent legislative and regulatory restrictions placed upon biosolids management related to PFAS concerns. The consultant Brown and Caldwell have completed the initial Biosolids Master Plans and are currently refining them.

Current efforts of PWD seek to address biosolids management at PWD and possible economies of scale with other similar wastewater utilities in Maine. This Memorandum of Agreement allows for the continued investigation and possible siting of a biosolids at the ecomaine site.

This Memorandum of Agreement was approved by the ecomaine Board in October 2024.

A significant challenge for any such facility will be affordability concerns and this may require significant financial support.

Scott Firmin, Director of Operations - Wastewater, explained the current concept is a project that might go as far as sludge drying that would significantly reduce the volume of material, make it easier to landfill, and then also set us up to be able to take advantage of emerging processes like paralysis or gasification, that would actually produce a potentially valuable product with dozens of outlets.

It was moved by Trustee Shattuck-Heidorn and seconded by Trustee Siviski.

It was Voted and unanimously,

ORDERED, the General Manager is hereby authorized to execute the Memorandum of Agreement with ecomaine in substantial form as attached hereto, related to the possible siting of a Regional Biosolids Processing Facility at the ecomaine site.

Resolution 24-015, adopting the Board of Trustees meeting schedule for 2025.

The Trustees discussed moving the December 22nd meeting to December 15th, all were in agreement.

Vice-President McCann moved the amended Trustee meeting schedule for 2024, seconded by Trustee Siviski.

It was Voted and unanimously,

RESOLVED, to adopt the proposed Board of Trustees' meeting schedule for 2025, attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference.

OTHER BUSINESS

None

SECOND INVITATION FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

None

TRUSTEE COMMENTS

Trustee Levinsky asked if people on the lake in the winter will see markings are to define where they can go on the lake.

Trustee Libby welcomed the two new Trustees to the Board, and noted that members of the Board get along well with each other.

Trustee Voltz said he was happy to join the Board. He appreciated the quality of the budget materials provided to the Board, and he is looking forward to working with the Board.

Trustee Shaughnessy echoed his remarks and thanked the staff for the excellent quality of the budget materials.

President Lunt also welcomed the two new Board members. He explained the use of Committee system by the Board and said it works well.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

None

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 6:46 p.m.

Submitted by,

Donna M. Katsiaficas
Clerk