

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 at the Ecology Center of the District, 1 White Rock Road, Standish, Maine, on Monday, September 9, 2024. In attendance from staff were C. Crovo, D. Kane, J. Wallace, S. Firmin, P. Hunt, C. Brown, A. Pratt and D. Katsiaficas.

Trustees Douglas and Siviski were absent. President Lunt opened the workshop meeting at 6:35 p.m.

## **1. Watershed Conservation Update**

Paul Hunt, Environmental Services Manager, Carina Brown, Water Resources Specialist and Amanda Pratt, Water Resources Specialist, provided an update on the District's Watershed Conservation efforts.

Paul Hunt began his presentation by explaining the reason the District's conservation program exists is because the District has a waiver of filtration. It is in PWD's best interest to avoid having to pay to build one. The cost could be half a billion dollars.

An effective watershed control program is required by PWD's waiver of filtration. The land around the lake is forested, and naturally filtering the water. PWD owns 1% of the watershed. PWD is signing agreements that protect water quality and that keep the land from being developed. Forest conservation not only provides clean water, it provides wildlife habitats, clean air etc. Organizations interested in such effects partner with PWD and initiate land conservation in the watershed. Several land trusts are leading the way in this conservation.

Carina Brown then took over the presentation. She stated that PWD contributes up to 25% of appraised value for eligible projects; this helps land trusts with the acquisition of real estate interests for conservation purposes. She explained the application process that land trusts go through to apply for PWD funds. This includes pre-application, application, appraisals, maps, conservation value, project budget and other information including what the property will be used for and how the land will be managed.

After the project is approved by the Board, the next step is to proceed to closing and transfer of funds.

Amanda Pratt gave a history of the land trust deals PWD has been involved in - with the first being in 2000. The policy related to the program was approved by the board in 2007. In 2012, an official financial assistance program was approved by the Board. Sebago Clean Waters was formed in 2017. This was a unique partnership and it has created the goal of 25% of the land in the watershed being conserved. In 2020, a RCPP award for 8 Million Dollars was given to PWD to administer; 5 Million Dollars of this award is for land conservation. Over 15,000 acres has been conserved to date; the goal is 35,000 acres. We have received \$16 Million Dollars' worth of benefit for the cost of approximately \$2 Million Dollars.

PWD is planning an outreach to woodland lot owners to make them aware of PWD's conservation assistance. PWD is working with other groups such as Maine Forest Service and Maine Audubon to spread the word, as well as working with land trusts. PWD tends to let other organizations take the lead, and PWD provides the financial assistance to accomplish the conservation goals.

## **2. RFP Review**

Staff reviewed with the Board, the Request for Proposal, which will be used to find a consulting firm to conduct the search for the General Manager position.

Donna Katsiaficas, Corporate Counsel, gave an overview of the proposed selection process for the hiring of a consultant to hire the general manager. Trustee Cote made some proposed changes to the RFP form and explained his proposed changes.

President Lunt told the Board that he and Trustee McCann met with the senior staff for lunch today and discussed characteristics needed in the next GM. Knowledge of water, wastewater and understanding of municipal public policy issues would be essential and was noted as important.

The President said he told the senior staff that the Board is there to help them, and to reach out to them as needed.

A survey will be done of the Trustees on the subcommittee as to dates and times they are available to interview potential consultants.

**3. Other Business**

Donna Katsiaficas updated the Board on the status of the new rule release by the DOL for paid family leave.

Donna Katsiaficas also reviewed the City of Portland's request that PWD participate in a proposed PILOT program requesting voluntary contributions from non-profits. The Board was not in support of a voluntary contribution. Staff will keep them informed.

**4. Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Submitted by,

Donna M. Katsiaficas  
Clerk