

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
January 27, 2021

REGULAR MEETING

The regular meeting of the Board of Trustees was called to order by President Jim Burrows at 2:02 pm. Trustees Tom Oliver, Fred Lynk and Bob Emmons attended along with Superintendent Steve Cox, Assistant Superintendent Scott Minor, Treasurer Wayne Brockway, Accountant Cathy McLeod, Plant Manager Bill Snyder, Facilities Manager Rob Weymouth, GIS/Asset Management Coordinator Justin Richardson, Front Office Supervisor Kathleen Chapin, District Engineer Jamie Paschal and Administrative Assistant Cindy Rounds.

Minutes – December 30, 2020 Meeting

On a motion by Trustee Oliver, seconded by Trustee Emmons, it was unanimously voted to approve the Minutes of the December 30, 2020 meeting as presented.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Treasurer's Report

December 2020 Financial Updates

The Treasurer presented the December budget versus actual comparison reports. Annual metered account revenues were \$5,262,645, indicating a 9.8% favorable variance of \$471,166. Seasonal metered account revenues totaled \$1,566,371 indicating a 1.4% favorable budget variance of \$21,790. Total metered revenues were \$6,829,016, indicating a 7.8% favorable budget variance of \$492,956 and an 8.1% increase in the year-to-date billed usage from 2019. Total operating revenues were \$8,292,468, indicating a 6.2% favorable budget variance of \$485,863.

There were 10 System Development Charges collected in December (\$16,570). A total of 148 SDCs (\$235,749.02) have been collected through December compared to 169 (\$397,409) in 2019.

2020 Year-end Inventory Report

The Accountant began her presentation by first recognizing the staff responsible for the lowest inventory variance in the past 11 years. She gave a brief overview of the process from the time the inventory is put on the shelf to when it is installed. She noted that Peter Jewett (Inventory and Cross Connection), who is responsible for purchasing and inventory control of pipe and associated materials that are installed, keeps a constant check on work orders to be sure no inventory was missed. She added that the Mainline and Utility crews have become more attentive in reporting the inventory (daily) when it is used.

She was pleased to report that the inventory variance for the 2020 was only \$415.87 on inventory valued at \$560,000, which calculates to 0.07%. The Assistant Superintendent noted that one of the ways Peter has reduced the variance is by gathering the inventory for each individual capital project, which further lowers the chance for errors in supplying the project.

At Trustee Oliver's request, the Superintendent agreed to send the Board's thanks to staff that were involved in this accomplishment.

Project and Operations Updates

COVID-19 Operational Update

The Superintendent reported that there were two incidents of positive COVID tests. One employee, with minor symptoms, has returned after an appropriate quarantine. The second individual is still recovering and observing the necessary quarantine period.

He reported that he has been in an on-going dialogue with local officials regarding COVID response and has maintained a list of employees interesting in receiving the vaccine. Subsequently, he was notified that some doses of vaccines had become available but response had to be immediate (within 30 minutes). As a result, 10 Plant and Utility staff members confirmed their availability and received the vaccine earlier today.

The Superintendent next explained that the Emergency Family and Medical Leave (pursuant to the Families First Coronavirus Response Act, FFCRA), which guaranteed paid wages during a medical leave associated with the Coronavirus, had expired on December 31, 2020. There was no objection from the Board regarding the Superintendent's proposal for a temporary (for this year) modification to the Extended Sick Leave (ESL) Policy whereby employees who have depleted their sick time for COVID related illness shall be eligible without having to deplete any vacation.

Water Supply & Production, 2020 Year-end Review

The Assistant Superintendent presented a comprehensive 2020 year-end report that included water production, precipitation, and water production cost.

He reported that total water production in 2020 reached 1,118.20MG, second highest in the District's history. Precipitation recorded at the Filtration Plant showed that there was 44.50" of rain/snow, making 2020 the second lowest in the past 17 years. Groundwater production for 2020 was comprised of 205.80MG from the Merriland River well, 9.03MG from the Harrisckett Road wells, 9.82MG from the Plant wells and 168.37MG from the Kennebunk River well for a total of 393.01MG. For December, the chemical cost comparison of surface water and groundwater revealed that the cost of surface water was \$259.11/MG, groundwater was \$181.32/MG with the composite blended water of \$227.90. For 2020, the chemical cost comparison ended the year with the cost of surface water at \$229.32/MG, groundwater at \$145.75/MG and the composite blended water cost at \$199.81/MG.

The Assistant Superintendent then brought the Board's attention to the water production versus metered revenue comparison chart. It indicated that the 2020 total metered revenue of \$6,829,016 exceeded 2019 by \$886,117 and 2018 by \$736,194.

He then addressed the water main leak history (1994-2020) chart that indicated eight leaks occurred in 2020 which is well below the 27-year average of 11.7. Those eight leaks were attributed to 0.56MG of lost water which is well below the 27-year average of 5.58MG.

His review of the watermain renewal program analysis followed and indicated that 10,683' of mains were retired and 9,880' of new mains were installed during 2020, resulting in a retirement (replacement) rate of 0.97% (1% is the industry gold standard). The District's 27-year average retirement rate is 0.86%. 2020 marked the first time since 2014 that the total linear feet of main retirements exceeded main installations. He applauded the efforts of the GIS Coordinator and Engineering Technician for their labor-intensive research using GIS to correct the total linear footage (by size and class) of water mains throughout the distribution system. The GIS Coordinator elaborated on the GIS research that was used to correct the inaccuracies found in previous reports. The Superintendent noted other utilities have already moved to a GIS based report with approval from the Maine Public Utilities Commission. He agreed that the GIS system is invaluable in achieving more accurate results.

AMI Meters

The Treasurer reported that another 263 installations were completed in December bringing the 2020 year-to-date total to 1,694 and the cumulative total to 11,830, representing approximately 81% of all customer accounts, 40% seasonal accounts and 95% of annual accounts. Installations in January, as of yesterday, stand at 239 bringing the total installations to 11,806. He explained that a large number of the meters installed were seasonal accounts in which the Utility staff coordinated the installation with area plumbers that service the properties. He added that as of yesterday, 182 meters have been installed so far in January.

SMRWC 2021 Chemical Bid Analysis

The Assistant Superintendent explained the process that is undertaken by the Southern Maine Regional Water Counsel (SMRWC) and other participating utilities to participate in the cooperative chemical bid process to achieve the lowest chemical costs possible. He gave an overview of the chemical costs that resulted from the bid results, noting that the cost of five of the ten chemicals will not increase in price for 2021.

GAC Facility

The Assistant Superintendent reported that the most recent PFAS samples taken on December 21st, resulted in a PFAS level of 4.5ppt found within the top 25% zone of GAC pressure filter #1 with undetectable levels found within the 50% zone of GAC pressure filter #1 as well as the top 25% zone of GAC pressure filter #2 after 159.4MG of water was processed. The results of the samples taken on January 20th, after processing 187.1MG should be available within 12 to 14 days. In response to an inquiry, he said that he was not aware that the EPA or the state Commission studying the PFAS matter has issued any new performance criteria such as Health

Advisory Limits (HAL) or Maximum Contaminant Levels (MCL). The Superintendent added that legislature is proposing a number of upcoming bills to consider the appropriate MCL.

Laudholm Farm Road/Old Farm Lane – Main Replacement/Installation

The Assistant Superintendent reported that this project, comprised of installing 3,750' of new main has gone smoothly after the initial difficulties with the directional drilling component (720') due to equipment failures and the unanticipated presence of large boulders that were placed to construct the approximate 400' long causeway portion of Old Farm Lane. There is approximately 200' of the new 16" PVC pipe along with two service connection remaining to be installed which should all be completed by the end of the week. He was pleased to recognize that the Mainline crew installed at least 200' a day, which is a significant achievement.

Watershed

Wood Reclamation and Harvest

The GIS/Asset Management Coordinator commended Forester Rick Jones and logger Jason Beaulieu, for the tree removal work they conducted in the area of the watershed that was involved in the 2018 fire. He remarked that at the conclusion of the work, the project area was left in a very tidy condition with all the debris removed from the property.

Status of Land Purchase (IF&W) Negotiations

The GIS/Asset Management Coordinator reported that Inland Fish & Wildlife (IF&W) has executed a purchase and sales agreement to purchase a portion of the (approximately 120 acres) Brown property. The Superintendent explained that if the sale goes through the District and IF&W will iron out access permissions for management activities. He thanked the GIS Coordinator for all his work in reaching this point in the negotiations.

Other Business

Employee Recognition

The Superintendent reiterated the Accountant's recognition of Peter Jewett's outstanding command of his inventory control. Also recognized was Mechanic Mark Lank who is dependable in keeping the District's fleet of vehicles in top condition which is a real value to the District. Trustee Lynk was also recognized for his ideas in regard to advertising the upcoming 100th anniversary of the District.

Maine Water Utilities Association Annual Meeting and Trade Show

The Superintendent informed the Board that GIS Coordinator Justin Richardson has played a big part in the coordination of the upcoming conference being held virtually and will be involved in moderating many of the sessions. He added that District Engineer Jamie Paschal, in collaboration with DN Tanks, will be presenting a session on the construction of the new

Arundel tank construction. Kathleen Chapin is a panelist for the leadership presentation highlighting the MWUA Leadership Institute.

Administrative Updates

Employee Handbook Review

The Superintendent reported that the final revisions (from changes made during the October Employee Meeting) have been applied to the Employee Handbook. Additional revisions relate to the earned paid leave requirement that became effective on January 1st and the stipulation that exempt employees are not eligible for the merit program.

Next Regular Meeting

The next regular meeting of the Board of Trustees will be held on Wednesday, February 24, 2021 at 2:00 pm (remote via Zoom). An Executive Session will be scheduled to conduct Officer evaluations.

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Trustee Oliver, seconded by Trustee Emmons, it was unanimously voted to adjourn the January 27, 2021 meeting at 3:08 pm.

Respectfully submitted,


Wayne A. Brockway, Clerk