

The Belfast Water District Board of Trustees met on Monday, April 3, 2023, at 1:00 p.m., at the 41 Wight Street Office.

Bruce Osgood, the Chairman, called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

A roll call of attendees was as follows: Chairman Bruce Osgood, Vice-Chairman Kenneth Colby Horne, Treasurer Stephen Hall, Secretary Jill Goodwin, Trustee Chad Otis, Superintendent Frank Short, and Administrator Tammy Morse.

VOTED: On a motion by Chad Otis, seconded by Stephen Hall and unanimously approved 5-0, to accept the minutes of the regularly scheduled board meeting of March 6, 2023.

The Board discussed the next meeting date and agreed on Monday, May 1, 2023, at 1:00 p.m. at the Belfast Water District office at 41 Wight Street, Belfast, Maine.

Superintendent, Frank Short, presented his report to the Board of Trustees.

The City of Belfast's Wight Street Project may be delayed, affecting the District's ability to tie into the storm drain and schedule our final paving.

The Four-Post Lift and two rolling jacks have been ordered and will hopefully be installed in our new garage before our May board meeting. We received the two new hydrant meters, and the crew built the third one; all hydrants are ready for projects this summer.

Frank thanked Dustin Howes, the District's Foreman, and the crew for their work on the Lead Service Survey this past month. Dustin wrote his report on the progress of the 400 unknown services (now down to 195), which consisted of knocking on doors to inspect the pipe material and verify that a check valve was present. Most customers are making an appointment as requested on the door hanger notice. If there is no response, then we must send a compliance letter. A few services will need the curb boxes vacuumed to determine the type of pipe. To date, no lead services have been found. As a rule, whenever we encounter a galvanized service, it is replaced. The Maine Drinking Water Program provided a spreadsheet to track customer services. The goal is to complete this survey by July 2023. The due date is October 2024.

In May 2022, Underwater Solutions inspected the Crocker Road and Back Searsport Road tanks. Their inspection of the Crocker Road tank provided an Assessment Priority List of Recommendations, most-stating a high priority immediate need, within one year. Before the installation of the pax mixer in 2014, ice was causing significant damage. The Crocker Road tank is due to be painted. Frank contacted Tim Sawtelle, of Dirigo Engineering, to prepare the bid process to paint the tank and address the list of recommendations.

Old Town Water District approached us to buy 400 feet of 12-inch ductile iron pipe from them. They are asking \$50 per foot for this rare commodity. The pipe can be used for a 330-foot section on Miller Street from Union Street to High Street, upgrading the existing 6-inch cast iron pipe. Our Capital Improvement Plan lists Miller Street as first on the list of projects for 2023. This project would be an in-house project that would include three 12-inch gate valves on High Street. In 2014, the water main was upgraded on Miller Street south of High Street. Each year the District intends to complete short-run in-house projects.

Another project not listed on the Capital Improvement Plan, but needs replacement, is Ocean Street. At the end of Ocean Street, the water main is severely undersized, and a 1-inch line serving as many as eight homes is limiting. Ocean St is a high-pressure area. This past year alone, Ocean Street has had two main breaks. The proposed water main replacement will be approximately a 1,000-foot section of 6-inch ductile iron pipe plus four gate valves. This project will include accommodations for a future loop up Race Street and a fire hydrant. Frank informed the Trustees that Ocean Street is on the City's paving schedule for this year.

The Board concurred that Frank should investigate the associated costs and report at the next meeting. Frank stated that he had also requested an estimated cost from Enterprise Electric Incorporated to bore under Route 1 at the Waldo Avenue Crossing. Only one customer service exists in the Waldo Avenue Crossing area, which can be relocated to the upper side of the gate valve, allowing a 500-foot section to be isolated if a water main break occurs.

Frank mentioned to the Board that he has been researching High-Density Polyethylene Pipe Ductile Iron Pipe Size (HDPE DIPS). HDPE is for new construction, yet ductile iron fittings can repair the pipe. This pipe comes in 40-foot lengths. It is solid and fast becoming popular due to its lower cost and availability. An 8-inch ductile iron pipe is \$37 per foot versus HDPE at \$16.08 per foot.

Due to moving the Belfast Water District facilities in 2022, our inventory was depleted intentionally because of using storage units while building our new garage. Therefore, due to the cost of replenishing inventory materials, Frank contacted the Board Chairman before purchasing. From an operations standpoint, Frank asked the Board to increase the authorized limit to \$5,000 when purchasing inventory materials. The Board discussed increasing the authorized amount from \$2,500 to \$5,000.

VOTED: On a motion by Chad Otis, seconded by Jill Goodwin and unanimously approved 5-0, to approve the \$7,166.93 spent to purchase inventory materials.

VOTED: On a motion by Jill Goodwin, seconded by Kenneth Colby Horne and unanimously approved 5-0, to approve increasing the authorized limit to \$5,000 to purchase inventory materials, other purchases will remain at the \$2,500 limit without authorization.

Frank mentioned to the Board that he is attending monthly superintendent meetings held at the Bangor Water District with other utilities, which is an excellent opportunity to learn from colleagues in the field.

This past month, the crew:

- Performed winter maintenance and removed snow from the hydrant areas.
- Moved the inventory from the rented storage container to the new garage.
- Continued with the Lead Service Survey.
- Located water service lines for Olver Associates, surveying the City sewer mains.
- Repaired our side of a 3/4-inch service leak at 235 High Street with a new curb stop.

Upcoming this month, the crew will:

- Continue with the Lead Service Survey.
- Move lawn equipment to the storage container on Crocker Road.
- Build a pipe rack for the District's inventory at Public Works on Crocker Road.
- Install a fence at 41 Wight Street.
- Landscape and plant trees at 41 Wight Street.
- Vacuum curb boxes.
- Start flushing hydrants and water mains.

Frank relayed to the Board that our accountant, Nick Henry of Horton, McFarland & Veysey, recommended the District ask the Maine Municipal Bond Bank for a shorter term of 5 years to get the small loan paid quickly. A 5-year term will have a 5% rate impact to cover the new debt service. The Maine Public Utilities Commission sets the surcharge limit based on the water utility's revenues and the utility's completed projects. Tammy reminded the Trustees that the District had not had a rate increase since 2015. Nick recommended implementing the surcharge effective 10/1/2023 or 1/1/2024. This Maine Drinking Water Program State Revolving Fund loan was initially approved in 2020 for \$2.2M for Water System Improvements of the Talbot Well and the Maine Department of Transportation (MDOT) Goose River Project. The final cost to the District for the MDOT Goose River Project was \$212,095.43, and the Talbot Well Preliminary costs were \$95,804.71, totaling \$307,900.14. In July 2021, the Board chose to rescind the balance of any unused funds. The District will pay the closing costs outside of the closing before the deadline of May 13, 2023. The first Maine Municipal Bond Payment will be due in October 2023.

With the proceeds from the sale of the Belfast Water District Little River property to Nordic Aquafarms and shoreland to the City of Belfast in March 2022, the District has remodeled the office building, built a new garage, paved the driveway, and added fencing. We still need to plant trees, complete the final paving overlay, and other minor necessities.

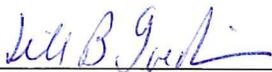
VOTED: On a motion by Stephen Hall, seconded by Jill Goodwin and unanimously approved 5-0, to implement a surcharge effective 1/1/2024 to recover costs from the MDOT Goose River Project on Searsport Avenue and the Talbot Well Preliminaries Project.

Jill Goodwin, Secretary of the Board, asked where the District stands financially now that we are fully operational at 41 Wight Street. Tammy replied that our accountant would provide the draft audit report in May. Shortly after that, the accountant will present the 2022 Financial Statement. All management reports will be updated when the accountant completes his year-end adjustments then Tammy will review them with the Trustees.

Tammy referred the Trustees to the list of 2022 Largest Water Users. Penobscot McCrum is no longer the largest water user due to the destructive fire in March 2022. Tammy explained how the list relates to the water production and consumption non-revenue water difference of 18.5% before adjustments. With the adjustments made by the Superintendent, the unaccounted-for non-revenue water was reduced to 7%, which is considered more than satisfactory by the Maine Public Utilities Commission.

Tammy informed the Board that through the Maine State Housing Authority, a Water Assistance Program is available to assist income-eligible residential water customers in receiving help covering their water bills up to \$500. Through a household application process, Maine Housing will determine customer eligibility. The customer must complete the Maine Housing Water Assistance Program application online at www.mainehousing.org/mainewaterprogram OR access the link at www.belfastwater.org OR printed applications are available at the Belfast Water District and City Hall.

VOTED: On a motion made by Chad Otis, seconded by Kenneth Colby Horne and unanimously approved 5-0, to adjourn the meeting at 2:26 p.m.



Jill B. Goodwin, Secretary/Clerk

