

The Belfast Water District Board of Trustees met on Monday, December 16, 2024, at the 41 Wight Street office.

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

Roll Call: The attendees present for the roll call were Chairman Bruce Osgood, Vice-Chairman Kenneth Colby Horne, Treasurer Stephen Hall, Secretary Jill Goodwin, Trustee Chad Otis, Superintendent Frank Short, and Administrator Tammy Morse. Nick Henry of HVM LLC and Henry Solutions LLC was present.

VOTED: On a motion by Stephen Hall, seconded by Chad Otis and unanimously approved 5-0, to accept the minutes of the regularly scheduled board meeting of November 4, 2024.

Next Meeting Date: The Board discussed and agreed on the next meeting date of Monday, January 6, 2025, at 1:00 p.m. at the Belfast Water District office located at 41 Wight Street in Belfast, Maine.

The Chairman welcomed the District's accountant, Nick Henry of HVM LLC. Nick referred the Board to the HVM letter regarding the Belfast Water District's position. HVM, LLC has provided the Belfast Water District with auditing, accounting, and other services for the past 40 years. HVM found it necessary to free up time; therefore, rather than releasing the small utility districts from their workload, HVM chose to release their largest clients, which included the Belfast Water District. With HVM's support, Nick has created his own business, Henry Solutions LLC, to offer the same accounting, financial, and non-audit services to increase efficiency and cut costs. Henry Solutions will provide strategic and long-term planning, rate cases, pre-audit/year-end close work, bond applications, budget assistance, etc. Choosing to transition with Henry Solutions LLC, the District must hire an outside auditing firm, as recommended by Nick.

VOTED: On a motion by Stephen Hall, seconded by Chad Otis and unanimously approved 5-0, to transition with the District's accountant, Nick Henry, from HVM LLC to Henry Solutions LLC and hire an outside auditing firm as recommended.

Nick explained that his visit today was to do the pre-audit and prepare the 2025 budget. The Board invited Nick to present the budget at the January 6, 2025, Board of Trustees meeting.

No members of the public were in attendance.

Health Insurance: Frank informed the Board of Trustees that the Belfast Water District received notice that the Maine Municipal Employees Health Trust (MMEHT) premiums for the Katahdin Plan (PPO 500) will increase by 9% for 2025. This increase amounts to approximately \$18,000, which represents 1% of the District's revenues. A discussion took place, and Frank reassured the Board that the employees of the Belfast Water District recognize the value of the benefits provided to them, which are essential for attracting and retaining experienced, knowledgeable, and loyal staff. The Trustees acknowledged the importance of the Belfast Water District employees and would like to continue offering this excellent benefit.

VOTED: On a motion by Chad Otis, seconded by Kenneth Colby Horne, and unanimously approved 5-0, to remain with the Maine Municipal Employees Health Trust and cover the premiums for the Katahdin Insurance Plan for 2025.

Frank presented his Superintendent's Report.

Lincolville Avenue 1.3M Gallon Tank Pax Mixer: In August, Frank reported that our 11-year-old Pax mixer had failed in the 1.3M gallon tank on Lincolville Avenue. Pax mixers are installed inside the tanks and continuously circulate the water. This process helps to mix the chemicals used for water treatment and prevents the water from freezing, which can severely damage the tank. Investing in Pax mixers is a wise decision, considering the high costs of painting and repairing a water tank. When Frank ordered the new mixer from Pax Water Technologies, he requested the shipment for November 1st since the tank needed to be drained. Frank wanted to avoid draining the tank during

the summer when daily water usage is high to replace the old mixer. The estimated lifespan of the mixer is 8 years, so getting 11 years of service from this mixer was beyond our expectations.

On Wednesday, November 13th, the crew began draining the tank slowly to avoid overwhelming the City's storm drainage system. By Friday, the tank was empty, and the slight buildup of sediment accumulated at the bottom was flushed out through the drainpipe.

The bracket holding the new mixer needed to be lengthened to accommodate it, which was modified by Doak's Machine Shop. Davey Small of Arc Electric confirmed the mixer was installed correctly; however, after making all the connections, the mixer did not work. Frank called a technician from Pax Water Technologies, and it was discovered that the old control panel that operated the previous mixer was incompatible with the new one. A new control panel was ordered for \$5,656.00 and arrived on the Monday afternoon of Thanksgiving week. Davey returned that Wednesday to install the new panel, and it worked. Filling the tank began on Monday following the long Thanksgiving weekend. The crew disinfected the tank and started filling it slowly to avoid overwhelming our daily usage and the other two tanks. By Wednesday, the tank was nearly full. Hayden, the District's Foreman, collected a coliform sample (an Operation and Maintenance sample processed in-house) and took it to the Brewer Treatment Plant in Eddington so we would have the results the next day. The sample came back clear. By Friday, the tank was full and returned to service after being offline for nearly a month.

New Flagpole at 41 Wight Street: Frank said he is pleased with our new flagpole from Nor'East Flagpole in Waldoboro. They constructed the concrete base on Friday, December 6th, then installed the pole that Sunday. A nice feature at the top of the pole is a solar light to illuminate the flag at night.

Subsurface Detention Pond 41 Wight Street: The crew was unable to start backfilling the subsurface detention pond for expanded parking this fall, but Frank expects the project to be completed in the spring.

Crocker Road Tank Fence: Frank stated that he is still waiting to hear back from Mid Coast Fence to replace the fence for the Crocker Road project, but otherwise, this project is complete.

Jackson Pit Transmission Line Project: All property owners involved with the required right of way for the Jackson Pit Transmission Line are in agreement. Frank notified the Board that modifications to the existing agreement between the Belfast Water District and the Hutchins regarding the right of way were revised. Attorney Lee Woodward drew up a new agreement. The Board concurred that Frank should sign the agreement when appropriate. Frank expressed his desire to finalize the right of way so plans can be made for the clearing once we know how much funding remains from the Maine Municipal Bond Bank General Resolution Loan, after we receive the bids for the Searsport Avenue Water Main Replacement Project. Less than \$20,000 of the loan was spent this year on closing costs, engineering, and surveying of the Jackson Pit Transmission line project.

City of Belfast's Wight Street Project: With the completion of the City's Wight Street Project, Frank stated that he attended the ribbon-cutting ceremony on November 25th.

Searsport Avenue Water Main Project: The pipe and materials for the Searsport Avenue Water Main Replacement Project were purchased from EJ Prescott and delivered to a staging area behind Perrys Nut House. Kent Darling, the property owner, signed an agreement with the District allowing us to store the pipe and fittings there for the winter and use the property for a construction yard when construction begins. Frank hand-delivered a \$226,659 check to EJ Prescott for the pipe and fittings on November 15th so that we could meet the General Resolution Loan spending requirements of \$234,000 by November 23rd.

Dirigo Engineering has completed the preliminary stages of this project and is preparing it to go out to bid in February. The water main replacement will consist of a 12-inch ductile iron pipe extending from the Footbridge to connect with the 12-inch ductile iron pipe in front of CMP, which was replaced during the Maine DOT Culvert Replacement Project

three years ago. One fire hydrant will be replaced, and an additional hydrant will be installed. New gate valves will also be installed.

Inquiry of the Upper Dam: Kenn Ortman, the manager of the City of Belfast Airport, has inquired about the dams owned by the Belfast Water District. The airport is considering expanding its hangar area; however, the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has concerns about phosphorus runoff potentially affecting bodies of water larger than 30 acres. The City of Belfast may be interested in removing the dams to facilitate the airport's expansion. Frank will provide further updates when he receives more information from the City.

Don Hahn Retiring: After serving the Belfast Water District for 38 years, Don Hahn has chosen to retire on Monday, February 3rd. Don is a Class II Water Operator and has been the designated Equipment Operator for the District for the past 27 years. He has been great to work with all these years and will be missed! Our newest employee, Ezra Downs, will take over as the District's Equipment Operator. Ezra brings experience operating an excavator and is a valuable addition to the Belfast Water District.

New Service Installations: The crew installed two new water services: a 1-inch domestic service on Footbridge Road for Dana Keene and another 2-inch domestic service for Kristine Wentworth on Searsport Avenue at the site of the old Wentworth building, for the area near the shore.

This past month, the crew:

- Winterized hydrants and installed new fire hydrant flags.
- Prepared the grounds and equipment for the upcoming winter.
- Unloaded the pipe and fittings for the Searsport Avenue Water Main Replacement Project.

Upcoming this month, the crew will:

- Remove the snow from fire hydrants and perform winter maintenance.
- Organize inventory and clean up the garages.
- Perform maintenance on the District's equipment.

Leak Detection: Frank stated that the pumping has increased by 40-50K daily for the last few days, so water is leaking somewhere in the system. A leak detection survey will be conducted as soon as possible.

No other business to report.

VOTED: On a motion by Jill Goodwin, seconded by Chad Otis and unanimously approved 5-0 to adjourn the meeting at 2:11 p.m.



Jill B. Goodwin, Secretary/Clerk

