

The Belfast Water District Board of Trustees met on Monday, January 12, 2026, 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 Chad Otis, Secretary Jill Goodwin, Trustee Stephen Hall, Superintendent Frank Short, Administrator Tammy Morse, and the District's Accountant, Nick Henry of Henry Solutions LLC.

No members of the public were present.

Chairman Bruce Osgood welcomed the District's accountant, Nick Henry of Henry Solutions LLC, to proceed with the District's Annual Fiscal Report. Nick referred the Trustees to the 2026 Budget sheet that he prepared, along with the estimated employee wages and benefits, and the Superintendent's proposal for 2026 employee raises. The budget sheet shows last year's budget, the District's actual income and expenses, which show a profit of \$69,000, and the proposed 2026 budget. Nick stated that the budget includes the estimated employee wages and benefits, with other expenses expected to hold steady, and that the projected 2026 revenue is \$1.9M. Frank recommended the 2.8% Cost of Living Adjustment and merits rounding up all employees to ensure they receive at least a \$1-per-hour raise. The Board commended Frank for being modest and for taking into account the 9% increase in health insurance. Frank commented that four other water utilities with comparable service connections pay 100% of the health insurance premiums for employees and families. Nick added that some utilities are concerned about retaining employees, so they opt to cover 100% of health insurance or higher wage increases. The Board agreed that employees' premiums should continue to be covered at 100%, but a possible change for 2027 would be to have employees contribute a percentage of the family premium. This amount is to be determined once the Maine Municipal Employees Health Trust notifies the District of the new rates. The Trustees recommended that Frank prepare employees for this possible change.

The Chairman requested a motion for the Superintendent's 2026 wage proposal.

VOTED: On a motion by Chad Otis, seconded by Kenneth Colby Horne, and unanimously approved 5-0, to accept the Superintendent's 2026 proposal for employee raises as presented.

The Chairman then requested a motion to accept the 2026 Budget as prepared by the District's accountant.

VOTED: On a motion by Jill Goodwin, seconded by Chad Otis, and unanimously approved 5-0, to accept the 2026 Budget as prepared by the District's accountant, Nick Henry of Henry Solutions LLC.

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 December 8, 2025.

Next Meeting Date: The Board discussed and agreed on the next meeting date, scheduled for Monday, February 2, 2026, at 1:00 p.m. at the Belfast Water District office, located at 41 Wight Street in Belfast, Maine.

Frank Short presented his Superintendent's report as follows:

The Little River Dams and Surrounding Properties: Frank stated he met with Dan McCaw of the Penobscot Nation and Belfast City Manager Erin Herbig on Monday morning, January 5th. Erin asked for a meeting with Dan to discuss the Penobscot Indian Nation's intentions regarding the Little River Dams. Dan explained that the grant from the NFWF (National Fish and Wildlife Foundation) will fund a study to determine the impact of removing the Little River dams, and that the Penobscot Indian Nation will address any public concerns. The grant is now expected to be finalized in March, not at the end of January as previously expected. Once the grant has been finalized, a meeting will be scheduled with the Belfast Water District, the Penobscot Indian Nation, the Down East Salmon Federation,

the Coastal Mountain Land Trust, and the City of Belfast to discuss expectations as we all move forward with this venture.

Property at 17 Blake Road: A Purchase and Sales Agreement to purchase the property at 17 Blake Road was signed by Viola Nickerson, Viola's daughter Carole McClure as her personal representative, and the Belfast Water District, for \$240,000, with the Belfast Water District paying all closing expenses. This property is in the wellhead protection area, where the District owns the surrounding property, making this parcel essential if a treatment plant is necessary in the future. A \$2,000 check was issued to Camden Law as earnest money, and we are now awaiting a closing date.

Back Searsport Road Tank Painting: The District received a quote from Marcel Payeur for \$427,000 to paint the tank and install a railing around the entry hatch at the top of the tank. This quote is much lower than anticipated, so we should replace the PAX Mixer at this time. Frank also recommended that the tank's water level be controlled by our SCADA system rather than relying entirely on the altitude valve. Both have additional costs, but should be within our \$530,000 budget.

New Sander: The Belfast Water District purchased a 1.5 Cubic Yard Fisher Tempest Sander with a vibrator kit and poly body for \$6,941. The District's employee, Zach Harriman, installed the sander on the new Ford F350 and is now fully operational.

Sanitary Survey: On December 17th, Frank met with Kelly Shores, our new water system inspector for the State of Maine Drinking Water Program, to conduct the Sanitary Survey of the Belfast Water District's facilities. Kelly was pleased with what she inspected. The only requirement she requested was that a written Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) be posted at the wells outlining how to operate the wells if the SCADA system failed.

Hydrant #138: Fire Hydrant #138 on Searsport Avenue, across from Viking Lumber, was destroyed by a three-car accident this past month. After speaking with the City of Belfast Fire Chief, Patrick Richards, it was agreed to replace hydrant #138 this spring rather than during the winter months.

Service Leak: It was discovered that the water service to 3 Whittier Road (the last service off the Back Searsport Road) is leaking at the curb stop. The leak will be repaired this week.

Emergency Response Class: The Belfast Water District will be hosting an Emergency Response Class at our office at 41 Wight Street, sponsored by the Maine Rural Water Association. The class will have 12 students in attendance, and be held on Thursday, January 15th, from 8:30 to 3:00.

Treatment 1 & 2 Classes: Three members of the Belfast Water District crew will be attending a Treatment 1 & 2 class to prepare for testing. This course is being conducted by the Maine Water Utilities Association instructor, Thomas Bahun of Tom's Water Solutions. Five classes will be held at different water utilities across the state, and the Belfast Water District is hosting the class on Wednesday, January 21st.

G.I.S. Mapping: Frank informed the Board that he will begin updating our G.I.S. (Geographic Information System) maps this month, with assistance from Dirigo Engineering. These maps have not been updated since June 2021. There have been significant changes since 2021.

Smart Road Heater: Frank stated that Hayden Bradford, the District's Foreman, informed him that the heater at our Smart Road Well was insufficient to heat the entire building at the Smart Road Pump Station, resulting in hiring Reynolds Electric to install an additional heater in the building to provide adequate heat.

Water Usage: Frank reported to the Trustees that the average daily water usage in December was 528,007 GPD. Pumping is up 36,500 GPD from November; this may be due to the cold weather and people running their water to prevent pipes from freezing.

OVERVIEW OF 2025 YEAR

Three New Services Installed

- 1-inch Domestic for 186 Swan Lake Avenue
- 1-inch Domestic for 37 Old Searsport Avenue
- 1-inch Domestic for 29 Searsport Avenue

Seven New Services Activated

- 1-inch Domestic for 186 Swan Lake Avenue
- 1-inch Domestic for 1 Little River Drive
- 1-inch Domestic for 7 White Tail Lane
- 1-inch Domestic for 73 Bayview Street
- 1-inch Domestic for 125A Union Street
- 1-inch Domestic for 6 Shipmasters Cove
- 1-inch Domestic for 8 Shipmasters Cove

Leaks Repaired

- 8-inch main break on Congress Street
- 1-inch saddle on the 10-inch A.C. main on Searsport Avenue
- 6-inch main break on Pierce Street
- 4-inch main break on Park Street
- 10-inch A.C. main break on Footbridge Road due to construction
- 6-inch A.C. main on Mitchell Street due to construction
- 2-inch service line going into MacLeod's Mobile Home Park
- ¾-inch service line at 70 Bayview Street
- 1-inch service line going to MacLeod's on High Street
- ¾-inch service line at 194 Swan Lake Avenue

Other Accomplishments for 2025

The Searsport Avenue Water Main Project consisted of 2,889 feet of new 12-inch D.I. water main to replace the 10-inch A.C. water main on Footbridge Road to Searsport Avenue, extending to CMP. A new 12-inch D.I. water main was also added to Mill Lane as far as the East Side Garage. Three new fire hydrants were added, and two were replaced during this project. Three 12-inch gate valves were also added during this project.

Two fire hydrants were replaced, one on High Street by the overpass, which has been out of service for many years, and the other at the corner of Cedar Street and Franklin Street.

New Equipment Purchased

- 2026 Ford F350 to replace the 2019 Chevy 2500 Foreman/plow truck
- Replaced the old sander with a new Fisher Tempest Sander
- A new pipe locator
- Two new curb and gate box locators
- New leak detection equipment

Personnel Changes

- Don Hahn retired on February 3rd
- Part-time employee, Kayden Richards, left the District in April
- New hire, Dave Hammond, joined the crew in June

2025 Capital Improvement Budget Expended as follows:

- Water main improvement budgeted \$70,000, spent \$3,132.64, moving the water main and adding a gate valve on High Street for the City's sewer project.
- Subsurface detention pond to improve parking at 41 Wight Street. Budgeted \$30,000; spent \$0. The project was not started.
- Upgrade meter reading equipment and software, budgeted \$30,000, spent \$28,603.24
- Pumping equipment and VFD (Variable Frequency Drive) for Back Searspoint Road Station, budgeted \$15,000, spent \$0 as it was agreed that it was not needed.
- Fire hydrants budgeted \$10,000, spent \$9,259.67 on hydrant #33 on High Street, and \$7,345.35 on hydrant #55 at the corner of Cedar and Franklin Streets for a total of \$16,605.02.
- New office equipment budgeted \$5,000, spent \$2,735.
- New sander, budgeted \$5,900, spent \$6,941.
- Purchased a new Foreman/plow truck at year's end instead of waiting until Spring 2026, plus accessories, \$50,728.33.
- Leak detection equipment and pipe locators \$8,131.63.

The total 2025 Capital Improvements Budget including contingency was \$175,000; we spent \$116,876.86, which is \$58,123.14 under budget.

2026 Capital Improvement Budget

- New water meters \$60,000
- Subsurface detention pond \$40,000
- Fire hydrants \$20,000
- New office equipment \$5,000
- Equipment purchased for excavator attachment \$25,000
- Remove building and cleanup at 17 Blake Road \$25,000
- Capital Improvement Budget is \$175,000

Tammy reported to the Trustees that our 12-month CD, which earned 3.5% interest, matured on December 23, 2025, and was then transferred to a 6-month CD, earning a 3.35% annual percentage yield.

Tammy referred the Trustees to the letter from the District's bond counsel, Lee Bragg of Bernstein, Shur & Nelson, which states that he was retiring on December 31, 2025. Mr. Bragg expressed that it was a pleasure to represent the Belfast Water District in public finance transactions for 32 years. Because Bernstein, Shur & Nelson did not anticipate having the capacity to handle the Belfast Water District's upcoming needs beyond 2025, he recommended Tim Pease of Rudman & Winchell. Tammy contacted Mr. Pease, based on Mr. Bragg's recommendation, to inquire whether they would be willing to represent the Belfast Water District as their client, provided there was no conflict of interest. Mr. Pease responded that there was no conflict and would be happy to serve as our new bond counsel.

VOTED: On a motion by Stephen Hall, seconded by Kenneth Colby Horne, and unanimously approved 5-0, to retain Rudman & Winchell as the Belfast Water District's new bond counsel.

VOTED: On a motion by Jill Goodwin, seconded by Chad Otis, and unanimously approved 5-0, adjourn the meeting at 2:18 p.m.



Jill B. Goodwin, Secretary/Clerk