

The Belfast Water District Board of Trustees met on Monday, July 8, 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, Superintendent Frank Short, Administrator Tammy Morse, and Trustee Chad Otis attended via conference call.

The Chairman welcomed the District's accountant, Nick Henry of Horton, McFarland, and Veysey. Nick Henry presented the District's 2023 Financial Statement, stating there were no difficulties and no findings, ensuring all procedures and processes were in place and goals achieved. HMV, LLC gives their opinion by testing controls and standards, and performing risk assessments to provide reasonable assurance. Nick reviewed the 50-page report of how the District operated in 2023, and then commented that our District is investing in its system, which is very good. The District's lower rating of their financial stability was due to not having their water rates increased since 2015. This required a 30% rate increase as filed with the Maine Public Utilities Commission effective January 1, 2024.

Nick explained that the MDOT Goose River Project/Talbot Well Preliminaries loan was included in the 30% rate increase whereas the Jackson Pit Transmission Line Upgrade was not, therefore, this capital improvement of borrowing \$1.56M from the Maine Municipal Bond Bank makes it necessary to implement a 1.5% rate increase as allowed by the Maine Public Utilities Commission (MPUC). The 1.5% rate increase will generate \$27,000, leaving a deficit to come from the funds set aside for other capital improvements, plus implementing a 3% surcharge when the Jackson Pit Transmission Line Upgrade is complete and in service.

The Board concurred that our accountant, Nick Henry of HMV, LLC, should file a revised water rate schedule with the MPUC to implement a 1.5% rate increase effective September 1, 2024.

In regards to a change in the auditing procedure, Nick informed the Board of Trustees that, if in the future, management tasks become a conflict of interest, a change will become necessary. He explained that HMV, LLC would continue with the accounting and act as our advisor, but we would need to hire an outside auditing firm. The audit would be completed in-house which is more time-consuming because the entire audit is on-site for 3-5 days. Nick assured the Board that the District is not at the accounting/auditing fine line that would require a change at this time, but wanted the Board to be aware.

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 June 3, 2024.

Next Meeting Date: The Board discussed and agreed on the next meeting date of Monday, August 12, 2024, at 1:00 p.m. at the Belfast Water District office, located at 41 Wight Street in Belfast, Maine.

No members of the public were in attendance.

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

41 Wight Street Storm Drainage: Frank informed the Board that he had been working with Randy Butler of Dirigo Engineering to set the grades to connect our existing storm drainage into the City's new storm drainage system here at 41 Wight Street as discussed with the City of Belfast and Olver Associates. The Planning and Codes office required that our existing site plan be amended to reflect the relocation of our storm drainage. Tying into the new storm drainage system will enable us to fill the retainage ponds at the back of the property for much-needed parking. The City installed the structure at the end of our driveway so we could tie into the new storm drainage. Then the District received an email from Planning and Codes stating that the Code would not allow increasing peak flows from the original predevelopment numbers stating storm water must be managed in a way that does not increase flows;

therefore, tying into the new storm drainage system may be difficult. Based on this information, Randy suggested that subsurface detention ponds may fit our needs. Frank told the Board he would have more information at next month's meeting.

Crocker Road Tank Site: The pad and footings for the new 30x40 cold storage building are complete, and construction has begun. The 7,000-sf stockpile area is being filled, and we hope to receive some of the fill from the Wight Street Project as soon as Nitram Excavation begins the box cut for the new road.

Wight Street Project: Two minor shutdowns happened during the Wight Street Project. One was at the Wight Street and Congress Street intersection to install a new catch basin, and the other was at 15 Midcoast Drive, Maine Behavioral Healthcare, to discontinue the existing meter pit to allow room for the new road and curbing; the meter is now inside their building. Also, the fire hydrant #17 near Congress Street needed to be relocated, so Nitram installed a new hydrant that we had in stock. At the last construction meeting, Frank requested an estimate from Nitram Excavation to replace the water main and valves at the intersection of Wight Street and Northport Avenue, which we have yet to receive. The next construction meeting will be on July 11th. Our crew will install a new 8-inch gate valve below Martin Lane on Wight Street so the businesses will have water service while the construction of the intersection occurs.

Jackson Pit Transmission Line: The Jackson Pit Transmission Line Project needs to make more progress. So far, Clark Staples of Good Deeds Land Surveying provided a quote of \$10,000 for the survey work to move the right of way. Frank stated he is awaiting a response from Evan Hutchins, property owner representative, to see what they need from us to move the right of way.

Office Steps: The prefabricated concrete front steps for our office at 41 Wight Street are ready and will be installed once the crew can take a break from building our 30x40 cold storage building at Crocker Road Tank Site.

115 Congress Street: All five 2-inch meters are set and activated at the 115 Congress Street Project. These buildings are still far from being occupied.

New Hire: The District has diligently searched for a new crew employee, and Ezra Downs, a local man with ten years of experience operating excavators and experience in installing water mains and services, is interested. With Don Hahn preparing for retirement from the Belfast Water District, we need an experienced equipment operator. Frank stated that he and the crew know Ezra and feel he will become a great team member here at Belfast Water District. Bringing in experienced personnel greatly benefits the District. Frank presented a starting wage to the Trustees, and they recommended negotiating, especially with health insurance covered by the District. A wage increase will be appropriate once designated as the Equipment Operator. No vote is necessary.

EPA Water Samples: The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has mandated that the Belfast Water District conduct Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule (UCMR) samples that includes PFAS in June and December of this year. The June samples were taken and sent to the Great Lakes Environmental Center in Indiana via overnight Federal Express at no cost to the District. We are still awaiting the results. The next set of sample bottles will arrive in November, and the samples will be taken in December of this year.

Terms and Conditions: Frank stated that he and Tammy are updating the Belfast Water District's Terms and Conditions; an updated copy will be available at our August Board meeting.

Employee Phone Allowance: Frank mentioned to the Trustees that our office staff must have their cell phones available for water district business and is requesting a phone allowance, the same as the on-call duty staff. The Board briefly discussed paying the phone allowance to all District employees.

VOTED: On a motion by Chad Otis, seconded by Kenneth Colby Horne and unanimously approved 5-0, to edit the Employee Handbook to pay ALL employees the phone allowance allocated.

This past month, Kayden Richards started taking call duty while working full-time before returning to college. Hayden, Kayden, and Zach attended training classes and will be scheduling appointments for testing shortly. Zach and Hayden will test for Treatment, and Kayden will test for Distribution.

Water Service Leaks: This past month, the crew repaired two small leaks on service lines; one was a meter pit at 10 East Side Battery requiring a meter bottom, and the other was a leaking curb stop at 239 Swan Lake Avenue. Minimal water was lost at these locations. Today, we were notified of another leak on the Front Street Pub water service.

This past month, the crew:

- Continued fire hydrant maintenance.
- Worked at Crocker Road Tank Site
- Repaired curb boxes
- Installed a water service on the blowoff, discontinued in the 90s, at the Footbridge for the City of Belfast for a dog water station.

This month, the crew will:

- Schedule tests for their Distribution and Treatment licensing.
- Continue working at Crocker Road Tank Site.
- Prepare to install the new office stairs.
- Maintain the fire hydrants.
- Install new services.
- Install a new 8-inch gate valve on Wight Street.
- Repair our side of the water leak at Front Street Pub.

Six-month probationary period: Frank requested the Board reinstate the one-week vacation for new employees after their six-month probationary period. New employees go above and beyond during this time, and a week's vacation is a well-earned reward. The Board requested the details of the change for next month's meeting to edit the Employee Handbook back to the original benefit.

Tammy presented the budget handout for the first six months to the Board, noting that the expenditures were less than budgeted. Metered sales are on track with the rate increase, yet the year-to-date will not reflect full effect until next year. The interest earnings to date are \$16,000. Camden National increased our interest-bearing accounts to a 3.8% variable.

VOTED: On a motion by Jill Goodwin, seconded by Kenneth Colby Horne and unanimously approved 5-0, to adjourn at 2:55 p.m.



Jill B. Goodwin, Secretary/Clerk



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State of Maine
County of Waldo, SS
Belfast, Maine

I, Kenneth Colby Horne, do swear that I will support the Constitution of the United States and of this State if I shall continue a citizen thereof. So, help me God.

I do swear that I will perform all the duties incumbent upon me as a

Member of The Water District Trustees Committee
To serve a 5-year term to expire July 1, 2029

for the City of Belfast Maine according to the Constitution and laws of the State of Maine. So, help me God.

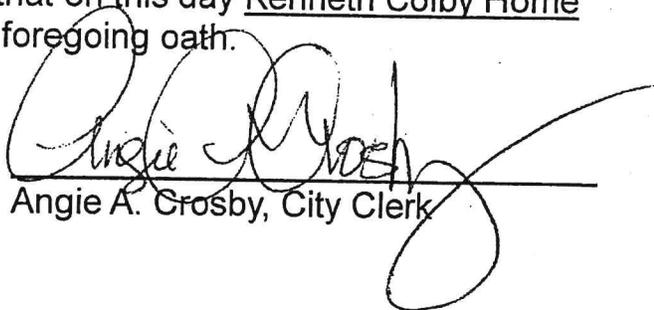

Signature

STATE OF MAINE
COUNTY OF WALDO, SS

11-25-24
Date

(Actual Sworn-In date:
1st week of July 2024)

I, Angie A. Crosby, hereby certify that on this day Kenneth Colby Horne appeared before me and took the foregoing oath.


Angie A. Crosby, City Clerk

Date appointed: July 1st 2024

All in attendance were pleased that Kenneth Colby Horne will serve another 5-year term. on the Belfast Water District Board of Trustees.

