

BRUNSWICK SEWER DISTRICT
Board of Trustees Regular Monthly Meeting
14 November 2013

Approved Minutes

Call to Order

The regular monthly meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Brunswick Sewer District was called to order by General Manager Blanchette at 8:37 am on Thursday, 14 November 2013, in the Board Room at District offices at 10 Pine Tree Road, Brunswick, Maine. A prepared agenda was noted and the meeting was recorded.

Members present: Chair Priest, Trustees Sartoris, Green, Harvey and Barbour.

Others present: General Manager (GM) Blanchette, Assistant General Manager (AGM) Pontau, Finance Manager (FM) Caron, Camera Operator Dan Munsey, and Mrs. Bonnie Shippen (Minutes). Also present were Mr. John Hart, Mr. Norton True and Ms. Mary Waring representing the Awards Committee of the MWWCA; and Mr. Owen Pierce, petitioner for relief of sewer use billing.

Meeting Advertisement

The meeting was advertised in the Friday, 08 November 2013, edition of the *Times Record*.

MWWCA Presentation of Richard B. Goodenow Award

Supervisor Greg Thulen, Senior Operator Matt Densmore, Operator Tom Mason, Operator Dan Munsey, Operator Jason Prout and Lab Technician Jennifer Nicholson entered the meeting to receive this award.

Mr. Norton True noted that Mr. Richard Goodenow was a janitor at the local college when he was approached about working at the new Brunswick treatment plant. He noted that Mr. Goodenow went on to be recognized as one of the premier plant superintendents and that is why this award was named after him. Mr. True noted that this award is given to a team that shows the capabilities to keep the water clean. He noted that the District was the first plant on the Androscoggin River to have primary and secondary treatment processes. Mr. True congratulated GM Blanchette, AGM Pontau, and the Treatment Plant Division Staff for coming out on top of some great competition.

Mr. John Hart thanked the employees and commended them for the work they do. He noted he knew Mr. Goodenow and his character and noted to Supervisor Thulen, GM Blanchette and AGM Pontau that they have a great crew and thanked them for their service. Mr. Hart also thanked the Trustee Board for their guidance and service to make the District what it is today.

Ms. Mary Waring presented the plaque to Supervisor Thulen and congratulations were made to the Treatment staff for receiving this award.

Mr. Hart, Mr. True, Ms. Waring and the Treatment Plant Staff left the meeting at 8:48 am.

Chair Priest congratulated the Board, Management team and Treatment Plant staff for the receiving this award. GM Blanchette noted that the District Board and Staff work well together as a team.

Public Comment

GM Blanchette noted FM Caron received a phone call from a customer who wanted to note that she found Lisa to be such an understanding and compassionate person.

GM Blanchette distributed three articles that were published in the Times Record concerning the treatment plant upgrade. He noted the article of the 17 October was a prelude to the public workshop held on 23 October. The 25 October article was a report on the public workshop, and the 04 November article was to note that the District would be updating the Town Council that evening.

Correspondence

- GM Blanchette noted he received a letter from the US EPA dated 18 October reminding us of the importance of maintaining the District's underground infrastructure and having sustainable rates to fund the required maintenance. He noted that this letter went out to all District's in the State of Maine.
- GM Blanchette noted that he received a request from Mr. & Mrs. Pierce of 15 Davis Street for a further adjustment to the third quarter sewer use billing. He noted Mr. Pierce is present and this is an agenda item for this meeting.
- GM Blanchette noted that he received a request from Mr. Croft of 29 Willow Grove for a further adjustment to the third quarter sewer use billing. This is an agenda item for this meeting.
- GM Blanchette distributed a copy of the letter sent to the Topsham Sewer District following our joint board meeting of 24 September 2013. He noted the letter recapped the discussion points of the meeting.

Adoption of Minutes of Previous Meetings / Workshops

The Trustees reviewed the minutes of the 24 September 2013 Joint Board Meeting.

IT WAS MOVED BY TRUSTEE SARTORIS, SECONDED BY TRUSTEE GREEN AND VOTED BY THE TRUSTEES PRESENT, (3-0, TRUSTEE BARBOUR ABSTAINS), TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES OF THE 24 SEPTEMBER 2013 JOINT MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES AND TOPSHAM SEWER DISTRICT BOARD OF TRUSTEES.

The Trustees reviewed the minutes of the 10 October 2013 Regular Board meeting.

IT WAS MOVED BY TRUSTEE BARBOUR, SECONDED BY TRUSTEE GREEN AND VOTED BY THE TRUSTEES PRESENT, (4-0), TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES OF THE 10 OCTOBER 2013 REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES WITH MINOR CHANGES NOTED.

The Trustees reviewed the minutes of the 23 October 2013 Board of Trustees Public Meeting and Workshop.

IT WAS MOVED BY TRUSTEE SARTORIS, SECONDED BY TRUSTEE GREEN AND VOTED BY THE TRUSTEES PRESENT, (4-0), TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES OF THE 23 OCTOBER 2013 BOARD OF TRUSTEES PUBLIC MEETING AND WORKSHOP WITH MINOR CHANGES NOTED.

Petition for Relief of Sewer Use Billing – Owen and Rebekah Pierce, 15 Davis Street

GM Blanchette noted Mr. & Mrs. Pierce of 15 Davis Street are requesting an additional adjustment to the sewer use bill of September 20, 2013. E-mail correspondence was distributed to the

Board noting that they had a broken water fitting under the mobile home, which has since been repaired, causing the excess water usage. As per policy staff has adjusted the bill, from 5,400 cubic feet to 2,700 cubic feet for a reduction of \$126.49. Mr. Pierce is seeking a further adjustment of the sewer use charge as the excess usage did not enter the sanitary sewer system.

GM Blanchette noted staff has reviewed the third quarter usage for the previous three years to determine a third quarter average use that could be applied to the relevant billed quarter under consideration. Based on this information, his recommendation is to reduce the net billed from 2,700 cubic feet (\$126.49) to the 3 year 3rd quarter average of 1,300 cubic feet. A further adjustment of \$65.59, for a final net billed of \$60.91.

Mr. Pierce noted that GM Blanchette explained the issue and chose not to add to the conversation.

IT WAS MOVED BY TRUSTEE SARTORIS, SECONDED BY TRUSTEE BARBOUR AND VOTED BY THE TRUSTEES PRESENT, (4-0), TO ACCEPT THE PETITION FOR AN ADDITIONAL REDUCTION OF SEWER USE BILLING FOR MR. & MRS. PIERCE, 15 DAVIS ROAD FROM \$163.97 TO \$46.85.

Mr. Pierce left the meeting at 9:05 am.

Petition for Relief of Sewer Use Billing Mr. Jim Croft, 29 Willow Grove

GM Blanchette noted Mr. Cross of 29 Willow Gove is requesting an additional adjustment to the sewer use bill of September 20, 2013. Through e-mail correspondence Mr. Croft noted that while he was away an unknown person turned on the outside faucet, which stayed on until Mr. Croft returned, thus causing excess water usage. As per policy staff has adjusted the bill from 7,000 cubic feet to 3,500 cubic feet for a reduction of \$163.97. Mr. Croft is seeking a further adjustment of the sewer use charge as the excess usage did not enter the sanitary sewer system.

GM Blanchette noted staff has reviewed the third quarter usage for the previous three years to determine a third quarter average use that could be applied to the relevant billed quarter under consideration. He noted based on this information, his recommendation is to reduce the net billed from 3,500 cubic feet (\$163.97) to the 3 year 3rd quarter average of 1,000 cubic feet. A further adjustment of \$117.12, for a final net billed of \$46.85.

IT WAS MOVED BY TRUSTEE SARTORIS, SECONDED BY TRUSTEE BARBOUR AND VOTED BY THE TRUSTEES PRESENT, (3-0, TRUSTEE GREEN ABSTAINS), TO ACCEPT THE PETITION FOR AN ADDITIONAL REDUCTION OF SEWER USE BILLING FOR MR. CROFT, 29 WILLOW GROVE.

Treasurer's Report

Financial: Trustee Green noted the October 2013 Variance Analysis report shows billing revenue \$5,000 below projection and non-billing revenue is \$9,000 ahead of projection. Expenditures are \$115,000 behind anticipated. Trustee Green noted the receivables are down, currently at \$22,800 and liens are steady at \$600.

Forecasted vs. Actual Revenue: Trustee Green noted that Brunswick Landing and septage operating revenues are currently ahead and Residential, Commercial, Topsham Sewer and Catch Basins are behind showing an overall \$5,118 below projection.

Capital Budget & Expenditure Report: The Trustees questioned expenses such as Instrumentation, temporary help, and advertisement. Management staff noted that Instrumentation

was for flow charts that Mr. Thulen typically orders towards the end of the year, temporary help was for a camera operator, which they no longer need and will not be on the 2014 budget, and advertisement was not for the newsletter but for Board meetings and rate increase notices that are required per charter. The Board thanked FM Caron for adding a column on the spreadsheet that denotes status of each project, (complete, in progress, etc.)

Warrants: The weekly warrants were distributed to the Board for their review. The Trustees reviewed the weekly warrants on disbursements for the preceding month, querying staff regarding the purpose of a number of those listed. Weekly warrants from general disbursements have been reviewed and signed by the General Manager. Disbursements unusual in amount or purpose were discussed. GM Blanchette noted that all checks for disbursement and payroll were on consecutively numbered instruments, and consecutive from the previous month, and all voided checks, if any, are accounted for and on file.

The Board questioned First Bankcard, Eastern Fire Services, Siemens Industry Inc, Treasurer State of Maine DEP, ESRI, Harry C Crooker & Sons, Inc., Wingfoot Commercial Tire, BEK, and Wright-Pierce. FM Caron noted that all of the management staff have a District Visa card through First Card. Payments were not being applied appropriately so we now individualize the payments; GM Blanchette noted Eastern Fire Services was the installation of O² sensors in Headworks for gas detection; Siemens Industry was to repair an issue with the pump in the primary clarifiers; State of Maine DEP is for storm water permit fee for the Plant; AGM Pontau noted ESRI is for ARC VIEW software services annual fee for the GIS System; HC Crooker is for equipment rental for spreading sludge; AGM Pontau noted Wingfoot was new tires for the Jet/Vac truck. He noted that we had purchased the used truck 3 years ago, therefore the tires needed to be replaced. AGM Pontau noted BEK was for PC upgrades; and Wright Pierce was for the Bowdoin Park sump pump removal program.

Trustee Harvey arrived at 9:22 am.

Monthly Report of Treatment Operations

AGM Pontau reported that the total flow to the treatment plant for October 2013 was 50.1 MG, down approximately 14% from the previous month and down 1% from this time last year. Flows of 7.87 MG and 4.23 MG for the month originated with Topsham and Brunswick Landing, respectively. Average daily flow for the period was 1.61 MG, or 42% of that allowed by permit. Maximum daily flow processed was 1.84 MG, on 02 October 2013. Precipitation for the month totaled 1.63", with a daily maximum of 0.51" on 07 October 2013.

Septage receiving for the period totaled 195,700 gallons, up 12% from the previous month. Removal rates for BOD and TSS for the period were 97.7% and 97.3%, respectively, in compliance with the minimum 85% required for each parameter by permit. A total of 197 CY of sludge was produced. All the plant systems were working and there were no bypasses or spills, and all flow to the plant received full treatment.

Adoption of Proposed 2014 Operations Budget

GM Blanchette presented to the Board the Proposed 2014 Operations Budget for adoption. He noted that the year-end numbers had been updated after speaking with Mr. Stuart Kay, the TSD revenue was increased. He noted the projected 2013 surplus was \$25,000 and has been updated to \$55,000.

Trustee Barbour departed the meeting at 9:34 am.

The Board discussed several items including the Treatment Plant renovation. GM Blanchette noted that since the Board had not given final approval for the go ahead it was decided to exclude it from the budget with the exception of consulting fees. He noted if the Board approves this in 2014 then we may seek a rate increase and bonds to cover the cost in 2014.

IT WAS MOVED BY TRUSTEE GREEN, SECONDED BY TRUSTEE SARTORIS, AND UNANIMOUSLY VOTED BY THE TRUSTEES PRESENT (4-0) TO ADOPT THE 2014 BUDGET AS PROPOSED.

GM Blanchette distributed to the Board a comparison report of what TSD currently pays and what they would pay if they were considered “rate payers.” He noted in 2012 they were billed \$164,651 and if they were charged based on a per cubic foot (quantity) method the charges would be \$740,645. GM Blanchette noted we do not do collections for Topsham. Chair Priest noted he would like to see those cost including jobbing and collections. GM Blanchette noted TSD does pay a portion of Bonds based on flow percentage. He noted the comparison chart is only to illustrate the revenue difference if TSD flows were charged the same as a rate payer and that TSD is aware of the “deal” they currently are receiving.

Review Draft Amendment to the By-Laws: Remote-Access Voting

GM Blanchette noted there is a void in state law regarding if a trustee’s vote, who is attending a meeting via remote access, is valid. Because of this, there is a concern with the possibility of having a vote(s) challenged. He noted that he has been asked by the Chair to develop a policy – or in this instance, some language which he feels can accomplish the goal with a by-law change – that will outline how votes are taken. Particularly on substantive issues (e.g. rate changes, rules & reg changes, bonding, budgets, etc.) so as to survive a potential challenge or at the very least, provide a sound legal basis for upholding the vote(s). In other words, have a quorum of the voters actually present and attending the meeting in person.

The Board discussed the matter based on the current by-law and requested the language to state the trustee must be present at the meeting to constitute a quorum. Chair Priest noted the AG’s office states that you have to be present to vote. Suggestion was made to postpone any important vote until a quorum is available.

The Board also suggested some minor change to the meeting time section. The revisions will be brought back to the Board for adoption.

Potential Increase to Debt Ceiling Authorization

GM Blanchette noted that the current authorized (by Charter) debt limit is \$20M. Our bonded debt is somewhere near \$1.6M. He noted if in the next one or two years we opt to bond a sum greater than the available balance, we will need to seek a Charter change from the State Legislature. This process takes some time, so we would want to plan accordingly. He noted this was for information only.

Finance Manager's Report

- Newsletter Issue #2: FM Caron distributed the second edition of the District Newsletter. The Board members noted that they were pleased with the newsletter. Trustee Sartoris suggested listing places they are working in the next edition. AGM Pontau noted that since it is a quarterly newsletter it would be difficult to pin point exactly where we will be at a given time, although he suggested adding a note that we are out there working.

Assistant General Manager's Report

- Bowdoin Park Sump Pump Relocation Project Update: AGM Pontau noted that the project is completed and 5 sump pumps were removed. He noted that now he is just waiting for some wet weather to test the storm drain hook up. He noted that we had not received the invoice yet.
- MRRA Contract Work Update: AGM Pontau noted that 14 of the 19 pipe-liners have been installed. He also noted that the Collections Division is also working on putting up sheetrock for fire code purposes in the building they will be leasing at MRRA. He noted they can't occupy yet and are hoping for some time in December.

General Manager's Report

- Presentation to Town Council: GM Blanchette noted that he gave a five minute presentation to the Town Council on the potential upgrade to the treatment plant and its estimated cost and impact to the rates, and noted a comparison to the rates of the northern New England area. He noted Trustee Green attended and there were no questions from the public.
- JETCC Workshop at BSD / Town Official Invitation: GM Blanchette noted an evening class on "Understanding Water & Wastewater Infrastructure and the Responsibilities of Local Officials" sponsored by JETCC, is being held in the District conference room. GM Blanchette invited the Board. He also noted he has invited various town officials from Brunswick and Topsham and has agreed to sponsor them. The fee for the session is \$12.00 each.
- TPO Magazine Submittal – Peoples / Awards: GM Blanchette noted he submitted two items of recognition to the TPO Magazine for publication. They were for the District's award of the Richard B. Goodenow Award from MWWCA and Treatment Plant Operator Mr. Thomas Mason's graduation from the JETCC Management Candidate School. The TPO [Treatment Plant Operator] magazine is a national publication.
- Wage Benefit Survey: GM Blanchette noted that the MRWA survey details information that does not all pertain to Sewer Districts. He suggested that when the Benefits Review Committee begins its meetings he will request a MRWA representative attend to explain the survey results in more detail.

Discussions

Discussions were made regarding private lines / manholes in a public way and who is responsible if it requires repairs - the Town, District, or property owner. This will be an agenda item for the next meeting.

Chair Priest requested the Board members develop the Board’s 2014 goals for the GM and deliver to Trustee Green for compilation. He also noted that GM Blanchette’s annual performance review will be rescheduled to the December meeting when a full Board is present.

Schedule of Upcoming Meetings and Events

The upcoming meetings and workshops are as follows:

- Trustee Strategic Plan Workshop Thursday 21 November 2013 8:30 am
- Trustee Regular Thursday 12 December 2013 8:30 am
- Trustee Regular Thursday 16 January 2014 7:00 pm
- Trustee Regular Thursday 13 February 2014 7:00 pm

Remarks from the Chair

Chair Priest thanked the Trustees present, GM Blanchette, AGM Pontau, FM Caron, Dan Munsey, and Mrs. Bonnie Shippen for their time.

Adjournment

There being no further business before the Board of Trustees,

IT WAS MOVED BY TRUSTEE SARTORIS, SECONDED BY TRUSTEE HARVEY, AND UNANIMOUSLY VOTED BY THE TRUSTEES PRESENT (4-0) TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 10:38 AM.

Attest: _____
Jacqueline A. Sartoris
Vice Chair, Board of Trustees