

**KENNEBEC WATER DISTRICT  
REGULAR BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING  
THURSDAY – MARCH 15, 2018 at 7:30 AM**

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 a.m. by President Hodsdon.

Trustees present: Al Hodsdon, President; Karl Dornish, Vice-President; J. Michael Talbot, Treasurer; Allan Fuller, Clerk; Jeff Earickson, Assistant Treasurer; Bill Boucher, Trustee; Mark McCluskey, Trustee; Frank Richards, Trustee; Denise Bruesewitz, Trustee; Alex Wild, Trustee

Trustees absent: None

Also present: Roger Crouse, General Manager; Jefferson Longfellow; KWD Engineer; Matt Zetterman, KWD Director of Water Quality; Benny LaPlante, KWD Distribution Superintendent; Sue Markatine, Recording Secretary

**ITEM 1: INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS**

None

**ITEM 2: REVIEW AND APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR BOARD OF TRUSTEES' MEETING OF MARCH 1, 2018.**

Motion by Trustee Talbot, "to accept the minutes of the Regular Board of Trustees' Meeting of March 1, 2018," seconded by Trustee Earickson.

Vote: Motion carried unanimously.

**ITEM 3: FINANCIALS****A. ACCOUNT WARRANT**

March 15, 2018

CHECKS RELEASED		Check	Dollar
Vendor	Description	Date	Amount
Treasurer, State of Maine	Annual Chemical Registration Fee	02/26/18	300.00
Spiller's	Canon IPF 785 Printer-Engineering Dept.	02/26/18	6,995.00
Postmaster	Bulk Mail Postage-Billing	02/28/18	245.03
Kennebec County Reg. of Deeds	Water Lien Filing Fees-3 Properties	03/01/18	66.00
Somerset County Reg. of Deeds	Water Lien Filing Fee-1 Property	03/01/18	22.00
Darling's	2018 Honda CRV	03/06/18	26,500.00
<b>TOTAL WARRANT</b>			<b>\$34,128.03</b>

Motion by Trustee Talbot, "to ratify the total warrant of checks released for \$34,128.03," seconded by Trustee Earickson.

The Trustees questioned the lower than usual dollar amount for this warrant. Mr. Crouse responded one reason is that during this particular period there have not been many invoices received for processing and payment. In addition, KWD is in the midst of the annual audit being performed by the accounting firm of Runyon Kersteen Ouellette (RKO), and staff time, particularly Betty Hastings, KWD's Financial Manager, is being dedicated to assisting and providing the auditors with various degrees of information and documentation.

Vote: Motion carried unanimously.

**B. Other**

Mr. Crouse informed the Board members that staff members from RKO have been on site to conduct the 2017 KWD financial audit. He stated that Betty Hastings has been extremely busy, including working on the weekends, completing the numerous required schedules and reports in addition to the Annual Maine Public Utilities Commission report.

The Trustees were informed that due to the receipt and expenditure of federal bond funds from the State Revolving Fund program for the Western Avenue Pumping Station (WAPS) project, there is a requirement for a federal "single" audit in addition to the regular annual audit. This federal audit and cost was not included in the original financial agreement and three-year contract between KWD and RKO. Due to the supplemental work, RKO is requesting a price adjustment increase not to exceed \$1,800 above the contracted price of \$9,750 for the 2017 audit. Trustee McCluskey asked the reason the federal audit is required, for instance if KWD was randomly chosen for this type of audit. Mr. Crouse responded that for all entities, when federal bond funds received are at or above \$750,000, inclusive and inconsideration of the principal forgiveness monies also, a separate single federal audit is required for the year the monies were received.

Motion by Trustee Talbot, "to expand the RKO audit, not to exceed an additional cost of \$1,800, to include the supplemental and required federal audit due to the receipt and expenditure of federal bond funds from the State Revolving Fund program for the Western Avenue Pumping Station," seconded by Trustee McCluskey.

Vote: Motion carried unanimously.

**ITEM 4: MOTION ISSUES**

**A. Other**

There were no additional motion issues for today's meeting.

**ITEM 5: TRUSTEES**

**A. Comments, Concerns, Ideas**

At the March 1<sup>st</sup> Board meeting, Trustee Earickson had recommended that Mr. Crouse visit Hamelin's Furniture Store, KWD's South Street neighbor, and introduce himself to Mr. Hamelin. At today's meeting, he inquired if this meeting had transpired. Mr. Crouse stated he did meet with and had a very cordial meeting with Mr. Marc Hamelin. Mr. Crouse informed Mr. Hamelin that if he has any concerns in the future, to please feel free to contact him.

**B. Other**

None

**ITEM 6: GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT**

**A. Project Updates**

Mr. Crouse reviewed the present and upcoming personnel changes for KWD. At the March 1<sup>st</sup> meeting, Mr. Crouse had reported that Mr. LaPlante had accepted the position of KWD Customer Service/Safety Manager. This created an opening and employment opportunity for the KWD Distribution Superintendent position. Mr. Crouse was pleased to announce that Mr. Jared Bragdon, who is currently a Water Treatment Plant (WTP) Operator, has accepted the position and will be promoted to Distribution Superintendent. Mr. Crouse stated that Mr. Bragdon has proven to be a valuable asset to KWD, and he is sure the Distribution Department will continue to be well led. Mr. Bragdon will start his new position on March 26<sup>th</sup>. This will create an opening at the WTP for an operator's position.

In addition, Jamey Epstein, who is also a WTP Operator, has tendered his resignation as of March 16<sup>th</sup> as he has accepted a position closer to his family in the Portland area. Mr. Crouse praised Mr. Epstein for the valuable knowledge he brought to the Water Quality Department, along with his great skills, hard work, and dedication. However, this resignation has created an additional staff opening at the WTP. Mr. Crouse reported that one of these positions will be filled by Mr. Lee Owens, who is currently an Operations and Maintenance staff member. Mr. Owens is a dedicated, hard-working employee with mechanical skills, and Mr. Zetterman is excited to have him as a team member. This will create an opening for an Operations and Maintenance staff member. Therefore, KWD will be advertising for both a WTP Operator and Operations and Maintenance staff member position to fill the two vacancies.

On behalf of the Board, Trustee Hodsdon commented that KWD is very fortunate to have a remarkable and dedicated Management Team. As some staff members are promoted and accept new

positions, during the transitioning period they will have the resource of the knowledge and skill of this Management Team.

The next topic was regarding employee evaluations. The Board members were provided with a copy of a memo comprised by Mr. Crouse which will be provided to all KWD employees. This document informs the KWD employees that the KWD Management Team has developed a performance evaluation form, and each employee currently employed will receive an annual performance review on the anniversary of their hire date. New employees will receive a review within six months of their hire date and on their anniversary date thereafter.

The aforementioned form and evaluation process will be utilized for all employees except for Mr. Crouse. Mr. Crouse plans to develop an evaluation form for the Board to utilize in order to evaluate him and his effectiveness as a General Manager (GM). Trustee Talbot pointed out that in past years, the Board had filled out an evaluation form for the GM although a high percentage of the questions on the form could not be rated objectively by Board Members as they do not interact on a daily basis with the GM. The interaction between a Board and GM is different than a typical workplace supervisor – employee relationship. Mr. Talbot suggested, to aid in creating the form, reviewing a few GM standard evaluations forms and striking the questions which would not pertain in this particular case. Mr. Crouse stated one tool which could potentially be used and included on his evaluation form is feedback remarks from KWD staff regarding an overall assessment of the performance of the KWD operations. Mr. Crouse will present this form to the Board for its review and recommendations for changes before his six-month evaluation date. Trustee Hodsdon stated he feels a six-month evaluation for Mr. Crouse and an annual evaluation in subsequent years is appropriate.

Regarding the KWD technology changes in process, Mr. Crouse reported that A Partner in Technology is in the process of transitioning KWD to Office 365 which will link all three office facilities to the same network and installing new hard drives for several computers with Windows 10. Next week, network drop wall outlets will be mounted at the various locations. After this has been completed, the voice over internet protocol (VOIP) telephone system will be installed. The target date for this project is the beginning of April.

The Management Team and Wright-Pierce Engineers continue to work on the KWD Comprehensive Facilities Master Plan. One component of this plan is for Wright-Pierce to evaluate and make recommendations for an upgraded garage for equipment and vehicle storage. The present garage is inadequate, too small and cramped to house and perform maintenance tasks on the majority of the KWD vehicles and equipment. There is a safety concern also. If equipment or vehicle maintenance is being performed and a fire breaks out, the cramped space does not lend itself to a quick departure. Another example of the garage inadequacy is the fact that there is no heated space for the Ditch Witch power trencher. This equipment froze recently and was thawed at the Waterville Sewerage District (WSD) garage facilities. Mr. Crouse stated that this new facility is expected to be quite costly.

Trustee Fuller asked if there is enough room to build a new facility at the current location or if an offsite location will be considered. Mr. Crouse responded that both these options are being considered. A determination will be made when the assessment from Wright-Pierce has been received and reviewed. However, Mr. Crouse conveyed various reasons he believes a new location would be more suitable. First, is that there is little room at this location for expansion and the site elevation at this site is slanted. Second, is that there is poor sight distance when pulling out from

South Street onto Western Avenue, especially dangerous with the construction vehicles and trailers, and there is a high school in the vicinity to consider. Third, when there is a necessity to repair a main break after hours and at times in the middle of the night, there is industrial noise caused by filling the dump truck with gravel and the engines of the vehicles themselves. These sounds can be a disturbance to the neighbors. Trustee Hodsdon brought up the fact that the present location is a shore land zone. Mr. Crouse confirmed that this is correct, and this places limitations on the amount of permitted redevelopment. Trustee Boucher stated that the vacant KWD property on Upper Main Street, Waterville, could be considered to build a new garage.

Trustee McCluskey inquired if Wright-Pierce is developing preliminary designs for the new garage. Mr. Longfellow answered that, at this time, Wright-Pierce is only conducting an evaluation of the garage and recommendations will be incorporated in the KWD Master Plan. Mr. Crouse further explained that Wright-Pierce's scope is preliminary planning, such as calculating necessary square footage and to determine, with consideration of the difference in elevation level, if there is enough land available at South Street for development.

Trustee Earickson proposed the idea that other districts, such as the WSD or the Kennebec Sanitary Treatment District (KSTD) could also have garage limitations, and there could be a potential for a combined facility. He suggested contacting these other districts for a general conversation regarding this possibility, and considering the similarities amongst the districts, there could even be the prospect of construction vehicles and equipment sharing.

Trustee Hodsdon stated that presently, the WSD has a large garage, he believes six bays, which meets the WSD storage needs. However, the WSD does have an abundance of land and their management could be approached if KWD would like to consider this site for a new garage. Mr. LaPlante stated he does intend to visit garage facilities for operations similar to KWD to discuss the details of the building layout and to learn which operational schematics are most efficient.

Trustee Fuller mentioned that if KWD does eventually decide to sell the M-4 hydro station, monies realized from this transaction could be used to aid in funding a new garage.

At the March 1<sup>st</sup> Board meeting, Mr. Crouse had informed the Trustees that to develop professional relationships, he had introductory meetings with Mr. Mike Roy, City Manager of Waterville, and Mr. Mike Heavener, Town Manager of Winslow. He has also now met with Michelle Flewelling, Town Manager of Fairfield, and plans on meeting with the other town leaders in the KWD municipality and the China Town Manager soon.

At this time, Trustee Fuller asked for commentary regarding the China Lake water level and maintaining this level within the Maine Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) lake level guidance order. Mr. Zetterman stated that in order to meet the winter target level of one to two feet below spillway, KWD has recently made an adjustment to increase the flow to the Outlet Stream, from 115 cubic feet per second (cfs) to between 150 and 160 cfs. Mr. Zetterman explained that although the DEP allows a maximum water release of 200 cfs, in consideration of the stream volume capacity, property owners, and shoreland, KWD attempts to maintain a flow below this level. In addition, as the lake level decreases, it becomes more difficult to sustain the higher flow. He further explained that the upcoming month of April is when the flow is adjusted with the intention of replenishing the lake with water. With the amount of eventual snow melt, raising the level should not be too difficult, but adjustments will continue dependent upon weather variables such as storm

precipitation. Mr. Zetterman stated KWD has good communications with the DEP, and the DEP is aware of the due diligence of KWD to maintain the lake level within the guidelines.

At this time, the Board discussed retirement party plans for Mr. LaCasse. Trustee Hodsdon stated that a commemorative plaque should be presented to Mr. LaCasse. After some discussion, the Trustees decided to hold an event at the close of the April 19<sup>th</sup> Board meeting and invite municipal leaders, associates, past Board members, and the press to attend. The Trustees suggested limiting the number of guests to approximately thirty, including the present Board members. Trustee Hodsdon volunteered to compile a list of applicable names for invitational purposes. Due to space confinements at the KWD Business Office, he also suggested using an offsite venue, such as the Waterville City Council Chambers. The regularly scheduled Board meeting could be held at the chambers before the presentation of the plaque and well wishes.

Motion by Trustee Talbot, “to accept the General Manager’s Report as presented,” seconded by Trustee Earickson.

Vote: Motion carried unanimously.

**A. Other**

**ITEM 8: EXECUTIVE SESSION, (Under MRSA Title 1, Section 405-6D, Collective Bargaining Discussions)**

Mr. Crouse reported that there were no updates regarding the union deliberations as these were scheduled to take place on March 8<sup>th</sup> but cancelled due to a major snowstorm. This meeting was rescheduled for March 20<sup>th</sup>. Therefore, there was no Executive Session held today.

**ITEM 9: PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

None

Motion by Trustee Talbot, “to adjourn the meeting,” seconded by Trustee Earickson.

Vote: Motion carried unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 8:12 a.m.

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Sue Markatine, Recording Secretary