

**KENNEBEC WATER DISTRICT  
REGULAR BOARD OF TRUSTEES' MEETING  
THURSDAY – NOVEMBER 21, 2019 at 7:30 AM**

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

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

Trustees absent: Alex Wild, Assistant Treasurer

J. Michael Talbot, Treasurer, left the meeting at 7:55 a.m.

Also present: Roger Crouse, General Manager; Jeff Longfellow, KWD Engineer; Matt Zetterman, KWD Director of Technology; Benny LaPlante, KWD Customer Service Manager/Safety Coordinator; Jared Bragdon, KWD Operations Superintendent; Robbie Bickford, KWD Director of Quality; Sue Markatine, KWD Recording Secretary

**ITEM 1: INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS**

None

**ITEM 2: REVIEW AND APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR BOARD OF TRUSTEES' MEETING OF NOVEMBER 7, 2019.**

Motion by Trustee Hodsdon, "to accept the minutes of the Regular Board of Trustees' Meeting of November 7, 2019," seconded by Trustee Dornish.

Vote: Trustee Earickson and Trustee Fuller abstained, motion carried.

**ITEM 3: FINANCIALS**

**A. Account Warrant**

Motion by Trustee Talbot, "to ratify the November 21, 2019 total warrant of checks released for \$194,858.51," seconded by Trustee Richards.

Vote: Motion carried unanimously.

**B. Outstanding Service Bills**

This agenda item was tabled until the December 4<sup>th</sup> Board meeting.

**C. Other**

For their review, the Board members were provided with an update of the 2019 KWD Capital Budget with notations and the associated line item cost of projects completed, projects underway but not completed, projects delayed to a future year, and projects added, along with the overall 2019 actual and estimated capital expenditures to date. Mr. Crouse expects to present to the Board the proposed preliminary 2020 Capital Budget at the December 4<sup>th</sup> meeting.

**ITEM 4: EXECUTIVE SESSION – 1 MRS §405. EXECUTIVE SESSIONS**

None

**ITEM 5: MOTION ISSUES**

**A. KWD Employee Year-End “Bonus”. In 2018 Board of Trustees Approved \$150 Per Employee; General Manager Recommendation for 2019-\$150**

In appreciation of the KWD employees, in 2018 the Board members approved a one-time cash bonus of \$150, and Mr. Crouse recommended the same for 2019.

Motion by Trustee Dornish, “in appreciation of the KWD employees, to authorize a one-time cash bonus of \$150 for 2019,” seconded by Trustee Fuller.

Vote: Motion carried unanimously.

**B. Approval of Cost of Living Pay Increase for 2020 for Non-Union Personnel**

Mr. Crouse explained that per the union contract, the union position employees will be receiving a 2.5 percent wage increase as of January 1, 2020. In the past, the Board has granted a raise equivalent to the union’s percentage rate to non-union position employees. For the year 2020, Mr. Crouse presented a memo proposing that the non-union position employees, excluding himself, receive a 3.0 percent wage increase.

Motion by Trustee Richards, “to award a 3.0 percent wage increase to all non-bargaining KWD personnel (excluding the General Manager) effective January 1, 2020,” seconded by Trustee McCluskey.

Motion by Trustee Hodsdon, “to amend the motion to award the amount of a 3.0 percent wage increase for all non-bargaining KWD personnel (excluding the General Manager) effective January 1, 2020, and authorize the General Manager to allocate a percentage of this total pool amount per employee individually,” seconded by Trustee Fuller.

The Trustees discussed the original motion and amended motion.

Vote on Amended Motion: 4 in favor, 5 opposed, motion fails.

Vote on Original Motion: Motion carried unanimously.

**C. Other**

None

**ITEM 6: TRUSTEES**

**A. Comments, Concerns, Ideas**

Trustee Hodson mentioned that KWD became a member of the Maine Rural Water Association (MRWA) earlier in 2019. He commented that because KWD's customer base exceeds the allotted MRWA threshold number for a utility, some of the specific technical services offered are unavailable to KWD. Although this is correct, MRWA does provide numerous other services such as being an advocate to improve the water and wastewater industry in Maine and being a resource for training seminars and general guidance.

## **ITEM 7: GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT**

### **A. KWD Mission and Values**

The Board members were provided with a copy of the revised KWD Values and Mission Statement which was developed by a collaborative effort of the KWD employees. After some discussion, the Trustees made a few suggested changes for Mr. Crouse to incorporate at his discretion.

### **B. Personnel Handbook Updates Progress** **a. Domestic Partner Definitions**

At the November 7<sup>th</sup> meeting, Mr. Crouse had explained that in order for KWD to offer health insurance coverage for an employee's domestic partner, the Maine Municipal Employees Health Trust (MMEHT), KWD's plan administrator, requires formal approval from the KWD Board of Trustees. The Board had requested and was provided with the MMEHT official definition of a domestic partner and the State of Maine's official definition for comparison purposes.

Motion by Trustee Dornish, "to authorize KWD to offer health insurance coverage to employees' domestic partners per the Maine Municipal Employees Health Trust definition of a domestic partner," seconded by Trustee Richards.

Vote: Motion carried unanimously.

Previous to the meeting, the Trustees had been provided with a memo comprised by Mr. Crouse summarizing the process to update the KWD Personnel Manual, the sections with new or significant modifications (which had previously been reviewed and endorsed by the Board) of the KWD Personnel Manual, and the additional changes to the KWD Personnel Manual. A copy of the draft KWD Personnel Manual was also provided to the Board for their review and input.

Trustee Stabins commented that although employees who have a birth or adoption of a child are covered under the category of the Maine Family Medical Leave Law, there is no paid parental leave. She recommended adding a paid parental leave benefit to employees.

Motion by Trustee Stabins, "as a potential addition to the benefits offered by KWD, to direct the General Manager to formulate a KWD policy for Board review regarding paid parental leave," seconded by Trustee Fuller.

Vote: Motion carried unanimously.

In reference to the KWD Military Leave of Absence with Pay Policy, Trustee Hodsdon asked for additional information regarding the legal requirements for this type of leave for review at the next Board meeting.

Mr. Crouse informed the Trustees that the employees covered under the union contract, which is in effect until December 31, 2020, have voted to approve an addendum to the contract that states that the KWD Personnel Manual takes precedence over the union contract when there is a conflict in policy. Mr. Crouse also pointed out that the personnel manual has a Conflicts of Interest and Anti-Fraud Policy which pertains to both employees and Board members.

### **C. Other**

Mr. Crouse reviewed the fact that KWD was granted a loan with 25-percent principal forgiveness through the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (SRF) Program for the 2019 Savage Street, Fairfield, main replacement project. There is a stipulation that before the principal forgiveness can be granted, the KWD Board members and Senior staff are required to participate in a four-hour Sustainably Managed Utility Seminar presented by the Rural Community Assistance Partnership (RCAP). This training will be scheduled for two, two-hour evening sessions in January with the dates yet to be determined.

Mr. Crouse reminded the Trustees that KWD is hosting the Maine Water Utilities Association's bi-monthly meeting on Thursday, December 5<sup>th</sup>. Therefore, the next Board meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, December 4<sup>th</sup>.

Motion by Trustee Earickson, "to accept the General Manager's Report as presented," seconded by Trustee McCluskey.

Vote: Motion carried unanimously.

### **ITEM 8: PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

None

Motion by Trustee McCluskey, "to adjourn the meeting," seconded by Trustee Hodsdon.

Vote: Motion carried unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 9:00 a.m.

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Sue Markatine, Recording Secretary