

**KENNEBEC WATER DISTRICT
REGULAR BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
THURSDAY – MAY 2, 2024 at 7:30 AM**

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

Trustees present: Frank Richards, President; Ben Murray, Vice-President; Jeff Earickson, Treasurer; J. Michael Talbot, Assistant Treasurer; Sarah Whateley, Clerk (Remote Access); Mark McCluskey, Trustee; Amy Stabins, Trustee; Denise Bruesewitz, Trustee (Remote Access); Allan Fuller, Trustee; Bruce Williams, Trustee

Trustees absent: None

Denise Bruesewitz, Trustee, joined the meeting at 8:00 a.m. and left the meeting at 8:20 a.m.

Also present: Roger Crouse, KWD General Manager; Amy Dyer, KWD Finance Manager; Jeff Longfellow, KWD Engineering Manager (Remote Access); Matt Zetterman, KWD Technology Manager (Remote Access); Jared Bragdon, KWD Distribution Manager (Remote Access); Robbie Bickford, KWD Water Quality Manager; 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 APRIL 4, 2024.

Motion by Trustee Talbot, "to accept the minutes of the Regular Board of Trustees' meeting of April 4, 2024," seconded by Trustee Fuller.

Roll Call Vote: Trustee Earickson – Yea, Trustee Talbot – Yea, Trustee Richards – Yea, Trustee Stabins – Abstained, Trustee McCluskey – Yea, Trustee Murray – Yea, Trustee Fuller – Yea, Trustee Whateley – Yea, Trustee Williams - Yea. Motion carried.

ITEM 3: REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF ACCOUNT WARRANT

Motion by Trustee Earickson, "to ratify the May 2, 2024 total warrant of checks released for \$326,236.88," seconded by Trustee Talbot.

Roll Call Vote: Trustee Earickson – Yea, Trustee Talbot – Yea, Trustee Richards – Yea, Trustee Stabins – Yea, Trustee McCluskey – Yea, Trustee Murray – Yea, Trustee Fuller – Yea, Trustee Whateley – Yea, Trustee Williams - Yea. Motion carried unanimously.

ITEM 4: REVIEW OF MARCH 2024 FINANCIAL REPORTS

The Trustees were provided with the March 2024 Financial Statements and Accounts Receivable Aging Report and a brief review was conducted.

The Board members thanked Ms. Dyer for the review of the financial statements.

ITEM 5: REVIEW OF RATE INCREASE PROJECTIONS

Motion by Trustee Earickson, “to take from the table the rate increase discussion,” seconded by Trustee Fuller.

Roll Call Vote: Trustee Earickson – Yea, Trustee Talbot – Yea, Trustee Richards – Yea, Trustee Stabins – Yea, Trustee McCluskey – Yea, Trustee Murray – Yea, Trustee Fuller – Yea, Trustee Whateley – Yea, Trustee Williams - Yea. Motion carried unanimously.

As part of their Board packet, the Trustees were provided with revised rate increase projections documents including water rate strategic planning, five-year rate increase projections, and impact of potential rate increases through the year 2026 on KWD customers including the public fire protection for the municipalities. Mr. Crouse answered questions from the Board members as they discussed this information.

As part of the rate increase discussion, Trustee Earickson requested consideration of a proposal to standardize the private fire service rates based upon the relative carrying capacity of the service line. Board members were provided with a document detailing the proposed changes to the private fire protection services for the existing 205 services prepared by Mr. Crouse and Trustee Earickson. Mr. Crouse and Trustee Earickson explained the methodology used to provide this rate structure and answered questions from the Board members. Before debating the implementation of this new rate structure, the consensus of the Board was to entertain recommendations from KWD staff regarding the potential value of an updated Cost of Service Study.

ITEM 6: APPROVALS/MOTIONS NEEDED

A. Approval of Rate Increase(s)

Motion by Trustee Williams, “to have no rate increase in 2024 and to approve an across-the-board water rate increase of six-percent effective January 1, 2025, and eight-percent effective January 1, 2026, subject to approval by the Maine Public Utilities Commission,” seconded by Trustee Earickson.

There was additional discussion regarding the rate increases and the Maine Public Utilities Commission rate(s) approval procedures.

Motion by Trustee McCluskey, “to move the question,” seconded by Trustee Williams.

Roll Call Vote: Trustee Earickson – Yea, Trustee Talbot – Yea, Trustee Richards – Yea, Trustee Stabins – Yea, Trustee McCluskey – Yea, Trustee Murray – Yea, Trustee Fuller – Yea, Trustee Whateley – Yea, Trustee Williams - Yea. Motion carried unanimously.

Roll Call Vote: Trustee Earickson – Yea, Trustee Talbot – Yea, Trustee Richards – Yea, Trustee Stabins – Yea, Trustee McCluskey – Yea, Trustee Murray – Yea, Trustee Fuller – Yea, Trustee Whateley – Yea, Trustee Williams - Yea. Motion carried unanimously.

ITEM 7: GENERAL MANAGER’S REPORT

The Trustees were provided with the General Manager’s report, and a brief review was conducted by Mr. Crouse.

Referring to his report, Mr. Crouse cited the fact that the China Lake water level has been abnormally high due to a series of recent major weather-related events. This resulted in property damage and shoreline erosion. Mr. Crouse and Mr. Bickford recently met with China's Town Manager, Vassalboro's Town Manager, and the Outlet Stream dam operator for the Town of Vassalboro to discuss the events and actions that could be taken to prevent this level of flooding from happening again. Other stakeholders, including the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and the China Lake Association, are also involved in discussions about the impacts of the flooding and ways to reduce the risk of this recurring.

The Board members thanked Mr. Crouse for his report.

ITEM 8: DEPARTMENT REPORTS

As part of their Board packet, the Trustees were provided with the Monthly Department Reports prepared by the respective managers.

Trustee Williams commented that, even if not awarded the Maine Municipal Association Ed MacDonald Safety Enhancement grant, KWD should still purchase the RIDGID pipe freezing unit for safety purposes.

In response to a question by Trustee McCluskey, Mr. Longfellow answered that corrosive soil is the likely cause of the damage to the 2012 pipe creating the main break in Eustis Parkway, Waterville. Since 2020 for main installations, and 2023 for main repairs, KWD wraps installed pipe and fittings in polyethylene to mitigate this corrosion.

Trustee Fuller commended KWD for working to automate the daily publication of lake level data onto KWD's website to provide data to stakeholders around the lake.

Trustee Earickson requested an update on the KWD Vassalboro solar energy project. Mr. Crouse responded that design and permitting are in progress and expects installation to occur late fall 2025 or early 2026.

At Trustee Fuller's request, Mr. Bickford explained that the land easement was necessary for the recycled water reduction project. This is the potential water discharge to the Outlet Stream in order to reduce the amount of backwash water recycled through the KWD Water Treatment Plant.

In response to a question by Trustee Fuller regarding the PFAS reduction media replacement trial samples, Mr. Bickford replied that the results continue to be favorable.

The Board members thanked the Department Managers for their reports.

ITEM 9: TRUSTEE COMMENTS, CONCERNS, AND/OR IDEAS

In response to a question by Trustee Fuller, Mr. Bickford indicated that another China Lake Watershed Land Acquisition committee meeting will be scheduled after the draft policy is revised with the input received during the previous meeting.

Trustee Williams thanked Trustee Earickson for his efforts reviewing and analyzing the KWD rate structure schematics.

ITEM 10: PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None

**ITEM 11: AS NEEDED: EXECUTIVE SESSION – 1 MRS §405. EXECUTIVE SESSIONS
SECTUIB 6. A. PERSONNEL**

None

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

Roll Call Vote: Trustee Earickson – Yea, Trustee Talbot – Yea, Trustee Richards – Yea, Trustee Stabins – Yea, Trustee McCluskey – Yea, Trustee Murray – Yea, Trustee Fuller – Yea, Trustee Whateley – Yea, Trustee Williams – Yea. Motion carried unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 9:03 a.m.

Sue Markatine, Recording Secretary