

**KENNEBEC WATER DISTRICT
REGULAR BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
THURSDAY – OCTOBER 3, 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); Allan Fuller, Trustee; Denise Bruesewitz, Trustee (Remote Access); Mark McCluskey, Trustee; Bruce Williams, Trustee

Trustees absent: Amy Stabins, Trustee

Denise Bruesewitz, Trustee, left the meeting at 7:55 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); Benny LaPlante, KWD Service Manager (Remote Access); 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 SEPTEMBER 19, 2024

Motion by Trustee Williams, "to accept the minutes of the Regular Board of Trustees' meeting of September 19, 2024," seconded by Trustee Fuller.

Vote: Trustee Earickson – Yea, Trustee Bruesewitz – Yea, Trustee Talbot – Yea, Trustee Richards – Yea, Trustee McCluskey – Abstained, 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 October 3, 2024, total warrant of checks released for \$654,400.62," seconded by Trustee Talbot.

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

ITEM 4: APPROVALS/MOTIONS NEEDED:

A. Approval of 2025 Cost of Living Adjustment

The Trustees were provided with a request for determination of the annual cost of living adjustment (COLA) for all KWD positions accompanied by statistical information from 1974 to 2024 of the variations in the Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W). (The CPI-W index is used by the Social Security Administration to establish the annual COLA for Social Security recipients.)

From August 2023 to August 2024 the CPI-W increased 2.4 percent. The Trustees briefly discussed this increase including the budgetary impact.

Motion by Trustee Earickson, “to authorize a 2.4 percent cost of living adjustment wage increase to all KWD personnel effective January 1, 2025,” seconded by Trustee Fuller.

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

ITEM 5: 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 further elaborated on and answered questions from the Trustees regarding the PFAS treatment grant application and PFAS treatment present and potential future projects.

Mr. Crouse informed the Trustees that KWD is actively pursuing the purchase of a used forklift for the Drummond Avenue facility. This item was included in the 2024 capital budget. Because a purchase commitment will be necessary when a used forklift becomes available, this will be presented as an after-the-fact approval request to the Board members.

On behalf of the Board members, President Richards thanked Mr. Crouse for the review of the General Manager’s report.

ITEM 6: DEPARTMENT REPORTS

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

In response to a question by Trustee Earickson, Mr. Longfellow replied that fire flow testing will be conducted in October after the completion of the water main projects and fall hydrant flushing. The installation of a larger water main in Pleasant Street, Waterville, will allow increased water flow through KWD’s distribution system and will influence the test results.

Trustee Earickson questioned if there is any concern that the KWD Certificates of Deposits (CDs) could be callable, meaning called back from the financial institute before maturity and shortening the higher interest rate realization. Ms. Dyer replied that because the majority of the KWD CDs are short term, there is limited concern of this occurring.

On behalf of the Board members, President Richards thanked the Department Managers for their reports.

ITEM 7: TRUSTEE COMMENTS, CONCERNS, AND/OR IDEAS

Trustee Richards informed the Board members that he, Mr. Crouse, and Trustee Murray met with two Trustees and the superintendent from the Kennebec Sanitary Treatment District (KSTD) to begin preliminary

discussions of the potential for a merger between KWD and KSTD. Mr. Crouse noted that KWD and KSTD have the same customer base, and a merger could be beneficial to both entities and the communities they serve. Mr. Crouse answered questions from the Trustees and explained preliminary thoughts regarding this potential merger. The consensus of the Board members was to allow Mr. Crouse to work with the KSTD superintendent to prepare a presentation highlighting the pros and cons of a merger as well as the potential costs. The presentation would occur in early 2025.

Trustee Williams, who is also the Director of Fairfield Public Works, commended Mr. Bragdon and the KWD Distribution Technicians on their work ethics and professionalism while performing jobs associated with the Town of Fairfield construction projects.

ITEM 8: PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None

**ITEM 9: AS NEEDED: EXECUTIVE SESSION – MRS TITLE 1, §405:
EXECUTIVE SESSIONS**

None

ITEM 10: ADJOURNMENT

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

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

Meeting adjourned at 8:15 a.m.

Sue Markatine, Recording Secretary