

UPPER BLACKSTONE CLEAN WATER
50 ROUTE 20, MILLBURY, MA 01527-2199
BOARD MEETING MINUTES - BOARD ROOM/HYBRID MEETING
April 12, 2023

ITEM I - CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Labovites called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

Ms. Mancini, through a roll call, recorded those in attendance and all are noted below:

<u>Board Members</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Present</u>	<u>Absent</u>	<u>In- person</u>	<u>Virtual</u>
Matthew Labovites	Chairman	X		X	
Philip Guerin	Vice Chairman	X		X	
John Woodsmall	Secretary	X		X	
Michael Traynor	Member	X		X	
Joanna Paquin	Member	X		X	
Donald Manseau	Member	X		X	
Robert Antonelli	Member	X		X	
Kevin Duffy	Member	X		X	
Joseph Buckley	Member	X		X	
Gary Nelson	Member		X		
Jay Fink	Member	X		X	

Upper Blackstone Staff

Karla Sangrey	Engineer Director/Treasurer
Mike Andrus	Deputy Director
Elizabeth Mailhot	HR Manager/District Clerk
Denise Mancini	HR Assistant

Guests

Attorney Robert Cox

Executive Session – Chairman Labovites asked that this Item be taken out of order and to move to Executive Session.

1:03 p.m. Member Traynor moved, Member Antonelli seconded and through a unanimous roll call, it was voted to move into Executive Session to discuss strategy with respect to litigation with the Department of Justice because an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the litigation position of Upper Blackstone and to return to open session: Chairman Labovites, yes; Vice Chairman Guerin, yes; Secretary Woodsmall, yes; Member Traynor, yes; Member Paquin, yes; Member Manseau, yes; Member Antonelli, yes; Member Duffy, yes; Member Buckley, yes; and Member Fink yes.

At the closing of the Executive Session, Member Traynor made a motion to adjourn the Executive Session and return to Open Session, it was seconded by Vice Chairman Guerin. Through a unanimous roll call vote of those as follows, it was voted to reconvene in Open Session: Chairman Labovites, yes; Vice Chairman Guerin, yes; Secretary Woodsmall, yes; Member Traynor, yes; Member Paquin, yes; Member Manseau, yes; Member Antonelli, yes; Member Duffy, yes; Member Buckley, yes; and Member Fink yes.

Board reconvened at 2:20 p.m.

ITEM II - APPROVAL OF MINUTES – March 15, 2023

Minutes – Member Antonelli moved to approve the minutes of the meeting on March 15, 2023. Vice Chairman Guerin seconded, and approval of minutes was noted as follows: Chairman Labovites, yes; Vice Chairman Guerin, yes; Secretary Woodsmall, yes; Member Traynor, yes; Member Paquin, yes; Member Manseau, yes; Member Antonelli, yes; Member Duffy, yes; and Member Fink, yes. Member Buckley abstained as he was not present at the meeting.

ITEM III – ELECTION OF OFFICERS

BAI #1 - Election of Officers commenced with member nominations. Vice Chairman Guerin nominated Matthew Labovites for re-election as Chairman, and Member Traynor seconded. Member Buckley nominated Philip Guerin for re-election as Vice Chairman, and Chairman Labovites seconded. Member Antonelli nominated John Woodsmall for re-election as Secretary, and Vice Chairman Guerin seconded. Member Antonelli motioned, Vice Chairman Guerin seconded, and through a roll call, a unanimous vote was obtained to approve BAI #1 to elect the slate of officers of the Board of Directors for a one-year term commencing April 12, 2023, and running until April 2024.

BAI #2 – Appointment of District Clerk commenced with Ms. Sangrey reporting that Denise Mancini has been performing many of the duties of the position since joining the staff in 2021. Member Antonelli made a motion to appoint Denise Mancini to the position of Clerk for a three-year term commencing April 12, 2023, and running until April 2026; Member Traynor seconded, and through a roll call, a unanimous vote was obtained to approve BAI #2.

IV FINANCE

Warrants – Member Woodsmall moved to approve the following warrants. Member Manseau seconded, and approval of the warrants was noted as follows: Chairman Labovites, yes; Vice Chairman Guerin, yes; Secretary Woodsmall, yes; Member Traynor, yes; Member Paquin, yes; Member Manseau, yes; Member Antonelli, yes; Member Duffy, yes; Member Buckley, yes; and Member Fink, yes.

Warrants	\$ 1,299,806.53	(03/29/2023)
	\$ 595,819.62	(03/31/2023)
	<u>\$ 223,821.05</u>	(04/07/2023)
	\$ 2,119,447.20	

ITEM V – ADMINISTRATION

Capital Improvement Projects Updates -

Standby Power Design – Mr. Andrus said the final Intended Use Plan has been issued; the SRF has included Upper Blackstone for \$10M for the project and will need a Board appropriation by June 30th; and CDM is working on the cost estimates for the micro grid system which includes working with the Power Options consortium on the cost of additional solar production through existing agreements.

Regional Biosolids Study – The monthly meeting was held on Monday, April 3rd to review technical options. Work is proceeding on a proposed solution/set of solutions.

Other In-House Projects – The headworks project is beginning its evaluation stage; the fuel tank relocation project is under design, and we are proceeding with procurement from the General Services Administration (GSA) program; the site drainage project is nearing 100% design; and a request for quote is out to the HVAC engineers and should be received by Wednesday, April 19th.

Mr. Andrus has a meeting with a WPI professor on April 14th to discuss researching sludge to energy and participating in projects.

Chemical Bids FY2024 – BAI#3 – Ms. Sangrey said the procurement process started with the Northeast/Merrimack Valley Chemical Consortium opening the bids for Caustic Soda and Ferric Chloride. She said there is not much leverage on the pricing as these are not big-ticket chemicals and added that it is good to be part of the consortium. She said the purpose of the BAI is to award the Caustic Soda and Ferric Chloride contracts to Borden & Remington Corporation for a period of twelve months. Secretary Woodsmall motioned to approve BAI#3, a motion to award the following contracts to the low bidders for a period beginning July 1, 2023, as noted below, and to authorize the Engineer/Director to execute the contracts on behalf of Upper Blackstone:

CAUSTIC SODA 50% Solution

Northeast/Merrimack Valley Chemical Consortium – UB2023-04

Borden & Remington \$0.2169/wet lb.
Term twelve (12) months

FERRIC CHLORIDE

Northeast/Merrimack Valley Chemical Consortium – UB2023-07

Borden & Remington \$0.6187/dry lb.
Term twelve (12) months

Vice Chairman Guerin seconded, and approval of BAI#3 is noted as follows: Chairman Labovites, yes; Vice Chairman Guerin, yes; Secretary Woodsmall, yes; Member Traynor, yes; Member Paquin, yes; Member Manseau, yes; Member Antonelli, yes; Member Duffy, yes; Member Buckley, yes; and Member Fink, yes.

Department of Labor Standards – Inspection Conducted March 30, 2023 – Mr. Andrus said he had been notified by the Department of Labor that a routine physical inspection would be done on March 30th. Inspector Danielson DeAndrade met with staff before and after the inspection. After the inspection was completed, Mr. DeAndrade said that Upper Blackstone is one of the cleanest and safest plants he had ever seen and was impressed with the physical condition of it. Mr. Andrus said we have some paperwork issues regarding insufficiencies in our planning/training to correct by May 11th and a safety meeting was held on April 11th to address them. He added the team will be working diligently to resolve them.

ITEM VI – OPERATIONS

Flow Summary – Ms. Sangrey said the weather has been warm and dry and there was nothing to report.

River Monitoring Program 2023 – Ms. Sangrey said the program will be starting later this month and similar work will be done as in the past. This will include sending all results to the DEP to continue transparency and to do everything we can to make sure our river data is included with the DEP in their periodic assessments of the river. The FY2021 data will be included in their next report which should be out in 2024.

ITEM VII– COMMUNICATIONS

MCWRS – Vice Chairman Guerin said the in-person Symposium will be held on September 13th or 14th at the Devens Common Center, and the topic will be financing sustainability, adding speakers will include financial people and panels discussing the financial and technical aspects of the projects.

He said comments for the new NPDES draft permit for potable drinking water facilities are being prepared and will close on April 20th.

The NCL for PFAS was issued to the draft by the EPA at four parts per trillion. There was a DEP briefing on the subject last week estimating that 30% of Massachusetts public water systems are going to be impacted.

Vice Chairman Guerin said he received an email from Wendy Leo of the MWRA letting him know that there are some new NPDES permits that have been issued recently. She said they will apply to Deer Island which also affects all the co-permittees for the major storm hazard plan. They will have one year from when the permit takes effect to come up with a three-part plan to assess the vulnerability of all the components to a major storm; propose an alternatives analysis to address vulnerability and project what a storm going out 100 years from now would look like; and put a plan in place to address flooding of wastewater facilities and components.

Woonsocket Incinerator – Ms. Sangrey said there has been some action from the RIDEM against Woonsocket after getting pressure from some advocacy organizations to do so, although she is not sure if a resolution is coming anytime soon. She added the City of Woonsocket is advertising for someone to manage their wastewater project.

Water's Worth It Day at the State House, May 11th – Ms. Sangrey said this is a “meet with your legislator day” which is organized by ACEC and MAWEA. She is planning to attend as there are currently bills at the state level relating to PFAS and biosolids. Her goal is to arrange meetings with legislators in our district to talk about some of the big, general issues such as PFAS and biosolids to achieve more awareness. It was recommended that she seek out Representative Dan Donahue, State Senator Robyn Kennedy, and Senator Mike Moore. Ms. Sangrey said she will discuss this further at the next Board meeting.

ITEM VIII – PERSONNEL

Postings, New Hires, Resignations – Ms. Mailhot said Christine Kelley, our temporary finance manager, has started and the transition is going smoothly, adding we have received some good prospects for a permanent hire that will be reviewed and discussed. We also have two lab interns who will be starting in May with the possibility of a third. Ms. Mailhot said she and Mr. Andrus attended a job fair at Tahonto High School on Tuesday. He said they focused on the environmental stewardship aspect of Upper Blackstone and the students seemed excited. Ms. Mailhot mentioned that was our first career fair, and we are registered to attend more in the upcoming weeks.

COVID-19 Cases – There are no new cases to report.

ITEM IX- DATE(s) NEXT MEETING(s) AGENDA TOPICS

4/26, 5/10, 5/24, 6/14, 6/28

ITEM X – ADJOURNMENT

At 3:04 p.m. Member Manseau motioned to adjourn the meeting. Member Traynor seconded, and the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Denise Mancini

Denise Mancini,
District Clerk