

**UPPER BLACKSTONE CLEAN WATER**  
**50 ROUTE 20, MILLBURY, MA 01527-2199**  
**BOARD MEETING MINUTES - BOARD ROOM/HYBRID MEETING**  
**June 7, 2023**

**ITEM I - CALL TO ORDER**

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

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

<b><u>Board Members</u></b>	<b><u>Title</u></b>	<b><u>Present</u></b>	<b><u>Absent</u></b>	<b><u>In- person</u></b>	<b><u>Virtual</u></b>
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	
Gary Nelson	Member	x		x	
Jay Fink	Member	x		x	
Austin Cyganiewicz	Member		x		

**Upper Blackstone Staff**

Karla Sangrey	Engineer Director/Treasurer
Mike Andrus	Deputy Director
Elizabeth Mailhot	HR Manager

**Guests**

Dana Green	Vice President, CDM Smith
Nick Holway	Electrical Engineer, CDM Smith
Mike Walsh	Vice President, CDM Smith

**ITEM II - APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES – May 24, 2023**

**Minutes** – Member Antonelli moved to approve the minutes of the meeting on May 24, 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; Member Nelson, yes; and Member Fink, yes.

**Administration** – Chairman Labovites asked that this Item be taken out of order.

**ITEM IV – ADMINISTRATION**

**Standby Power Project Update – Dana Green, Nick Holway, Mike Walsh, CDM Smith –**

Presentation of Draft Preliminary Design Report - Ms. Sangrey said she was delighted to have CDM Smith in to talk about the project and added Board authorization is needed by the end of the month to meet all the State Revolving Fund (SRF) obligations for the 2023 IUP.

Dana Green began by introducing himself, Mike Walsh and Nick Holway. He gave a brief explanation of the background of the project which included utility service issues, a 2018 quick evaluation memo of the

generator sizing options, and the pre-design objectives. Ms. Sangrey explained that during the Phase A design, our team learned that our facility had a vulnerability because the dual feeds to the facility have a common source. A compounding factor is the fact that National Grid cannot switch the feed automatically without relieving load in other places. She said this standby power project was included in the IP plan because it was on the list of projects that Upper Blackstone prioritized, and there is a likelihood that there would be an increase in standby power requirements included in the next NPDES permit received. Ms. Sangrey confirmed that there are similar facilities in New England that currently have standby power requirements, adding it is quite common.

Mr. Holway gave a recap of how CDM Smith got through the alternatives analysis portion of the study, which included the three tech memos for the scoring criteria, standby power, and energy resiliency. A workshop was held and based on the scoring criteria for power generation equipment, it was determined that tier IV diesel engine generators were the best option for Upper Blackstone as controlling emissions is a factor. Mr. Holway pointed out that battery storage also scored high. He added future projects are not going to be included in the sizing criteria in this project but will be part of those projects when constructed. After a second workshop, the team determined that additional solar PV to the site was the best option. Mr. Holway shared the overall project scope and listed all that is included in it. He also provided a list and explanation of some optional scope to consider, and the costs associated with it. He went on to explain the standby load confirmation and redundancy requirements, and feasibility of the solar PV. Ms. Sangrey mentioned that regarding the incentives, some of the solar may qualify for thirty percent of the initial investment to be reimbursed. Mr. Holway addressed the concerns for the need for Tier IV vs. Tier II and the difference between them.

Mr. Green spoke about the project delivery considerations. Ms. Sangrey pointed out that Upper Blackstone has been a member of the Power Options Consortium for several years for gas and electric procurement. Mr. Green said they have been fantastic to work with and are well suited to deliver these projects and are very likely the ones they will be working with to advance this. He proceeded to talk about the timelines for the options of design-bid-build, Construction Manager at Risk (CMAR), which is a known delivery method for Upper Blackstone, and pre-purchase. In summation, Mr. Smith addressed the SFR funding steps.

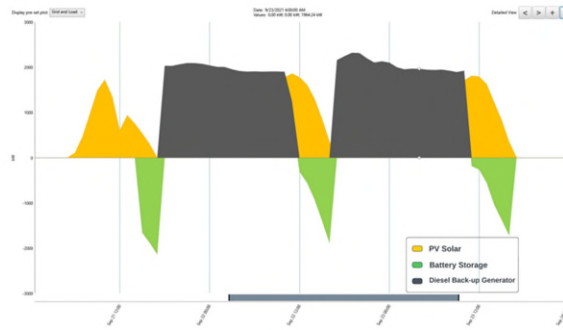
Ms. Sangrey said one question is we don't know how much we can or want SRF to fund a larger project; we need to figure where the project is to see if we want to borrow more money or not and find out if they have room because other projects that aren't happening. She said the draft Board Action Item #1 for the debt authorization was prepared in consultation with the team and she wants to cover the obligation of the SRF and the potential that the SRF would fund a bigger project that would be in our best interest to do. She added that the vote does not have to be made today but would need to be at the next meeting. Also, she would like feedback on what is drafted prior to the meeting, that the authorization needed would be at least \$10M. Chairman Labovites tabled voting today to review and digest what has been presented and requested some additional slides be sent to the Board.

Mr. Woodsmall initiated a discussion regarding the alternative's evaluation and selection of a diesel generator as the 'winner.' Discussion continued regarding the importance of educating the community about how this is not just a fossil fuel generator for power project and that Upper Blackstone seeks to maximize the use of battery storage and solar components to the maximum extent possible. Battery storage alone is not possible given the size of the loads required and the size of the site. Ms. Sangrey mentioned that an executive summary that can highlight the use of renewables might be helpful in this regard.

The additional slide below was discussed because it highlights how the various project components (solar, battery, generator) could be used to meet plant power demands during extended, multi-day outages.

## Planning Considerations: Distributed Energy Strategies

- Traditional Solar PV
- Hybrid #1 (Solar + BESS) – Renewable Shifting
- Hybrid #2 (Solar + BESS) – Demand Response



2:15 Messrs. Walsh, Green, and Holway left the meeting.

### ITEM III - FINANCE

**Warrant** – Member Traynor moved to approve the following warrant. Member Nelson seconded, and approval of the warrant 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 Nelson, yes; and Member Fink, yes.

Warrant           \$   382,677.25           (05/30/2023)

**Breakdown of Cash** - Ms. Sangrey said the operations account is current and the investment account is through April 30<sup>th</sup>, that another breakdown of cash will be done for the next meeting which will go to the end of May to bring us back up to date. She said the operations account reflects all the April assessment monies are received and is the reason there is more money in the money market account adding all the investment accounts reflect April's month end.

**Aging Report** – Ms. Sangrey said there is a current aging of \$7M due to the first quarter 2024 assessments being issued. She said she is working with the interim finance manager on the aging and is managing some of the outstanding payments that are overdue. She added she is preparing to write off the \$540.00 due from Blase.

**Outside Revenue Position** – Ms. Sangrey said the septage revenue has been down and is almost certainly going to end the year that way, that she anticipates the next couple of months will be good; she believes the sludge is going to come in around budget; and there will be more revenue on the energy credits side than was budgeted which will offset the increased energy costs for electricity and natural gas. Ms. Sangrey will provide a cost summary at another meeting to reflect that.

**FY2024 First Quarter Assessment Invoices** – Ms. Sangrey said the invoices were sent out are out electronically with a due date of July 7<sup>th</sup>. She asked the Board to check to see that they have been received and are in the right hands.

### ITEM IV ADMINISTRATION

**Integrated Planning Update** – The Chairman said there is nothing to report as they are waiting on the EPA's response.

#### **Regional Biosolids Project Update –**

Mr. Andrus said the available technologies have been whittled down to three finalists (Anaerobic digestion with incineration, anaerobic digestion with drying, and Thermal Hydrolysis/anaerobic digestion). He said the team has been focused on developing a scoring rubric for non-economic factors in selecting a

technology. He added there are thirteen non-economic criteria being used to evaluate the three options and each criterion is being given a “weight” based on how important each is to the final decision. Mr. Andrus listed a number of criteria.

**Capital Improvement Projects Updates, Mike Andrus, Deputy Director -**

*Other In-House Projects* – The headworks and fuel tank relocation projects are under design; the biological tank maintenance projects are ongoing; and the site drainage project is nearing 100% design with construction beginning this summer. Several On-call Projects are in the planning stage, including plant water pipe repair, disinfection improvements, etc.; the Engineering department is meeting weekly to review all current projects; and the RFQ received five proposals for the HVAC improvements to solids processing complex, and the candidates have been short listed.

**Chemical Bids BAI #2** – Ms. Sangrey said the bids for Hypochlorite, Bisulfite and Magnesium Hydroxide were opened on May 25<sup>th</sup> and the low bidders are Univar USA, Inc., and Aries Chemical. The contracts are for a one-year period beginning July 1, 2023, with the option to extend to years two and three included. She said the Hypochlorite came in lower and this year’s prices came in more favorable than what was budgeted. Ms. Sangrey added there is one more chemical that is out to bid. The Chairman asked if Upper Blackstone has done business with Aries Chemical before and Ms. Sangrey confirmed we have for many years. Member Nelson motioned to approved BAI #2, a motion to award the following contracts for a one-year period beginning July 1, 2023, as noted below, and to authorize the Engineer Director/Treasurer to execute the contracts on behalf of Upper Blackstone.

**SODIUM HYPOCHLORITE**

**UB2023-C01**

Univar USA, Inc.           \$1.845/gallon  
Term one (1) year

**SODIUM BISULFITE**

**UB2023-C03**

Univar USA, Inc.           \$0.45/dry lb.  
Term one (1) year

**MAGNESIUM HYDROXIDE**

**UB2023-C06**

Aries Chemical           \$.375/dry lb. brine  
Term one (1) year

Member Fink seconded, and approval of BAI #2 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 Nelson, yes; and Member Fink, yes.

**Board Fees** – Ms. Sangrey referred to the Summary of Board Member/Commissioner Rates of Compensation that was included in the handouts. She said the rates are based on data collected from May 2022 and added the Board’s rates have not been increased since 2008. Ms. Sangrey provided the summary for informational purposes for the board’s use. She referred to the graph that was provided which shows historical staff/union wage increases since 2008. Chairman Labovites recommended the Board review it and discuss it at one of the next meetings. He also informed the Board that the Engineer Director/ Treasurer’s evaluation for salary has been initiated.

**ITEM V – OPERATIONS**

**Flow Summary** – Ms. Sangrey said the flows are low, the temperatures have been rising and a bioreactor has been taken off for maintenance work.

**ITEM VI – COMMUNICATIONS**

**MCWRS** – Vice Chairman Guerin said the members' annual membership meeting is scheduled for June 14<sup>th</sup> via zoom and will include voting to fill the vacant positions on the Board. He said comments for the Holyoke NPDES permit were submitted on Monday which included visions for a long-term flood/storm water plan and mitigation for the wastewater treatment facility and the sewer system itself. Adding the new permit requirements include a one-year timeframe to pull a plan together that identifies vulnerabilities and individual components of the facilities as well as the facilities as a whole. The Vice Chairman said it was suggested that doing a long-term plan is not a bad deal, but that it should be a federally funded program. He said NACWA also commented on it, and it appears that no one else in the nation has such a permit. Ms. Sangrey said Deer Island and Upper Blackstone commented on the Holyoke permit as well. She also asked, as part of her response comments, that an example be provided of one of these plans that will satisfy their requirements for a facility that is similar in size. Vice Chairman said the September 28<sup>th</sup> symposium at the Devens Conference Center is still being worked on. He also mentioned there is an EPA biosolids webinar coming up on June 21, and Ms. Sangrey said she plans to attend.

**Blackstone River Tour Friday, June 23<sup>rd</sup> RSVPS** – Ms. Mailhot asked the members to respond if they hadn't already and Ms. Sangrey reminded all that guests are welcome.

**ITEM VII – PERSONNEL**

**Postings, New Hires, Resignations** – Ms. Mailhot said a repairman 3 started today; our finance manager will start on July 5<sup>th</sup>; and we have hired an IT support specialist that will be starting by the end of the month/beginning of July. The Chairman asked for some information about the finance manager and Ms. Mailhot said she has three years of experience as Business Manager of the Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission; prior to that she worked ten years for the WRTA. She added we are excited to have her, and she is excited to join us. There are no resignations.

**ITEM VIII - DATE(s) NEXT MEETING(s), AGENDA TOPICS**

6/28, 7/19, 8/16, 9/6

**ITEM IX – ADJOURNMENT**

At 2:49 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