**UPPER BLACKSTONE CLEAN WATER**

**50 ROUTE 20, MILLBURY, MA 01527-2199**

**BOARD MEETING MINUTES - BOARD ROOM/HYBRID MEETING**

**May 24, 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:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Board Members** | **Title** | **Present** | **Absent** | **In- person** | **Virtual** |
| 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 |  |  |
| Robert Antonelli | Member | x |  | x |  |
| Kevin Duffy | Member | x |  |  | x |
| Gary Nelson | Member |  | x |  |  |
| Jay Fink | Member |  | x |  |  |
| Austin Cyganiewicz | Member |  | x |  |  |

**Upper Blackstone Staff**

Karla Sangrey Engineer Director/Treasurer

Mike Andrus Deputy Director

Elizabeth Mailhot HR Manager

Denise Mancini HR Assistant/District Clerk

**ITEM II - APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES –** May 10, 2023

**Minutes** – Member Antonelli moved to approve the minutes of the meeting on May 10, 2023. Member Paquin 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 Antonelli, yes; and Member Duffy, yes.

**ITEM III - FINANCE**

**Warrants –** Member Woodsmall moved to approve the following warrants. Member Paquin 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 Antonelli, yes; and Member Duffy, yes.

Warrants $ 204,637.35 (05/17/2023)

$ 286,366.75 (05/22/2023)

TOTAL $ 491,004.10

**ITEM IV – ADMINISTRATION**

**Integrated Planning Update –** Chairman Labovites said a meeting with the EPA was held last week. He felt it went well and said negotiations will continue. The Chairman suggested having an Executive Session at the June 28th Board meeting with Attorney Cox present as he is hopeful there will be feedback from the EPA by then. Vice Chairman Guerin confirmed that stormwater was the primary topic discussed, and Chairman Labovites said Director of Sewer Operations, Dave Harris joined the group, and it is great to have his expertise. Ms. Sangrey said Dave Harris, and the Commissioner, were at Upper Blackstone yesterday to discuss the CSO long-term control update, which is an IP scheduled project. She said the project is kicking off with a team and consultants Kleinfelder and Stantec have been hired. The city representatives at the meeting were Dave Harris, Jay Fink, Kerry Reed, and Bill Coyle. Also, representatives of Kleinfelder and Stantec were here to introduce everyone to the project and are hoping to collect data on the performance at the CSO facility and at the treatment facility at the same time. Ms. Sangrey said Mike Cunningham, who was also the project manager on the integrated plan, is the project manager. The project team will be looking at recent data to confirm the Brosnihan square improvements project. The Chairman said he or the Vice Chairman will talk to Mr. Cunningham and provide additional information.

**Regional Biosolids Project Update –**

Biosolids National Conference – Ms. Sangrey and Mr. Andrus attended the WEF Residuals and Biosolids Conference last week in North Carolina to learn more about possible technologies. Ms. Sangrey presented and participated in a panel discussion on regionalization; the panel also included discussion of regional projects in Florida and in the UK, where all biosolids treatment is regionalized. Ms. Sangrey said some of the technology seems new to us but has been in use in the UK for ten to fifteen years. Mr. Andrus reported that there was consensus at the meeting that the EPA biosolids regulations for incineration, landfilling and land application have been around for thirty years, haven’t really changed and EPA intends to maintain them. Mr. Andrus said the EPA is endorsing Michigan’s approach to PFAS management using source reduction as the system seems to be working and is the model to follow. Adding, the focus on the back end [to add on PFAS treatment] is the drinking water side as it is much more sensitive than the wastewater side.

A regional biosolids project workshop was held May 22 at Upper Blackstone – Mr. Andrus said the third workshop was held at Upper Blackstone on Monday. The purpose of the meeting was to whittle down the universe of biosolids treatment to three options for detailed evaluation, which are: (1) Traditional (mesophilic) anaerobic digestion (MAD) followed by incineration (new fluidized bed incinerator); (2) MAD followed by drum drying (like Deer Island and Greater Lawrence); and (3) Thermal Hydrolysis (Cambi) process with anaerobic digestion and dewatering. There are pros and cons to each option and the project team looked at thirteen different scoring criteria to generate a scoring matrix for non-economic factors that will be considered while costing out scenarios. Mr. Andrus said the project partners will rate the three options that are being costed out by the project design team.

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

*Standby Power Design* – Mr. Andrus said the Upper Blackstone team met with CDM’s team yesterday to try to get their assumptions aligned to attempt to shrink the size of the proposed generators and reduce the cost of the project. He said there will be a meeting on June 2nd to do a review of the numbers and establish an approach for going forward. Also, CDM will be presenting this project at the June 7th Board meeting. Mr. Andrus reiterated the current cost estimate remains at approximately $47M but will be reduced. The state SRF requires a Board appropriation by June 30th to stay on schedule for a loan application. Ms. Sangrey said the vote will be to appropriate estimated costs for the project and confirmed the final cost is to be determined. It does not all need to be appropriated now, and appropriation of funds does not mean we need to borrow the full amount.

*Other In-House Projects* – The headworks project and fuel tank relocation project are in design and the site drainage project is nearing 100% design with construction beginning this summer.

**ITEM V – OPERATIONS**

**Flow Summary** – Ms. Sangrey said despite the rain last weekend, there was no wet weather blending, and it was business as usual for flows and temperatures. She said a meeting is going to be held next week to discuss switching to summer mode. There was a discussion of media attention, or lack of, regarding the most CSO notifications.

**April Effluent Summary Report –** Ms. Sangrey said the numbers were good across the board and there were no exceedances or toxicity exceedances in the month of April**.**

**ITEM VI – COMMUNICATIONS**

**MCWRS –** Vice Chairman Guerin said the members’ annual membership meeting is scheduled for June 14th via zoom and one of the items that will be shared is the Coalition’s new strategic plan. Also, planning for the September symposium is ongoing and progress continues to be made updating the Coalition website.

Ms. Sangrey mentioned the comment letters for the proposed PFAS drinking water standards and the Holyoke NPDES permit need to go out soon. Vice Chairman Guerin said the deadline for the PFAS comments is May 30th and the NPDES permit comments are due June 5th or 7th. He said the PFAS letter is being drafted. He wants to comment on in the NPDES letter is the new requirements from the EPA for long-term storm planning for wastewater facilities including plants and pump stations. He said it’s going to be a daunting task and will require mapping and flood mitigation options which lead to implementation of such. The Vice Chairman believes it to be a Region 1 initiative and not a nationwide requirement. Ms. Sangrey asked if there are final permits that already have that language and the Vice Chairman said he believes they are all drafts at this point. Ms. Sangrey said she has not started working on comment letters yet as she is waiting to see the MWRA’s comments and what should be included.

**ITEM VII – PERSONNEL**

**Postings, New Hires, Resignations** – Ms. Mailhot said there are no new postings; there are three offers pending to be sent for the IT support specialist, finance manager and repairman positions; and there have been no resignations. She explained the IT support specialist position is to support our network administrator, who plans to retire next year. The IT specialist will also provide support for the SCADA computer system. Ms. Sangrey said internal discussions are in progress to contract with Integrated Computer Solutions (ICS), or another vendor, to assist when needed on IT issues, and asked if the members had any suggestions.

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

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

Blackstone River Tour, June 23rd – Ms. Mancini said the tour takes place in Central Falls, RI, lasts approximately an hour and sets out at 1:45 p.m. She said she would email all with the details. It was suggested that members may want to invite government officials such as state representatives and senators as it would be an opportunity to get the word out regarding the biosolids issues and perhaps a photo opportunity. The Chairman suggested members consider that option for discussion at the next meeting.

**ITEM X – ADJOURNMENT**

At 2:20 p.m. Member Woodsmall motioned to adjourn the meeting. Member Paquin seconded, and the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

**Denise Mancini**  Denise Mancini,

District Clerk