

## WINNIPESAUKEE RIVER BASIN PROGRAM

### ADVISORY BOARD MEETING MINUTES

**September 17, 2020 – Conducted Electronically**

**Members Present:** The meeting was called to order by Wes Anderson (Laconia), chair, at 10:02 am. Ron White (DAS), Sharon McMillin (NHDES), Rene Pelletier (NHDES), Glen Brown (Northfield), Jeanne Beaudin (Belmont), Scott Dunn (Gilford), Ray Korber (Bay District), Trish Stafford (Sanbornton), Brian Sullivan (Franklin), and Phil Warren (Meredith) were present at that time.

Wes announced that due to the ongoing COVID-19 crisis and in accordance with Governor Sununu's Emergency Order No. 12 and Executive Order 2020-04, that the meeting would be conducted electronically, and was being hosted via Laconia's Zoom Video Communications account.

**Minutes:** Glen moved, seconded by Jeanne, to approve the August 20, 2020 meeting minutes as written. The motion carried.

Scott, who was not in attendance at last month's meeting and who abstained from voting, asked Sharon what she meant (as recorded in last month's meeting minutes) when she said that each member community had its own replacement fund balance. He was surprised when he read that because he thought that the fund was simply "the fund."

Sharon explained that due to the current statutory language, DES-Accounting tracks how money has been applied to each member community; both assessments and expenditures. Once a member community reaches its fund balance, it is no longer assessed. When the Advisory Board began discussing how to re-value the assets covered by the replacement fund and how the reimbursements work, DES-Accounting went back in time to the beginning of the replacement fund and accounted for every penny in and out of the replacement fund to determine the balance for each member community. This process will continue regardless of the method for reimbursements. The individual fund balances are listed on spreadsheets that have been distributed at previous Advisory Board meetings.

**Monthly Summary Report:** Sharon distributed the *Monthly Summary Report* for August 2020 by email prior to the meeting.

- Energy Efficiency Upgrades – The equipment upgrades for WRBP facilities was recommended during the energy audit that was completed in October 2019. Upgrades will include a smaller aeration blower, two RAS pumps, and staff-installed interior lighting. The estimated project budget is \$400K with 50 percent principal forgiveness from the CWSRF (up to a max of \$200K) and a \$100K Eversource incentive making the overall estimated project cost \$100K. There will be a less than three-year simple payback based upon the estimated electricity savings. In order to qualify for a CWSRF loan and Eversource's 2020 incentive, the project needs to be substantially complete on or about December 31<sup>st</sup>. A task order for engineering support (B&C) was just finalized. WRBP staff will be performing some of the electrical and mechanical installation work.
- WRBP Infrastructure O&M Responsibilities – Memoranda of Agreement – No updates.
- Replacement Fund – DES requested the AG Office's opinion regarding the proposed statutory

changes. Discussed below.

- Asset Management (AM)/Collection System Evaluations Incentive – At next month’s meeting, the WRBP hopes to present an update on their AM Initiative.
- Governance Work Plan – Discussed below.
- Rate Assessment Formula – Additional information from the four southern members was being evaluated by WRBP staff and DES staff with the assistance of Franklin’s and Belmont’s joint consultant. Discussed below.

Scott asked Sharon if she could distribute the DES request letter along with the AG Office’s response letter. Sharon agreed to do so after the AG Office’s response letter was received.

**Citizens Comments for Agenda Items:** Wes asked if there were any guests from the members’ communities participating on the Zoom call and if they had any questions, comments, or concerns regarding the agenda items. As there were no guests participating, he moved on to the next agenda item.

**Governance Guidelines, MOA, & By-laws:** Wes announced that the Manager’s Group may recommend a change for the WRBP which will be discussed during the Authority Workgroup Update later on during the meeting.

**Rate Assessment Formula Update:** Wes asked Jeanne for an update regarding Underwood’s assessment activities in Belmont. Jeanne indicated that Underwood has been installing flow meters. She anticipated Underwood issuing a report at the end of October; however, she needed to confirm a date with Underwood.

**Authority Workgroup Update:** Wes announced that the Manager’s Group has discussed a change from creating a separate inter-municipal agency to creating a separate agency commission like NH Fish & Game. Doing so would be less difficult than moving from a state agency to a non-state agency and would also allow the member communities to have more control over the WRBP operations. Attorney Richard Head met with DES managers to answer any questions they might have about the proposed transition.

Ray noted that the Manager’s Group has been meeting with officials in the member communities. Phil noted that Gilford was already on board with the idea. Brian noted that he was meeting with the City Manager to discuss the idea and that he or she would get back to the Manager’s Group.

Wes noted that a current escrow summary was included in the meeting handouts that were distributed by email prior to the meeting. The summary included the last bill received from the attorney; however, the bill does not include the attorney’s work from the past couple of weeks. For that reason, the total (page 2) may drop. He asked if there were any questions pertaining to the escrow account and there were none.

Ron asked what would happen to WRBP employees if the proposed change was made. Ray explained that the commissioners would be selected from the member communities; and under them, an executive director for the day-to-day operations. Ron asked if WRBP employees would remain state employees. Wes and Ray affirmed that they would.

**Replacement Fund:** Wes asked with the change in direction that the Manager's Group was proposing to form a new agency instead of independent Authority if the LSR for the replacement fund should be dropped and language pertaining to the replacement fund be added to the LSR for the new, separate agency. Ray, Brian, and Phil concurred. Wes agreed to work on the changes.

**WRBP's Proposed Biennial Budget for FY 22/23:** As a reminder, Sharon reminded members that the cost for the disposal of the WWTP biosolids has increased significantly due to the liability concerns over the land application of biosolids containing PFAS. Prior to the change, \$120K to \$130K was spent per FY for transportation for beneficial land application as Class B biosolids. The cost for the disposal of biosolids will increase in FY 1 and onward by approximately \$325K/FY.

Seven of the WRBP pump stations and several outbuildings at the WWTP required re-roofing and asbestos abatement. There was ACM in all of the roofs, which was an additional consideration as permitting and abatement will be required when the roofs are replaced. Current information provides that a bundled cost will be cheaper if all of the roofs are addressed concurrently and early forecasts indicate a cost of \$126K to \$127K for the re-roofing and abatement. A more exact estimate will be forthcoming.

Wes asked where the cost for the new SCADA system would fall. Sharon explained that it would fall under FY22/23. The system was installed in 1998 and, while the WRBP got a lot of use out of it over the past 22 years, it does not work with current operating systems and both hardware and software have become increasingly unreliable. The project needs to include updating the radio telemetry from pump stations and the continuity of operations plan is being developed. Brian offered the use of the high-elevation Franklin water tank and Sharon indicated she would put that offer into their planning.

**Other Business:** The meeting adjourned at 10:40 am. The next meeting will be held on Thursday, October 15, 2020 at 10:00 am via Laconia's Zoom Video Communications account. The minutes were prepared by Pro-Temp Staffing.