BOARD MEETING MINUTES
February 12, 2024

The Board of Water Commissioners of the Lynnfield Water District held its regular monthly meeting on Monday, February 12, 2024, at the District office. The meeting was called to order at 7:03 P.M. The following individuals were in attendance: Stephen F. Rondeau, D.C., Chair; John K. Harrigan, Commissioner & Treasurer; Ruth E. McMahon, Commissioner; Brian D. Buckley, Moderator & District Clerk; Matthew O’Connell, Superintendent; Charlene Savary, Administrative Assistant; and Carolyn Umbach, Office Administrator. James Finegan, District Engineer, attended virtually via GoToMeeting.

1. MINUTES OF JANUARY 8, 2024, BOARD MEETING
On motion duly made and seconded, it was unanimously voted to approve the January 8, 2024, Board meeting minutes with minor edits.
2. TREASURER’S REPORT
The Treasurer reviewed the latest financials for January. In January, 38 checks were written for a total amount of $104,935.02. Mr. Harrigan reported that General Expenses and Salary & Wages were within budgeted expectations at 58% into the fiscal year.

**Preliminary Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Review**

The Treasurer presented the Board with a copy of the preliminary fiscal year 2025 budget. Each line item from District expenses was reviewed and any adjustments to the budget were discussed. Notable changes included: an increase in the audit and DEP Assessment budget; the addition of a LWD centennial fund; a 10% increase to the Essex Regional Retirement System line item; and an increase in the FICA budget due to Medicare Part B reimbursements for LWD retirees. Ms. McMahon stated thus far the budget has increased 26% from the previous fiscal year.

**Water Rate Discussion**

Mr. Finegan provided the Board with stratification reports outlining the revenue and water usage for each rate tier and customer category. They were designed to show how a water rate increase would impact each tier level in preparation for a March 11, 2024, public hearing to discuss water rates. Further discussion will continue during the public hearing on March 11, 2024.

 **906 Salem Street**

The Treasurer informed the Board that when the property at 906 Salem Street was sold in 2019, there was an outstanding lien entitled to LWD that was not received from the Town of Lynnfield. The Board accepted the recommendations of the Town of Lynnfield Accountant to write off the amount owed to the District, because the Town reconciled these financial records five years ago.

**LWD Centennial Celebration Planning**

The Board contributed ideas to commemorate the 100-year anniversary of the District. It was agreed to fund the account in accordance with MGL Chapter 40, Section 5H.

**Massachusetts Water Resources Authority – Local Water System Assistance Program Interest**

Mr. Finegan confirmed with the MWRA that the amount of interest earned on a LWSAP project can be used toward the current project and/or a future eligible project. As a result, the District’s accountant, Dick Hingston, recommended interest be tracked in an equity account instead of an income account. This will ensure the monies are not counted when the Mass Department of Revenue reviews District financials for ascertaining free cash. Mr. Harrigan informed the Board of the change.

1. SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT

The Superintendent provided District updates throughout January which included 3 final reads, 24 routine mark outs, and 1 emergency mark out. Water samples were collected and delivered to the lab for monthly bacteria analysis. All samples tested negative for any bacterial growth. Monthly inspection of the water tanks was completed in accordance with MassDEP requirements. Water use for December showed a 1.1% decrease in usage compared to last December, and a decrease of 11.6% for year-to-date flow. The system share is currently down 6.3%.

**Pump Station**

The Superintendent informed that Board that during the weekly pump station inspection, a small leak was discovered at the pump station on the discharge side of the Pump #1 mechanical flange. This leak could likely be repaired with a simple replacement. Further examination revealed leaks in the packing/stuffing box on both the suction and discharge side of Pump #2. The packing on the valves in this area was replaced four years ago. The Superintendent believes that past leaks contributed to metal fatigue in the stuffing box, making it unable to create a watertight seal. Corrosion was discovered on the underside of the gate flange similar to where recent repairs were made last October. The Board viewed photos of the areas mentioned for repair. Weston and Sampson CMR were contacted for repair cost estimates. The Superintendent recommended replacing both gates due to potential metal loss. The newly added automatic closing valves were noted as beneficial investments to protect the pump station due to the age of its infrastructure.

**Small Tank Vault**

In early January, following a snowstorm and rainstorm, a high-level alarm was triggered at the small tank, even though the larger tank was at a normal operating level. Upon arrival, operators discovered a sinkhole in front of the vault causing water to pool inside. The telemetry damage from the water caused a pressure spike, triggering the alarm for the small tank. While pumping the vault, it was revealed that the entering pipe was not properly sealed. The Superintendent mentioned that the sinkhole was likely caused by snowmelt, rain, and an excavation from two years ago during the tank rehabilitation project that created a slope into the vault. To prevent future water pooling in the vault, the Superintendent proposed to excavate the surrounding area and seal the entering pipe with watertight hydraulic cement. A vactor truck will be contracted for safe excavation to reach the front of the vault.

**Hydraulic Model Update**

Tata and Howard submitted a proposal for the updated hydraulic model that includes water age and various operating scenarios to move water more efficiently from the tanks. The Superintendent aims to implement the hydraulic model before the summer season impacts water quality in tanks and the distribution system.

**Overtime Reports**

The Superintendent created a new report for operators to track customer calls during after-hours. It is intended to track repeat incidents and follow up with customers who have any remaining questions or concerns.

**Water Meter Study**

A water meter study proposal from Weston and Sampson was provided to the Board. On a motion duly made and seconded, the chair was unanimously authorized to execute the “Water Meters and Reading Systems Evaluation Project” dated January 31, 2024, in the amount of $25,000. Funding monies will be available July 1, 2024.

**735 Salem Street Fire Service**

Lynnfield Community Church, located at 735 Salem Street, is opening a daycare and plans were submitted to bring a fire service into the building. These plans were approved by the District. Double gate valves will be installed to prevent blocking traffic on Salem Street in the event of an emergency service shutdown.

1. ENGINEER’S REPORT

**Water Storage Tank Rehabilitation Project**

The wiring for the new cathodic protection system was completed. Mr. Finegan reported that only one punch list item remained: the One Year Inspection. He estimated the inspection would be completed by the end of the fiscal year. Worldwide Industries submitted Pay Application #10, and Weston and Sampson recommended a payment of $61,425.09. On a motion duly made and seconded, it was unanimously voted to approve Payment #10 dated January 22, 2024, to the contract with Worldwide Industries for the Rehabilitation of Water Storage Facilities project in the amount of $61,425.09, and to authorize the Chair to execute the pay request.

**Request for Proposals (RFP) for the Lease of Storage Tank Site for Cell Vendor**

Mr. Finegan stated that there has been no action from T-Mobile regarding the installation of a new standby generator. He also reported that the revised AT&T lease agreement was still under review and was unaware of when AT&T would be moving forward.

**922 Lynnfield Street**

There have been no changes regarding Sonny Noto’s property at Goodwin Circle. A water connection application has yet to be submitted to the District.

**King Rail Golf Course Clubhouse**

A meeting was held on January 12, 2024, with representatives of MarketStreet, the Town, and the District to discuss irrigation. The Town and MarketStreet representatives agreed to connect to the District water main for irrigation and install meters and backflow devices within the new clubhouse. The installation of the water main revisions for the new clubhouse were completed at the end of January. As-built plans are currently being developed.

**Harvey Park**

A developer submitted plans to replace the six existing dwelling units at Harvey Park with six new units. The proposed development outlined a new six-inch water main coming off Grove Street, and a new hydrant. The developer was requested to formally submit the proposed water main upgrades to the District for review and approval. The District is waiting to receive newly revised plans from the developer.

**MWRA Local Water System Assistance Program**

On January 18, 2024, the MWRA Advisory Board recommended $300 million be funded for Phase 4 of the Local Water System Assistance Program to the MWRA Board of Directors. The funds, available as no-interest loans, would be accessible in fiscal year 2025. Based on preliminary figures, the District would have access to $1,621,000 in no-interest loans.

**Water Rate Study**

The District personnel will continue training on the operation of the water rate model after revisions are made by Raftelis. An additional training session will be scheduled once the updated rate model is completed.

**Capital Improvement Plan Update**

An updated copy of the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) completed by Weston and Sampson dated February 5, 2024, was distributed to the Board of Water Commissioners. The update included a recommended list of future improvements to the distribution system and indicated the water meter replacement job as the next high priority project.

1. OTHER

The Board then commenced its discussion for fiscal year 2025 annual salaries.

**Upcoming Meeting Dates**

A public hearing is scheduled for Monday March 11, 2024, at 7:00 PM.

The next regular meeting of the Board will follow the public hearing on Monday, March 11, 2024.

1. ADJOURNMENT

On a motion duly made and seconded, it was unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting at 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Charlene Savary