

Monday, January 25, 2021

Greater Augusta Utility District Board Minutes

Virtual meeting using ZOOM Video Communications

Trustees present: Ken Knight, Pat Paradis, Bob Corey, Cary Colwell, Cecil Munson, Bradley Sawyer, and Keith Luke

Trustees absent: Charlotte Warren & Kirsten Hebert - Colwell is Hallowell's voting member for this meeting in Warren's absence

Attendees: Brian Tarbuck and Andy Begin

Guests: Alan Burton, human resources consultant; and Meredith Strang-Burgess, Burgess Advertising & Marketing

At 18:00 Chairman Knight called the meeting to order.

Knight asked if there were any agenda additions; there were none. Knight introduced the meeting participants.

Knight asked about public comment and observed none.

On a motion by Corey, seconded by Sawyer, the meeting minutes were unanimously approved.

There is interest in the Central Maine Water Council. A meeting will be set up in the first quarter of the year.

The Board discussed legislation that might be of interest to GAUD. Sawyer provided an update. In particular, the Legislature is considering rules relating to PFOA / PFAS, the so-called "forever chemicals" that could impact GAUD. Other bills would change how biosolids from wastewater plants are disposed of; change ownership of water rights from people who own the property to the State of Maine; and changes to the Lead and Copper rule are under review. Knight asked about water rights legislation recalling that the District had spoken against this in the past. Sawyer pointed out that this water bill is a constitutional amendment which will have to clear a high bar to pass.

Corey provided an update from the rate committee. Kenney will have a conversation with Maine Rural Water to check on rate filing options. The estimated cost of drinking water projects exceeds what the water division can pay for without pulling funds out of emergency reserves. The Board will need to consider financial impacts of PFAS and arsenic legislation. The current estimate to replace 1% of the drinking water mains per year is about \$1.7M. There are multiple variables to consider. Knight asked if the City of Augusta (COA) was aware of GAUD's need to postpone the Highland Avenue project until the fall or 2022. Knight asked if GAUD could support a loan to pay for the Highland Avenue project. Tarbuck replied that there were sufficient funds to pay for that level of debt service. Corey said that GAUD has been doing a good job communicating with the COA regarding its ability to complete specific projects.

Tarbuck said that the COA is currently billed for 2,161 basins. After review, it appears that the COA should be billed for 2,259 basins. There are about 39 basins that haven't been historically billed. This information was new at the time of the meeting so the rate subcommittee hasn't reviewed it yet. GAUD has tied the catch basins that have been located in the geographic information system to the billing database.

Luke noted that with the recent retirement of Ralph St. Pierre it is worth investing a little time to bring other senior COA management up to speed on the catch basin counts. Corey pointed out that the COA's current approximately \$1.1M annual fee for catch basins will remain the same with the exception being

that they may instead be billed for the equivalent residential unit (ERU) equivalent represented by city streets.

Begin provided an update on projects. The CSO project is now complete and the Board will receive no further updates. The siphon project is still being assembled by GAUD's consultant, Stantec, and has not yet been submitted to the permitting agencies for review.

The Ishigaki screw press dewatering project at the wastewater treatment plant is nearly done. New windows have been installed, the room has been painted, the roof over the press room has been replaced. This is essentially a brand new unit process in a completely refurbished part of the plant. The dramatic change to the space warranted a review of existing air handling and odor control systems which is ongoing now.

The Wildwood sewer pump station is being replaced with a new submersible pump station. Many elements of the existing station are being reused to keep costs low. The existing station is extremely difficult to maintain which presents safety concerns. Neighbors have been advised about the planned construction.

The East Crescent / Gage Street sewer main project is ongoing. Property issues have dragged out longer than anticipated but construction by St Laurent and Son should commence per schedule near the end of February.

The Highland Avenue project won't be ready for bidding until July of this year. The plan is to bid it in 2021 and start building either late in 2021 or start it in 2022.

The old cross-country clay tile sewer pipe between Mount Vernon Avenue and Gilbert School that leaked and created a sanitary sewer overflow in December, 2020, will be relined with a steam-cured resin liner this spring by Green Mountain. Theirs was the least cost to reline about 2,450 feet of pipe for \$33 per foot. This should be a 50 year solution.

Tarback provided updates about COVID-19 management. Other states are addressing PFOA / PFAS differently because there is no federal maximum contaminant level yet. Other contaminants of concern include chlorides which are impacting water bodies as a result of treating roads and parking lots to prevent accidents during the winter. The state may reduce the maximum contaminant level for arsenic to a level that may require treatment. Sawyer noted that arsenic in drinking water in Maine is nearly always naturally occurring and not something that is a byproduct of water treatment or poor siting of the wells. Munson asked if there had been any incidents with arsenic in our wells. Tarback said that our wells meet the drinking water arsenic standard.

The Carleton Pond Watershed committee said that the recent meeting suggested that the District consider updating its property appraisal from 2004. Tarback explained that the Readfield Trails Committee has marked out a footpath on the east side of Carleton Pond. The agreement between GAUD and the town of Readfield has been reviewed by both parties and is ready to execute.

Strang-Burgess reviewed the Board's 2021 goals. Burton reviewed goals specific to human resources. Broadly, goals included managing capital improvement projects; tracking financials and rates; improving relationships and communications; human resources goals; Carleton Pond / property use; and observing 'forever chemicals' to include PFOA / PFAS. On a motion by Corey, seconded by Paradis, the 2021 goals were approved as presented.

In Kenney's absence, Tarback provided a brief overview of the financial reports which were current to the end of November, 2020. Tarback pointed out that each division was tracking as expected. Tarback

explained that the auditors will be here a bit later in 2021 than last year and there will be a particular focus on inventory control which has been a long standing challenge.

Tarback explained a sanitary sewer overflow violation that happened between Mount Vernon Avenue and the Gilbert school in December, 2020. The violation lays out deadlines for locating the cross-country pipes in the system, inspecting the cross-country pipes and the creation of a plan to address issues discovered during the inspections. There is a plan to reline the pipe between Mount Vernon Avenue and Gilbert School that will be executed in early spring of this year. Tarback said that the compliance dates are attainable and the Board will continue to be updated along the way.

Knight added testing drinking water for PFOA / PFAS to the agenda so the Board wouldn't have any surprises about testing. Corey suggested that this topic should be included in the legislative update going forward. Sawyer pointed out that it is important to have language to provide to the public when we receive PFOA / PFAS test results. Munson asked if anyone had asked about PFOA / PFAS levels in Augusta. Tarback said that he had received a couple of inquiries so far. The Board expressed concern that we shouldn't test just for the sake of testing. Corey suggested that a billing insert related to PFOA / PFAS should be scheduled for later in the spring. Sawyer thought that saying GAUD was concerned but wasn't doing anything about it sends the wrong message. Strang-Burgess thought that sharing what these chemicals are would be the first stage of many stages of conversation.

Knight asked for public comment. There was none.

On a motion by Sawyer, seconded by Munson, the board voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 7:30 PM.

Monday, February 22, 2021

Greater Augusta Utility District Board Minutes

Virtual meeting using ZOOM Video Communications

Trustees present: Ken Knight, Pat Paradis, Bob Corey, Cary Colwell, Cecil Munson, Bradley Sawyer, Keith Luke and Charlotte Warren

Trustees absent: Kirsten Hebert

Attendees: Brian Tarbuck and Andy Begin

Guests: Alan Burton, human resources consultant; and Meredith Strang-Burgess, Burgess Advertising & Marketing

At 18:00 Chairman Knight called the meeting to order.

Knight asked if there were any agenda additions; there were none. Knight introduced the meeting participants.

Knight asked about public comment and observed none.

On a motion by Corey, seconded by Sawyer, the meeting minutes were unanimously approved.

There is interest in the Central Maine Water Council. A meeting will be set up in the first quarter of the year.

There was no meeting of the legislative committee. Sawyer provided a short summary of legislation. No bills required the District's specific attention.

The rate committee explained the need for a 10% increase in the drinking water and fire protection rates to go in effect on or about July 1, 2021. The last drinking water rate adjustment was in 2011. The committee reported that the increase would need to be 80% to reach full depreciation and fund 1% water main replacement targets. This amount was determined to be aspirational and would require slow and steady rate adjustments to achieve these targets over time. This rate adjustment fully funds the contingency allowance and starts toward the goal of replacing 1% of pipe per year. Corey pointed out that the numbers PUC considers for rate cases doesn't look at the amount of money a utility has on hand at the time. Corey expressed concern that the District is falling short in its efforts to replace pipes each year. The Board discussed the amount of money in reserves and that the District has spent down its cash reserves. Tarbuck said that the City of Augusta is aware that the Board is considering a 10% rate increase. The Board discussed whether to increase the amount of the increase by more than 10% but opted not to due to economic uncertainty caused by the pandemic.

On a motion by Corey, seconded by Paradis, the Board unanimously agreed to move forward with a public hearing to increase the drinking water and fire protection rates in an amount not to exceed 10% with a desired effective date of July 1, 2021.

Begin provided an update on projects. There is a notice of intent for the Natural Resources Protection Act permit with a public meeting scheduled for March 1, 2021 to proceed with the double-barrel sewer siphon beneath the Kennebec River. Other permits are needed from the Army Corps (navigation and environmental), the City of Augusta and a Section 401 water quality permit. Begin noted that this has been the most onerous permitting effort of his career.

Begin worked with the City to provide easements for the siphon project, a new sewer off Gage Street, and the sewer pipe between Mount Vernon Avenue and Gilbert School.

Wright-Pierce Engineers narrowed its most promising candidates for odor control at the wastewater treatment plant to include two biofilter systems and one carbon filtration system.

The Wildwood pump station replacement project is moving forward. An electrical design is being vetted by a consultant. Earthwork and the building will be bid out. The District has used an in-house, design-build approach on this project.

Highland Avenue should be at 50% design by March with a complete bid package ready by June. Begin suggested that the project would be built in 2022 as a single large project.

Trustee Charlotte Warren joined the meeting at approximately 18:50, assuming voting responsibilities for Hallowell from Colwell.

The Mount Vernon to Gilbert School off road sewer pipe was relined by Green Mountain out of Vermont. Recall that this was the pipe that had a sanitary sewer overflow in December, 2020.

Coffin Engineering completed a survey of the properties along Howard Street to facilitate a sewer main repair. GAUD sewer exists on a former 'paper street' where Howard Street was supposed to have been built. The pipe will be relined, reconstructed or some combination of the two.

Tarbuck pointed out the anniversaries of two employees. Progress toward goals has been minimal so far. Meetings will be set for the Manchester drinking water pipeline, Central Maine Water Council and the joint District / Trunkline board meeting. Long range planning for the Trunkline is ongoing. UNH is investigating ways to reduce odors in the Trunkline forcemain and will have a report by May. Wright-Pierce will build upon UNH's report and help the District select odor mitigation efforts. A drinking water system in Florida was remotely accessed and tampered with so that has kicked off national conversation about cybersecurity. The District has taken steps to strengthen its own digital security. UMA is scheduled to send up a drone next week to create some aerial imagery to assist the UMaine Orono capstone project.

Begin noted that the City of Augusta did not charge the District a fee for the easements.

The Carleton Pond watershed committee noted that it had been many years since the properties in Winthrop and Readfield have been appraised and recommended that the Board commit funds to update the appraisal. On a motion by Paradis, seconded by Corey, the Board voted unanimously to have an appraisal completed for the Carleton Pond land and structures at a cost not to exceed \$10,000.

The Board reviewed the current status of testing and regulation relating to PFOA / PFAS chemicals, aka "forever chemicals". Tarbuck asked the Board for guidance relating to communications to share with the public after testing has been completed. Tarbuck expressed concern that the results may drive treatment and the Board needs to be aware of this potential. Knight suggested putting some information on the website about forever chemicals. Others added that it was important to move forward and sample the water. Tarbuck said he'd make the testing happen.

Kenney provided financial information from December, 2020. Data is still unaudited and therefore preliminary. Water division revenues of \$3.9M were 1% under budget; expenses were \$3.7M at 4% under budget. Water division cash at the end of December was \$1.1M.

Sewer division revenues of \$4M were 7% above budget; expenses were \$4.1M at 6% under budget. Sewer division cash at the end of December was \$2.7M.

Stormwater division revenues of \$4M were 2% above budget; expenses were \$2.6M at 10% under budget. Stormwater division cash at the end of December was \$0.25M.

At the end of January, water division revenues of \$0.3M were 1% above budget; expenses were \$0.23M at 2% under budget. Water division cash was \$1.2M. Sewer division revenues of \$0.3M were 1% above budget; expenses were \$0.23M at 2% under budget. Sewer division cash at the end of December was \$2.0M. Stormwater division revenues of \$0.3M were on budget; expenses were \$0.2M at 3% under budget. Stormwater division cash at the end of December was \$1.1M.

Kenney noted that Runyon Kersteen and Oullette will begin its audit of the District's 2020 financial statements next week. Audited financials will likely be presented in May or June instead of April as years past.

There were no liens for consideration by the Board.

Tarbuck asked the Board to ratify the sewer and stormwater percentages that are used to pay back the CSO4 loan. On a motion by Corey, seconded by Sawyer, the motion to appropriate repayments for the 2019 \$3M SRF loan for the CSO4 project at 37% to sewer and 63% to stormwater was approved unanimously.

Alan Burton stated that the ongoing COVID restrictions were still being managed and there were no other human resources issues to report.

[Meredith Strang Burgess](#) asked if Board members would agree to being 'profiled' on the District's website to add a bit more personality to the website. There was no objection.

Knight asked for public comment. There was none.

Paradis noted that Mike Charest was elected as Sergeant at Arms at the Calumet Club.

On a motion by Sawyer, seconded by Munson, the board voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 19:44 PM.

Monday, March 15, 2021

Greater Augusta Utility District Board Minutes

Virtual meeting using ZOOM Video Communications

Trustees present: Ken Knight, Pat Paradis, Bob Corey, Cary Colwell, Cecil Munson, Bradley Sawyer, Charlotte Warren, and Keith Luke

Trustees absent: Kirsten Hebert

Attendees: Brian Tarbuck, Sherry Kenney and Andy Begin

Guests: Alan Burton, human resources consultant; and Meredith Strang-Burgess, Burgess Advertising & Marketing

At 18:00 Chairman Knight called the meeting to order.

Knight asked if there was any public comment. There was none.

Knight asked if there were any agenda additions. There were none.

The Board, employees and guests introduced themselves.

On a motion by Corey, seconded by Sawyer, the board voted unanimously to approve the meeting minutes from February 22, 2021.

The Board reviewed the planned 10% drinking water and fire protection rate increase to go into effect on or about July 1, 2021. Documents necessary to fulfill the requirements of the public hearing are being assembled for submittal to the Public Utilities Commission (PUC). Public notice documents are being prepared to meet the notification requirements of the rules governing rate adjustments. The public hearing for the meeting will be held on April 26, 2021 prior to the regular GAUD board meeting.

Begin provided project updates. The permit for the east side sewer siphon has been submitted. There was a public meeting about the permit but there was no public participation. The dewatering project at the WWTP is done. Wright-Pierce is finishing an odor control study which was necessitated by the dramatic reduction in odor management needs thanks to the new Ishigaki screw presses. The Wildwood pump station project is moving forward. The sewer connection project on East Crescent / Gage Street is ongoing. The holdup on this project has to do with property we need to acquire. The off-road pipe between Gilbert School and Mount Vernon Avenue has been relined at a price of about \$35 / foot. The expected life of these liners is 50 years so our successors will have to check us on this. An old main at the end of Howard Street needs to be replaced. The City requested two new catch basins and a stormwater main extension on Fairview Avenue.

Tarbuck provided updates relating to employee anniversaries, COVID-19, the Manchester 202 redundant pipeline, the Central Maine Water Council and a GAUD / Trunkline meeting.

Tarbuck said the Carleton Pond and water treatment facility RFPs to appraise their value have not been done yet.

Tarbuck and Keith Luke will catch up soon to bring that to fruition.

The Board discussed PFOA / PFAS. Samples of the raw water from each of the five wells were collected on March 5, 2021. The wells were sampled for PFOS, PFHxS, PFOA, PFNA and PFHpA. Sawyer noted that one part per trillion is about 1 second in 31 years. Warren noted that the supplemental budget for the State established a fund to address growing concerns with these so-called 'forever chemicals'.

Kenney provided financial information from February, 2021. Water division revenues of \$0.65M were on budget; expenses were \$0.52M at 4% under budget. Water division cash at the end of February was \$1.3M. Sewer division revenues of \$0.632M were on budget; expenses were \$0.60M at 2% under budget. Sewer division cash at the end of February was \$1.9M. Stormwater division revenues of \$0.66M were on budget; expenses were \$0.39 M at 6% under budget. Stormwater division cash at the end of February was \$1.2M.

Kenney expects the presentation of the audited financial statements from Runyon, Kersteen and Ouellette to be presented in May.

There were no liens for the board to review.

Tarback explained that two trucks had worn out due to corrosion and will acquire two new trucks while there is more residual value for trade-ins. Corey asked what the expense of each truck was. Tarback explained that each truck would cost about \$30k. Corey asked if the City was paying for the Fairview stormwater extension or if GAUD was paying for it. Tarback said the City would be paying for the stormwater extension.

The Board discussed when they might want to return to in-person meetings. The Board concluded that while everyone would like to get back together in person that they'd wait until the CDC gives the all clear to do so later this year.

Meredith Strang Burgess provided an update about public relations efforts. Burgess Advertising has created documents to use to explain recent PFAS testing. Burgess has asked for information about people behind the scenes at GAUD as customers would like to know that it's just regular folks volunteering their time to keep water, sewer and stormwater flowing. Burgess reviewed the digital report from the last quarter.

Alan Burton provided an HR update. Some people are working remotely. Remote workers have been productive but we have begun discussing when those remote workers might feel comfortable returning to work in the office. Mask mandates present challenges for our workers but we're managing that to keep people safe.

Knight asked if there was any public comment. There was none.

On a motion by Sawyer, seconded by Warren, the board voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 6:56 PM.

Monday, April 26, 2021

Greater Augusta Utility District Board Minutes

Virtual meeting using ZOOM Video Communications

Trustees present: Ken Knight, Pat Paradis, Bob Corey, Cary Colwell, Kirsten Hebert, Cecil Munson, Bradley Sawyer, Charlotte Warren and Keith Luke

Trustees absent: None

Attendees: Brian Tarbuck, Andy Begin and Sherry Kenney

Guests: Alan Burton, human resources consultant; and Meredith Strang-Burgess, Burgess Advertising & Marketing

The meeting will start with a drinking water rate hearing. The monthly trustee meeting will start directly after the rate hearing.

Tarbuck reviewed the ground rules of the public hearing. Anyone from the general public may speak, they will have three minutes, more if time allows. The public hearing will be recorded and aired live on CTV7. Customers have the right to petition the Maine Public Utilities Commission (MPUC). A notice of the public hearing has been mailed to all customers and published in the local newspaper. Materials supporting the rate change were provided to the MPUC. New rates will go into effect on or about July 1, 2021.

Tarbuck opened the hearing for public comment. The first public concern was why the supporting documents listed the 2020 financials as unaudited and why the need for a rate increase. Corey explained that when the supporting documentation was gathered the annual audit was not yet complete but has since been completed and will be presented during tonight's meeting for board approval. Knight stated that rates need to increase to keep pace with the rising cost of replacing infrastructure. The second public comment was in support of the rate increase and thanked the district for maintaining the water system.

At 18:25 Chairman Knight closed the public hearing and called the meeting to order.

Knight asked if there were any agenda additions; there were none.

Knight asked about public comment and observed none.

At 18:27 Corey moved to accept the Board meeting minutes for March 15, 2021. The motion was seconded by Sawyer. The vote to approve the motion was unanimous.

The Central Maine Water Council held a meeting on April 7th. Utilities from the surrounding area attended and showed interest to continue to meet and share ideas. The next meeting will be held on June 9th.

Legislative committee. There is no update from this committee.

Rate committee. There is no update from this committee.

Begin provided an update on projects. Major permits for the Eastside Sewer Siphon project have been submitted. Comments and questions have been received and answered. Hoping to have permits and bids back to start construction in the time frame allowed. An SRF application has been submitted to fund this project. The Dewatering Project is now in the odor control phase. Both carbon and biological systems are being evaluated. The upgrade to the Wildwood Pump Station has been bid out. The need has surpassed the budget by approximately \$182K. To stay within budget this project will move forward without building or electrical upgrades. St. Laurent has finished construction on the East Crescent & Gage Street project. There is one more four-foot piece of pipe to install to connect the last service. The District is waiting on the road design from the City of Augusta before bidding out this project for 2022 construction. The easement from the City of Augusta for

the Howard/Sturgis street project has been granted. This project will go out to bid soon. The District and the City of Augusta will be partnering on the Fairview Avenue Storm Project. The city will be responsible for 250 feet of underdrain and the District will install a new catch basin. The Districts share of the \$50k project will be around \$15K. The preliminary design for the Gilman Street Sewer Upgrade Project is complete. The project may be expended to include storm separation.

Knight stopped the regular meeting to read a couple of questions submitted for the public rate hearing. Does the rate increase involve maintenance and replacement of cast iron pipe, if so what material will be used? Tarbuck stated that generally ductile iron pipe would be used and in some cases high density polyethylene or even pvc pipe. The next question stated that natural gas lines went in a few years ago next to water lines so access should be easy as is necessary for gas lines. Also most pipes on the outskirts aren't that old so how do we justified the expenses predicted? Tarbuck stated the District maintains 130 miles of pipe. Some of the pipe is 130 years old while other pipe is only 60 years old. Pipe is repaired or replaced based on need not age. The 60-year-old pipe may fail before the older pipe. Natural gas lines being adjacent to or sometimes crossing over our pipes actually drives up the cost. Natural gas lines are only a couple feet underground whereas water pipes are six or seven feet underground. It was also noticed that during the project update pipes were labeled as asbestos pipes, is that safe? Tarbuck stated that the pipe labeled as asbestos pipe was a sewer pipe not a water pipe. The only water pipe known to have asbestos in it only feeds a water hydrant and is checked regularly.

Tarbuck pointed out the anniversaries of four employees. Progress has been made toward the first quarter goals. A meeting was held to discuss a redundant drinking water pipeline on 202 in Manchester. The Central Maine Water Council met with surrounding area utilities. The Trunkline group will be invited to the May board meeting. Long range planning for the Trunkline is ongoing. The Brooks solar project has been delayed. CMP is still analyzing if and how many solar projects they can handle. The District is planning to hire interns again this summer. The Carleton Pond water treatment facility has been being used for law enforcement training. The District is applying for grants from the Northern Border Regional Commission and the DEP to apply towards the cost of the siphon and fiber optic conduit beneath the river. The UNH and UMaine capstone projects will be wrapped up soon. Seasonal services have been turned on. Phyllis Rand was featured on the cover of the Maine Municipal Association's March newsletter.

Carleton Pond watershed committee update. Tarbuck is still working on the RFP. Tarbuck is actually going to do separate RFP's for the land and the building.

The Board reviewed the testing results relating to PFOA / PFAS chemicals, aka "forever chemicals". All five wells have been tested and fall well below the 70 parts per trillion currently allowed. There are three different bills in front of the legislature but as of right now and no one knows what the acceptable levels will be or which forever chemicals will need to be tested for. In aggregate one well tested a little high but is still under the 20 parts per million that one bill is asking for. Tarbuck suggests further monitoring of the wells and the three bills. Work session on these three bills will be taking place this Friday.

Hank Farrah from Runyon Kersteen Ouellette presented the District's 2020 audited financial statements. The District received an unmodified opinion and showed no material weaknesses or significant deficiencies. In 2020 cash and cash equivalents decreased significantly due to purchases of capital assets. Accounts receivable also decreased due to prior year receivables being paid. Other assets in the sewer and storm division also decreased due to the drawdown of funds for construction projects. Accounts payable for all divisions decreased significantly due to several large projects wrapping up during the year. Accrued time off increased due to a change in policy. Deferred credits are amortized over the life of the loan and will continue to decline. Capital assets increased as new acquisitions outpaced depreciation. The water divisions issued \$1,300,000 of new debt. All debt service payments were made in full and on time. Operating income exceeded operating expenses in all divisions in 2020.

At 19:23 Corey moved to accept the audited financial statements for calendar year 2020 as presented by Runyon Kersteen Ouellette. The motion was seconded by Munson. The vote to approve the motion was unanimous.

At 19:24 Sawyer moved to elect officers of the District as follows:

Chair: Ken Knight

Clerk: Pat Paradis

Treasurer: Bob Corey

Assistant Treasurer: Brian Tarbuck

The motion was seconded by Munson. The vote to approve the motion was unanimous.

Financials from March 2021 were presented. Water revenues were on budget at \$0.95M, while expenses were 5% under budget at \$0.8M. Cash at the end of March totaled \$1.4M. Revenue in the sewer division was 1% over budget at \$0.95M and expenses were 3% under budget at \$0.92M. Cash at the end of March totaled \$1.5M. Stormwater revenue was on budget at \$1.0M and expenses were at \$0.57M which was 9% under budget. Cash at the end of March totaled \$1.1M.

There were no liens for consideration by the Board.

Sherry Kenney announced that she has resigned from her position as Finance Director. Kenny stated that she has greatly enjoyed her time at the District, has learned a lot and hopefully has left the District with a better financial understanding than when she arrived. Board members thanked Kenny for all her hard work and wished her well in her future endeavors.

The City of Augusta has asked the District to install a catch basin on Fairview Avenue at the cost of \$15K. A couple of years ago the board voted to fund \$200K for City of Augusta storm water work yearly. As this project is well below the \$200K Tarbuck was given the go ahead to proceed.

A Ganneston resident recently asked to place three bee hives on property that the District owns in Ganneston. Tarbuck gave the conditional approval but wants to make sure the board is ok with his decision. Concerns where setting precedent and any liability the District may have. Tarbuck believes that state statute covers the Districts liability but will have the resident sign a disclaimer.

Meredith Strang Burgess gave a public relations update. The Districts home page was reviewed which included the rate hearing notice and the annual water quality report. The May bill stuffer will have a QR code that will take customers directly to the water quality report. Under the drinking water section is a new page about PFAS. Explaining what PFAS is, the Districts test results and links to resources to learn more.

Alan Burton gave an HR update. The District is working on COVID related issues. In 2020 the Trump administration allowed for eighty hours of paid leave for COVID related issues. This program ended on December 31, 2020. Employers were allowed to extend the program to the end of the first quarter of 2021, which the District did. The current administration has allowed employers to extend the program until the end of 2021. The District will extend the program until June 11, 2021. This should give all employees who choose to be vaccinated time to do so. Masks must still be worn outside unless you are around other fully vaccinated employees. We are hoping this will encourage our employees to vaccinate.

Knight asked for public comment. There was none.

At 19:54 Sawyer moved that this body stand adjourned. The motion was seconded by Paradis. The vote to approve the motion was unanimous.

Wednesday, May 5, 2021

Greater Augusta Utility District Board Minutes

Virtual meeting using ZOOM Video Communications

Trustees present: Ken Knight, Pat Paradis, Bob Corey, Kirsten Hebert, Bradley Sawyer, Charlotte Warren and Keith Luke

Trustees absent: Cary Colwell and Cecil Munson,

Attendees: Brian Tarbuck, Andy Begin and Sherry Kenney

Guests: Alan Burton, human resources consultant

At 07:00 Chairman Knight called the meeting to order.

Knight asked if there were any agenda additions; there were none.

Knight asked about public comment and observed none.

This special meeting is being held to review the plan to fill the Finance Director position.

At the last meeting we learned that Kenney intended to leave her position on June 1st. Since that time Tarbuck, Burton and Kenney have had time to discuss her intentions and other options to move forward. Kenney has invested a lot of time and effort into her position here and cares that her replacement is well positioned to be successful.

During our conversation it was noticed that the Finance Director spent a lot of time doing entry level accounting work that a Staff Accountant could be doing. Having a Staff Accountant would also allow the Finance Director to be able to take time off without worries and would be great for succession planning.

The plan to move forward is to hire a new Finance Director. Kenney will stay to help ease this person into the position. A Staff Accountant position will be made to support the Finance Director. This position will be filled internally which will open up an accounts payable position. Kenney has offered to stay until her position is filled but will be taking the month of July off.

Herbert was worried that Kenney was feeling pressured to stay and help with the transition when this is not her problem to solve. Warren questioned that if we did hire a Staff Accountant to help the Finance Director would that be enough incentive for Kenney to stay? Corey agreed with Herbert and wants to move forward as quickly as possible to be fair to Kenney and respect her decision to resignation.

Kenney addressed the board concerns. Kenney stated that she was burnt out both professional and personally. Being able to take a chunk of time off and having a Staff Accountant to help would entice her to stay longer. The longest she would be willing to stay would be another three years. This would put the board in the same position it is in now and Kenney might not be able to stay and help with the transition. Kenney thinks it would be to the boards advantage to start the process now while she is able to stay and help.

Tarbuck will move forward with the process of hiring a new Finance Director. If the need arises to advertise the position again, Kenney has offered to stay until a replacement can be found. The rate committee, who have been key to finances, will meet to discuss moving forward. More information will be available at the next meeting on May 17th.

At 07:25 Sawyer moved that this body stand adjourned. The motion was seconded by Warren. The vote to approve the motion was unanimous.

Monday, June 21, 2021

Greater Augusta Utility District Board Minutes

Virtual meeting using ZOOM Video Communications

Trustees present: Ken Knight, Pat Paradis, Bob Corey, Cary Colwell, Cecil Munson, Bradley Sawyer and Keith Luke

Trustees absent: Charlotte Warren, Kirsten Hebert

Attendees: Brian Tarbuck, Andy Begin, Mike Payne (new Finance Director); and Meredith Strang-Burgess, Burgess Advertising & Marketing consultant.

Guests: None

At 18:00 Chairman Knight called the meeting to order.

Knight asked if there were any agenda additions; there were none.

Knight asked about public comment and observed none.

Knight thanked Dan Wells, manager of Winthrop Utilities District, for coming to the meeting.

Knight introduced Mike Payne, new financial director, who will begin work on Monday, June 28.

At 18:03 Corey moved to accept the Board meeting minutes for May 17, 2021. The motion was seconded by Munson. The vote to approve the motion was unanimous.

Central Maine Water Council. There were no updates from the council.

Legislative committee. There were no updates from this committee.

Rate committee. Corey noted the committee would meet again by September at the latest to review the current escrow minimum to determine if \$750,000 is the right number and to see if a change is needed now.

Begin provided an update on projects. Begin noted the siphon project was moving slowly with lots of communication with permitting agencies but admitted that there's diminishing hope that the agencies will have the necessary approvals granted in time to bid, award, and construct the project in 2021. The dewatering project is over but the odor control evaluation is ongoing. Begin is hopeful evaluation will show the success of the Anua AirClean system to reduce chemical costs and odors at the plant. Plant staff are looking at ways to reduce costs of dewatering by changing polymers, as sludge disposal costs are expected to increase. The expected cost reduction is nearly \$30,000.

Paradis asked about odor control on the Rail Trail. Begin responded that the new odor control system has not yet been budgeted for but odor reduction is the goal with that system. In the meantime, sludge tanks have been resealed which should help.

Begin noted that the cost of a control building at the Wildwood pump station was high at about \$80,000. Tarbuck located a control building for less money. Begin said other projects may need to be moved to next year to complete the buildout, as the Wildwood work created a \$118,000 deficit.

Begin noted the Highland Avenue project is still in the design phase and they plan to bid it late summer 2021 for the 2022 construction season. The Howard Street sewer replacement project was contracted to CH Stevenson for a cost effective \$64,800. The Gilman Street project is in design. The completed project will result in combined sewer separation and eliminate about 300' of cross country sewer located just behind customers' homes. The District-funded Fairview Avenue stormwater project is scheduled to be completed in June or early July. The Mill Street Place sewer improvement is designed and easement rights for private property are being explored.

Begin asked if there were any questions. Munson asked about the paving plan for the Mill Street Place sewer project. Begin responded that GAUD would take responsibility for it and pave as if it were a commercial driveway.

Tarback began with a summary of June hiring anniversaries. Tarback noted there had been no response yet from the May grant application from the Northern Border Regional Commission. He then said there will likely be phone calls about the 10% drinking water and fire protection increases that will go into effect on July 1. Tarback then said that the December sanitary sewer overflow resulted in a DEP notice of violation with three milestones, two of which were due June 19. There has been investment in off-road sewer inspection since the December violation. Tarback noted the District acquired two free electric cars (Kia Kona Electric) via three year leases which he and Begin are using.

Carleton Pond watershed committee update. Tarback is working on RFP's for the appraisals. Tarback is working on procuring and completing PFAS testing. Sawyer requested that PFAS testing be done on Carleton Pond. Tarback clarified that 20 parts per trillion is for each well is the PFAS limit and blending sources could be an acceptable means of treatment though the state has not clarified that yet.

Knight raised the question of lead testing. Sawyer replied there was conversation around reassessing lead limits as EPA implements new rules. The current EPA arsenic maximum contaminant level of 10 parts per billion will be reviewed by the state of Maine, not EPA.

May 2021 financials were presented. Water revenues were on budget at \$1.6M, while expenses were 8% under budget at \$1.4M. Cash at the end of May totaled \$1.5M. Revenue in the sewer division was on budget at \$1.6M and expenses were 2% under budget at \$1.7M. Cash at the end of May totaled \$1.4M. Stormwater revenue was on budget at \$1.7M and expenses were at \$1M which was 14% under budget. Cash at the end of May totaled \$1.4M.

There were no liens to review. Several past due accounts from last month have been paid and others are going through foreclosures.

Meredith Strang-Burgess reported that the summer newsletter is ready to be mailed out. She noted that public relations will be working on their insert schedule for the rest of the year. The annual report is in process, and they will be making educational videos by the end of the year. Strang-Burgess said that one of their goals for the year is to work on the crisis communication plans. Paradis requested more visibility of all project costs for the public.

Tarback made the HR report. He noted that a job posting had been made for a staff accountant position to assist the finance director and that a need for assistants to the water and wastewater quality specialists and the geographic information systems position had also been recognized. He added there was also a need for someone to manage files due to a multitude of storage locations and for an assistant to engineering and project management. There will be more on this later including timelines. Corey requested budgeting be included in the follow up report.

Knight asked for public comment. There was no public comment.

Corey requested an updated copy of each board member's manual and Munson suggested they be made digital.

At 18:58 Sawyer moved that this body stand adjourned. The motion was seconded by Munson. The vote to approve the motion was unanimous.

Monday, July 19, 2021

Greater Augusta Utility District Board Minutes

Augusta City Center

Trustees present: Ken Knight, Pat Paradis, Bob Corey, Cary Colwell, Cecil Munson, Bradley Sawyer, Keith Luke, and Kirsten Hebert

Trustees absent: Charlotte Warren

Attendees: Brian Tarbuck, Mike Payne, Alan Burton

Guests: None

At 18:00 Chairman Knight called the meeting to order.

Knight asked if there were any agenda additions; there were none.

Knight asked about public comment and observed none.

At 18:01 Corey moved to accept the Board meeting minutes for June 21, 2021. The motion was seconded by Sawyer. The vote to approve the motion was unanimous.

There were no updates from the Central Maine Water Council. The council may reconvene in August or September.

Legislative committee. The committee did not meet but Sawyer noted that several new bills had passed and it would take some time to review them and decide what action was needed by the District.

Corey noted that the rate committee was looking to meet in August with Payne to discuss numbers. Tarbuck said there were calculation errors in the rate tariff sheets from May that have now been corrected and resubmitted. Corey moved to approve the sheets. Sawyer seconded and the vote passed unanimously.

Tarbuck provided an update on projects. DEP has issued a permit for the Eastside Sewer Siphon but the project will happen next year due to the need for remaining permitting approvals and insufficient time remaining to put the work out to bid. The Wildwood Sewer Pumping Station received a new control building and has a startup goal in late August or early September. The Highland Avenue project is nearing design completion and will be constructed next year. The Howard Street sewer main replacement project will begin late August or early September. Gilman Street Sewer/Storm Improvements are nearing design completion. The work to install a new catch basin near 79 Fairview Avenue is complete and the city will finish paving. The Mill Street Place sewer improvement project is awaiting easements but design is nearly complete.

Tarbuck noted staff anniversaries. Another meeting needs to be scheduled regarding the Manchester 202 redundant pipeline project and that it will likely happen in August or September. The GAUD/Trunkline meeting occurred; they are working on long term Trunkline planning and discussing the remaining two pump stations that need to be updated. No update on the Brooks solar power project or the grant that was applied for through the Northern Border Regional Commission. Grant response is expected in August. The next GAUD/Trunkline meeting will be October 27, 2021.

The Carleton Pond watershed committee has not met since February. Knight noted an RFP was now out for property appraisals and proposals are due July 30, 2021. Responses are expected next month. Tarbuck said they would evaluate and make a selection at that time.

Knight raised the question of PFOA/PFAS testing. Tarbuck replied that a second round of testing is planned for late July and will be regulated by the Drinking Water Program which is a division of Maine CDC. It will include a

sixth analyte per LD 164, which also proposed a limit of 20 ppt on the sum of any two of the six analytes or any individual analyte.

Paradis asked whether the limit of 20 ppt was unrealistically low, as the federal advisory level is 70 ppt. Tarbuck replied that there is much discussion on that topic. The EPA is still in the rigorous process of investigating the federal limit and several states, including Maine, have decided not to wait for that outcome and have therefore set their own limits. Paradis asked where the chemicals were coming from and Tarbuck replied that they were found in sludge from paper mills and nonstick coatings on fibers and other products. The health effects are still unclear and research is ongoing. Munson asked what would happen if a well was found to have over 20 ppt. Tarbuck replied that the public would be alerted but the well would not be shut down. Munson asked how the source of the chemicals in the water was known. Tarbuck said that it wasn't. Hebert asked if a well would be abandoned if it tested over the limit. Tarbuck replied that it would be treated if treatment could occur in a cost effective manner. If not, revisiting surface water treatment could be a viable option. The next step is transparent testing and evaluation of results.

June 2021 financials were presented. Water revenues were on budget at \$1.9M, while expenses were 9% under budget at \$1.6M. Cash at the end of June totaled \$1.4M. Revenue in the sewer division was 1% under budget at \$1.8M and expenses were 2% under budget at nearly \$2M. Cash at the end of June totaled \$1.1M. Stormwater revenue was 1% over budget at \$2M and expenses were at \$1.2M which was 17% under budget. Cash at the end of June totaled \$1.7M.

Payne presented a revised budget proposal that more accurately reflects our mid year position. He proposed that the debt service interest figure in the sewer division should be amended to \$255,583, an increase of \$127K; a \$127K decrease in debt service interest in the stormwater division to \$128k; a \$40K increase in water depreciation to \$975K; a \$240K increase in sewer depreciation to \$1.6M; a \$240K increase in stormwater depreciation to \$980K.

Sawyer moved to approve the revised budget for July 19, 2021. Corey seconded and the vote passed unanimously.

There were no liens to review. Corey noted payments are coming in.

Burton made the HR report. He emphasized the need for Staff Accountant, Water Quality Coordinator backup, and GIS Information System backup positions through the Organizational Risk Plan. The target for filling the Staff Accountant position is November 1, 2021. The target for filling the Water Quality Coordinator backup position is November 7, and the target for a GIS Information System backup is mid-October. The budget impact for 2021 would be wages and benefits of \$58,000. For 2022, the budget impact would be \$212,000. He noted that the General Manager performance review would begin sometime in mid-August and be completed in September.

Knight asked for public comment. There was no public comment.

At 18:38 Sawyer moved that the body stand adjourned. The motion was seconded by Munson. The vote to approve the motion was unanimous.

Monday, August 16, 2021

Greater Augusta Utility District Board Minutes

Location: Augusta City Center

Trustees present: Ken Knight, Pat Paradis, Bob Corey, Cary Colwell, Cecil Munson, Bradley Sawyer, Keith Luke, and Kirsten Hebert

Trustees absent: Charlotte Warren

Attendees: Brian Tarbuck, Andy Begin, Mike Payne, Alan Burton

Guests: None

At 18:00 Chairman Knight called the meeting to order.

Knight asked if there were any agenda additions; there were none.

Knight asked about public comment and observed none.

At 18:01 Corey moved to amend the minutes for July to correctly reflect a motion. The motion was seconded by Sawyer. The vote to approve the motion was unanimous.

Corey provided an update relating to efforts by the rate committee. GAUD personnel are putting together CIP and O&M budgets to review at the October 27 planning meeting. There will be a report in September relating to converting the city's current catch basin fees for city streets to ERUs. The committee discussed amending its minimum cash reserve requirements. The committee discussed costs relating to inflation and the potential need for PFAS compliance. GAUD personnel are actively pursuing grant opportunities.

Knight asked about the water rate increase in 2021. Knight wanted to be sure that at the planning session there would be a discussion about the cost of replacing a mile of pipe per year and what it would cost and how it would impact rates.

Begin provided an update on projects. Silt screens will not be required for construction in the river to replace a broken sewer siphon pipe. The completion of the "in water work" will need to be done in September and October 2022. GAUD received a \$1M grant from the Northern Border Regional Commission that will help fund the fiber project that goes along with the sewer siphon and water main project beneath the Kennebec.

The \$2M dewatering (screw press) project at the WWTP is nearly complete. The new control building for Wildwood Sewer pump station has been installed. Electrical systems for that project have been delayed. Design of Highland Avenue is nearly done and will be a \$1M project in 2022. Replacement sewers for both Howard Street and Gilman Street will be constructed this year. The replacement sewer project located at Mill Street Place requires survey to be completed so we can acquire appropriate easements to complete the project. The relining project next to Aubuchon Hardware on Bangor Street will be completed this fall. The pipe next to Aubuchon is very deep and located next to a very old foundation. The project will be done with point repairs to address the worst parts of the pipe followed by a UV-cured liner for the entire pipe.

Tarbuck noted staff anniversaries. The Manchester 202 redundant drinking water pipe remains a goal. If the existing 115 year old pipe fails all of Manchester could go dry. There may be ARPA money from Manchester to assist with this. Tarbuck recognized Keith Luke's critical role in encouraging application to Northern Border Regional Commission for grant funding. Additional grants are available and GAUD is applying for as many as possible. Luke provided an update relating to grant applications that the City was filing that could impact GAUD.

There was no response to the RFP for the property appraisal around Carleton Pond. Appraisers are in high demand right now. The property is very unique and lacks comparative sales. Paradis suggested that the property across Route 17 to the north is less impactful to the quality of the water in Carleton Pond. Knight suggested that we have addressed an issue related to Carleton Pond that the City brought up in 2020. Further, the pond may yet play a role if PFAS or arsenic treatment prove too costly at the wells thereby making surface water treatment a competitive option.

Tarbuck said that each of the 5 wells as well as Carleton Pond were recently tested for PFAS. Results are forthcoming and will be posted on the website when received.

Mike Payne provided a review of financial statements. Each of the three divisions is running ahead of budget on revenue, and below budget on expenses.

Remote meetings can still be held provided that the Board has a hearing to adopt a policy that would allow remote meeting participation under certain specific circumstances. The September meeting will be the 'hearing' for this policy. Knight asked if there should be a meeting prior to Labor Day weekend. Sawyer noted that meetings under the new law may not be fully remote for either the public or board members. Based on that, Sawyer felt that an earlier meeting wasn't necessary. Munson asked whether or not the proposed policy would allow for full remote if there were a very aggressive virus. Sawyer suggested that this policy was not designed to respond to events like that and an executive order by the government would be required for a return to 'full remote' meetings. The bill will become law in mid October. Corey expressed a concern about a person being able to participate remotely if others couldn't.

The board waived automatic foreclosures in the total amount of \$3,404.70 at six different locations in Augusta. Corey noted that in November 2018 GAUD had approximately \$23k in liens. Today the total liens owed to the three divisions equals \$3.4k. This is largely because stormwater can now be liened for nonpayment. The motion by Corey was seconded by Sawyer and approved unanimously.

Alan Burton provided a human resources update. Burton noted that the annual review of the General Manager is starting up. The organizational risk plan is ongoing. Key positions that lacked internal backup have been identified. Four positions present significant organizational risk. Augmenting these positions with additional personnel will cost more money. Existing resources will be realigned in 2021 to help provide a no-cost means of reducing risk of critical personnel departure. A broader conversation about mitigating this risk will be part of future budget and planning meetings.

Knight asked for public comment. There was no public comment.

At 18:38 Sawyer made a double motion to both recognize Keith Luke as the "board member of the month" and that the body stand adjourned. The motion was seconded by Corey. The vote to approve the motion was unanimous.

Monday, September 20, 2021

Greater Augusta Utility District Board Minutes

Location: Augusta City Center

Trustees present: Ken Knight, Charlotte Warren, Pat Paradis, Bob Corey, Cecil Munson, Bradley Sawyer, Keith Luke, and Kirsten Hebert

Trustees absent: Cary Colwell

Attendees: Brian Tarbuck, Andy Begin, Mike Payne, Alan Burton, Meredith Strang-Burgess

Guests: None

At 18:00 Chairman Knight called the meeting to order.

Knight asked if there were any agenda additions; there were none.

Knight asked about public comment and observed none.

Knight asked Trustees and attendees to introduce themselves.

At 18:02 on a motion by Corey, seconded by Sawyer the board unanimously voted to approve the minutes of the August 16, 2021 meeting as presented.

Corey provided an update from the rate committee. The committee met on September 1 and is discussing escrow funds, converting city catch basin fees to equivalent residential units, rate increases and a five year capital improvement plan to include carryover projects for 2022 capital improvements. The Committee will look at rate adjustments required to continue to meet board goals.

Corey noted that the District has had many public meetings back to 2017 beginning with a stormwater workgroup that had some recommendations for GAUD. One outcome of the meetings was a suggestion to convert the way GAUD bills the City of Augusta for stormwater in city streets from a per catch basin basis to the equivalent residential unit (ERU) basis. GAUD spent a lot of time reviewing its records to ensure that the baseline numbers for the conversion were well documented. This process has led to the following motion:

Corey moved to create a new stormwater rate for the City of Augusta that replaces its existing city streets stormwater fee calculated on the basis of catch basins to an equivalent amount based on ERUs. The new monthly fee of \$13.35 per ERU for 6,363.97 ERUs will apply only to the City of Augusta and only for city streets. The rate would be effective on January 1, 2022.

Pat Paradis seconded the motion. Knight noted that this motion will not set the rate but it will set into motion the rate hearing to review the proposed change at the Board's October 27, 2021 meeting. The motion was unanimously approved.

Begin updated the Board on current projects. He explained that the Army Corps had yet to finalize its review of the sewer siphon project. Applications were submitted to the County for ARPA funds and the Drinking Water Program to help support the cost of the siphon project. The WWTP dewatering project is ramping down. An odor control project at the wastewater plant is ramping up with a design for a new odor control system that uses less chemicals by employing mollusk shells in its process. Wildwood Station is still on target. It should be ready for startup by October. VHB is still in the process of completing a road design for Highland Avenue. The Howard Street / Sturgis Lane off-road sewer main replacement project will start in October. The low bid for the Gilman Street off-road sewer main replacement project was awarded to Pratt & Sons for \$244k. Begin noted that about \$120k of the \$244k is the addition of 725' of stormwater pipe to further the District's goals of reducing combined sewer overflows by removing catch basins from a combined sewer. Draft easements have been distributed to residents of Mill Street Place. Mill Street Place is not a city street per a recent survey of the properties in the area paid for by GAUD. The new sewer main in Mill Street Place will be moved to an area that can be easily accessed for maintenance purposes in a location that has defined easements. An ultraviolet cured in place fiberglass sewer liner was installed in a failing pipe located near the Aubuchon building on Bangor Street. The main was deep (about 18' deep) and located close to the building (about 10') which made an open cut replacement very expensive due to the shoring that would have been required to protect the structure's foundation. This kind of liner should prolong the life of the pipe from 30 to 50 years.

Tarback noted employee anniversaries of Hardy Cummings, Phyllis Rand, John Mills, and Rebecca Hughes. Tarback pointed out an example of extreme pipe tuberculation from an 1887 cast iron pipe excavated in 2020 on Chapel Street. Paradis noted that he appreciated the photo of the old pipe as a visual reminder to ratepayers that the infrastructure we rely on day to day is not new and needs to be replaced. Corey asked if flushing would be sufficient to eliminate tuberculation. Tarback noted that the velocities are not high enough with regular flushing and 'pigging' the pipes using mechanical means would be required to restore full pipe capacity. Drinking water pipes are much more expensive to rehabilitate than sewer and stormwater pipes. Tarback noted that we have submitted a \$3M request to the County for ARPA funds to install an appropriately sized generator for the wastewater plant and replace aging electrical equipment. This work would move critical electrical systems out of the floodplain and move the service line from State Street underground to eliminate power and communications outages caused by treefall onto Jackson Avenue.

Tarback mentioned that the GAUD website has results from PFAS testing that has been collected so far. Keith Luke noted that the Kennebec Valley Council of Governments is doing some PFAS work to the north of Augusta to help find solutions to PFAS issues. Luke recommended that GAUD should continue to share PFAS information.

Payne reviewed the financials. Water revenues of \$2.8M were ahead of target at 71% year to date. Water expenses were \$2.3M netting \$0.4M for year to date. Cash at the end of August was \$1.5M. Wastewater revenues of 2.6M were ahead of target at 71% year to date. Wastewater expenses were 7 percent under budget at \$2.7M. Cash at the end of August was \$1.6M. Stormwater revenues of 2.7M were ahead of target at 69% year to date. Stormwater expenses were 12 percent under budget at \$2.7M. Cash at the end of August was \$2.1M.

The Board reviewed a recent change in law that allows for remote meetings under certain circumstances. The Board discussed the nuances of the policy and different scenarios in which it may apply. Sawyer moved to approve the remote participation policy with the date of Board adoption as September 20, 2021. Warren seconded the motion. The motion carried on a vote of 6 in favor, 1 opposed (Corey).

Meredith Strang-Burgess updated the board relating to recent public communications efforts. Notable were the summer newsletter and the use of Constant Contact to help provide digital content directly to people who signed up to receive it. Two newsletters are mailed to customers each year; the addition of the digital delivery option will reduce the amount of paper mailed annually. The District also uses Facebook, Instagram and Twitter to keep people updated. A PFAS page was added in May. The website will be ADA compliant to the AA standard by the end of the year.

Alan Burton provided an update relating to the personnel policy manual. Changes included documenting the practice of paying overtime for working at night. Two current pension plans, a 401A and MPERS, were funded differently by GAUD so the policy is revised to match the contribution to 401A that is made to MPERS. This change increases this portion of the annual budget by about \$10,000. A weekly Roth IRA deduction option was added to provide additional retirement opportunities to employees. The policy adds Juneteenth to the 2022 holiday schedule. Language was modified to clarify intent related to employees who serve on agencies that could be deployed to respond to a nationally declared emergency. The final change related to leave without pay and modifying that language to make leave without pay requests clearer. Sawyer moved to approve the changes to the personnel policy manual presented at today's meeting. The motion was seconded by Paradis and approved unanimously.

Paradis noted that Keith Luke will receive the Spirit of America award which will be presented at an upcoming council meeting.

At 19:02 Sawyer moved to enter executive session pursuant to Title 1, Chapter 13, Section 405 6 D to discuss a labor contract. The motion was seconded by Corey.

At 19:13 the board exited executive session.

Knight asked for public comment. There was no public comment.

At 19:14 Sawyer made a motion that the body stand adjourned. The motion was seconded by Paradis. The vote to approve the motion was unanimous.

Monday, October 18, 2021

Greater Augusta Utility District Board Minutes

Location: Augusta City Center

Trustees present: Ken Knight, Pat Paradis, Bob Corey, Cecil Munson, Cary Colwell, Bradley Sawyer, Keith Luke, and Kirsten Hebert

Trustees absent: none

Attendees: Brian Tarbuck, Andy Begin, Mike Payne, Alan Burton

Guests: None

At 18:00 Chairman Knight called the meeting to order.

Knight asked Trustees and attendees to introduce themselves.

Knight asked if there were any agenda additions; there were none.

Knight asked about public comment and observed none.

At 18:02 on a motion by Munson, seconded by Paradis. Paradis asked the minutes to reflect that Warren was present at the September 20, 2021 meeting. The board unanimously voted to approve the corrected minutes of the September 20, 2021 meeting.

Corey provided an update from the rate committee. The committee met on October 6. Corey noted that we are ready for the meeting on October 27th to discuss the proposed change to how the City of Augusta pays for stormwater fees on city streets. If approved, the new method switches from catch basins to equivalent residential units in January, 2022. The subcommittee is making sure all of the projects are being considered. Corey noted that a table was provided to show about how much it would cost to replace 1% of each division's buried infrastructure. Knight noted that the upcoming planning session is a good opportunity to set goals for management, including how much pipe should be replaced each year.

Begin updated the Board on current projects. Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) has granted a draft permit for the siphon project. Begin hoped for approval as soon as this week to secure funding from several agencies which is needed for this project. We have also submitted a request for funds from Kennebec County ARPA for this project. The Wildwood pump station is done apart from installing the Flygt pump as the manufacturer's representative who is needed for pump startup certification has been unavailable. VHB engineers have not completed the road design for Highland Avenue and the COA may not have money to do the project until mid 2022. The Howard Street sewer main replacement project has begun but won't be done until December. Gilman Street has been completed. This project moved the sewer from behind the homes to the street. The project also allowed two catch basins to be separated from the combined sewer. The sewer pipe replacement on Mill Street Place is underway now and will be completed by Pratt and Sons soon. Three easements were required as this project was not beneath a public way. The Aubuchon pipe was relined but during project research we determined that a section of pipe closer to the river is nearly 30 feet deep. We are looking into a way to create a sewer that is more accessible by installing a manhole for elevation change. Western Avenue sewer pipe will be relined at a cost of about \$150k (original budget was \$120k) to reline just under 4,500' of pipe. The project extends from Senator Way to Armory Street.

Corey asked if the additional money for relining would come from other projects that won't be completed in 2021 as originally planned. Begin believes that the funding for the project will mostly hit the books in 2022. Corey recommended that the Board approve the budget adjustment of \$120k to complete the relining work. The motion was seconded by Munson. The motion to approve the adjustment was unanimous.

Tarbuck asked if there were any questions about the general manager's report. Knight noted that the Board should consider attending conferences to learn more about issues faced by water, wastewater and sanitary utilities around Maine. Tarbuck extended his congratulations to Tim Wade for winning the MeWEA President's Award from Phil Tucker. Two employees, Bob Higgins and Troy Maheux, have employment anniversaries in October. Tarbuck noted that the

WWTP endured a short duration violation of its discharge permit. Tarbuck reported that we had submitted a request for grant money from the Kennebec County ARPA fund to pay for the replacement of the electrical service and undersized generator at the wastewater plant. These improvements would reduce the number of times the plant could not operate due to a power outage and would increase its resiliency by moving modern electrical equipment to higher ground. Tarbuck noted a separate request for an ARPA grant from the County for \$11M to pay for the consolidation of two Trunkline pump stations, Pond Road and Manchester 202, into a single station and to reuse the 1970 pipeline route for a new HDPE forcemain. The then abandoned ductile iron pipe that currently conveys wastewater along the Granite Hill Road would be pipe burst and repurposed as a redundant drinking water pipeline for Manchester.

There was no discussion about Carleton Pond. Knight asked that the matter be discussed at the upcoming planning session.

Sawyer presented information relating to recent information from the federal government relating to PFAS. The federal government is reviewing data and aligning different agencies in their response to widespread PFAS detection in drinking water supplies. Tarbuck noted that the wells were recently sampled for PFAS for the third time and that he had been in touch with the Drinking Water Program regarding the new regulation relating to PFAS.

Payne reviewed the financials. September represents 75% of the year to date. Water revenues of \$3.1M were ahead of target (75%) at 81%. Water expenses were \$2.6M netting \$0.6M for year to date. Cash at the end of September was \$1.5M. Wastewater revenues of \$2.9M were 5% above budget. Wastewater expenses of \$3.0 M were 8% under budget at 67%. Cash at the end of September was \$0.4M. Stormwater revenues of \$3.0M were on target at 77%. Stormwater expenses were 16% under budget at \$2.0M. Cash at the end of September was \$1.8M.

Alan Burton provided an update regarding the organizational risk plan requested by the Board. Payne indicated that at this point in time he didn't need a staff accountant. The plan identified six positions that would help improve District operations and provide backfill to critical positions. The positions included a GIS / data librarian; assistant engineer; engineering technician; distribution operator; maintenance mechanic; and an assistant shop mechanic for a total proposed expense of approximately \$343k. Corey thanked Alan for evaluating the risk of losing people. Corey wanted to know where to get the \$343k needed to fund the positions. The total budget for salaries and benefits now is about \$4.1M. Warren asked for examples of what it means to not have some of these positions for the District. Knight asked if there should be a HR subcommittee to interface with the rate committee to make recommendations to the full board.

At 18:43 Sawyer moved to enter executive session pursuant to Title 1, Chapter 13, Section 405 6 D to discuss a labor contract and Section 405 6 D to discuss the General Manager's annual performance review . The motion was seconded by Corey.

At 19:18 the board exited executive session.

Knight asked for public comment. There was no public comment.

At 19:19 Sawyer made a motion that the body stand adjourned. The motion was seconded by Hebert. The vote to approve the motion was unanimous.

Monday, October 27, 2021

Greater Augusta Utility District Board Minutes

Location: Augusta Civic Center

Trustees present: Ken Knight, Pat Paradis, Bob Corey, Bradley Sawyer, and Keith Luke

Trustees absent: Kirsten Hebert, Charlotte Warren, Cecil Munson, Cary Colwell

Attendees: Brian Tarbuck, Andy Begin, Mike Payne, Alan Burton

Guests: None

At 16:30 Chairman Knight called the rate hearing to order.

The rate hearing was required to change the way the city of Augusta is billed for stormwater. Historically, GAUD has billed the city for stormwater based on the number of catch basins that drain city streets. The change proposed will instead bill the city for stormwater based on the number of equivalent residential units represented by city streets. The hearing is to determine if there is any concern about this proposed change.

Knight read the motion made by Bob Corey at the September 20, 2021 meeting:

I move to create a new stormwater rate for the City of Augusta that replaces its existing city streets stormwater fee calculated on the basis of catch basins to an equivalent amount based on ERUs. The new monthly fee of \$13.35 per ERU for 6,363.97 ERUs will apply only to the City of Augusta and only for city streets. The rate would be effective on January 1, 2022.

Corey noted for the record that GAUD has been working closely with the City to change the rate from basins to ERUs for three years.

Paradis noted for the record his appreciation for the hard work done by the rate committee to get this done.

Knight asked for public comment. There was no public comment.

At 16:34 Sawyer made a motion that the body stand adjourned. The motion was seconded by Corey. The vote to approve the motion was unanimous.

Monday, November 15, 2021

Greater Augusta Utility District Board Minutes

Location: Augusta City Center

Trustees present: Ken Knight, Pat Paradis, Bob Corey, Cecil Munson, Cary Colwell, Bradley Sawyer, Keith Luke, and Kirsten Hebert

Trustees absent: none

Attendees: Brian Tarbuck, Andy Begin, Mike Payne

Guests: None

At 18:00 Chairman Knight called the meeting to order.

Knight asked Trustees and attendees to introduce themselves.

Knight asked if there were any agenda additions; there were none.

Knight asked about public comment and observed none.

At 18:02 on a motion by Corey, seconded by Sawyer, the board unanimously voted to approve the minutes of the October 18, 2021 meeting.

Corey provided an update from the rate committee.

Begin updated the Board on current projects. Begin noted that the District has all permits apart from the one needed from the US Army Corps of Engineers. The permit was stalled because the current federal administration canceled permits that followed the previous administration's rules. The District has requested information from the Army Corps to determine how to reconcile the differences in the two permits. The sub-permittees have all signed off on the project so there are no obvious permits missing that would delay permit approval. Unfortunately, the project can't go out to bid until the permit has been approved. The new submersible pumps at Wildwood sewer pump station are operational. The Howard Street sewer main replacement project will begin next week. The Gilman Street sewer relocation project will be completed as soon as final pavement has been placed. The Mill Street Place sewer project has been installed and is functional. The Western Avenue sewer relining project will begin in December. This relining project will reline the 4,500' long gravity sewer from Senator Way to Armory Street at a cost of about \$137k. GAUD crews will replace a failing old off-road stormwater pipe that discharges to a basin on the west end of Glenwood Street.

Tarbuck asked if there were any questions about the General Manager's report. Tarbuck reported that he and Ken attended a meeting with the Monmouth Selectboard to discuss the proposal by the District to consolidate Trunkline stations 2 and 4 into a single new station near Trunkline 4. This project has been put forth as a candidate for grant funding to Kennebec County as part of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). The Board discussed attending the Kennebec County meeting which will explain how the County intends to commit funds.

The board discussed a request for proposals for the value of the property around Carleton Pond. Tarbuck will put a RFP out and report back regarding the cost of the proposal.

Tarbuck explained recent PFAS results. A test of the river by the boat landing and the water from the wells at Riverside showed each were at about 12.6 parts per trillion for the sum six analytes.

Payne reviewed the financial statements. October represents 83% of the year to date. Water revenues of \$3.5M were 8% above budget. Water expenses of \$2.9M were 13% below budget netting a year to date gain of \$0.6M. Cash at the end of the month was \$1.6M. Wastewater revenues of \$3.3M were 5% above budget. Wastewater expenses of \$3.4 M were 7% under budget netting a year to date loss of \$157k. Cash at the end of the month was \$0.36M. Stormwater revenues of \$3.4M were on target at 85%. Stormwater expenses were 13% under budget at \$2.3M netting a year to date gain of \$1.1M. Cash at the end of the month was \$2.0M.

A digital report relating to recent online public outreach efforts was shared with the Board.

There was no update related to human resources.

Tarback provided an overview of the draft 2022 capital improvement plan for the water, sewer and stormwater divisions. Tarback noted that Highland Avenue was expected to be a significant joint City of Augusta and GAUD project for 2022 but that will likely be deferred until 2023.

At 18:44 Sawyer moved to enter executive session pursuant to Title 1, Chapter 13, Section 405 6 D to discuss a labor contract. The motion was seconded by Corey. The vote to approve the motion was unanimous.

At 19:07 the Board exited executive session.

Knight asked for public comment. There was no public comment.

At 19:07 Sawyer made a motion that the body stand adjourned. The motion was seconded by Paradis. The vote to approve the motion was unanimous.

Monday, December 6, 2021

Greater Augusta Utility District Board Minutes

Location: Augusta City Center

Trustees present: Ken Knight, Pat Paradis, Bob Corey, Cecil Munson, Cary Colwell, Bradley Sawyer, and Keith Luke

Trustees absent: Charlotte Warren, Kirsten Hebert

Attendees: Brian Tarbuck, Andy Begin, Mike Payne

Guests: None

At 18:00 Chairman Knight called the meeting to order.

Knight asked Trustees and attendees to introduce themselves.

Knight asked if there were any agenda additions; there were none.

Knight asked about public comment and observed none.

At 18:01 on a motion by Corey, seconded by Sawyer, the board unanimously voted to approve the minutes of the November 15, 2021 meeting.

Corey provided an update from the rate committee. He noted that the rate committee has been working with GAUD management to update both the operations and maintenance budgets and the capital improvement budgets. One of the goals of the committee is to include the 6 additional personnel recommended by the organizational risk plan and show how that impacts the operations and maintenance budgets. Another goal is to fund 1% pipe replacement each year in each division. Corey noted that the purpose of the meeting tonight was to have discussion about these concepts to give management guidance for approval of the budgets at the board meeting on December 20.

Corey noted that there are several options to address financial needs. That includes increasing revenue by finding grants, taking out loans instead of paying cash by reducing cash reserves or increasing rates. Expenses are rising due to inflation but steps can be taken to reduce costs by cutting back on personnel or tasks that are not necessary.

The committee is working to balance the impacts on ratepayers with the need to maintain the existing system and maintain a reasonable cash reserve. Corey noted that Payne is using a financial forecasting tool developed by Maine Water Company that lays out these different financial needs over the long term to provide a financial guide for the utility.

Payne explained some of the budget detail. Water revenues are forecast at 4.3M which is flat compared to 2021. Expenses are up about 12%. This includes 6 new employees shared among all three divisions; 5% raise for employees; 2% increase in health insurance; 25% increase in power costs; increase in chemical costs. Corey noted that the power budget is going to go up about 25% which is lower than the numbers the public may end up paying. Tarbuck noted that GAUD has long term supply contracts. The increases on CMP's delivery cost aren't as significant to the District's overall power cost as supply cost.

Sewer revenues are also consistent with 2021 at \$3.9M. The draft budget shows no increase in revenue. Expenses are expected to increase about 15% for sewer in 2022 for the same reasons impacting drinking water but with additional cost pressures related to the disposal of wastewater biosolids.

Storm revenues are also consistent with 2021 at \$4M. Total expenses are greater than 2021 by about 12%.

Knight asked for confirmation whether or not the budget included the 6 positions identified by the organizational risk plan. Payne confirmed that it did. Knight asked overall how much the three divisions would cost in 2022 compared to 2021. Payne said on average, 2022 expenses are forecast to be about 12% higher than 2021.

Munson asked about the solar project and whether or not that would happen in 2022 to reduce rates. Tarbuck confirmed that it would not happen in 2022 based on current information.

The board reviewed some of the capital improvement plan items and reviewed the need for the projects and how they might be paid for.

Tarback and Corey explained a forecasting tool that GAUD management and the rate committee are working with to balance cash reserves with CIP and O&M needs.

Sawyer expressed concern about the proposed cost and asked if postponing hiring 6 people would help blunt the impact of potential rate increases in particular because the O&M costs may preclude the replacement of pipe.

Munson asked if the 6 positions had been prioritized such that if we could only hire a couple of them, which would they be.

Sawyer asked to see the costs of the HR and public relations consultants we use to see if that is another potential area to reduce operations and maintenance costs.

Corey expressed his appreciation for hearing dissenting opinions to ensure that the Board makes the best decisions for the ratepayers.

Sawyer noted that given the stress of the work over the last year to be sure to take some time off to recharge.

Knight asked for public comment. There was no public comment.

At 18:53 Sawyer made a motion that the body stand adjourned. The motion was seconded by Corey. The vote to approve the motion was unanimous.

Monday, December 20, 2021

Greater Augusta Utility District Board Minutes

Location: Augusta City Center

Trustees present: Ken Knight, Pat Paradis, Bob Corey, Cecil Munson, Cary Colwell, Bradley Sawyer, Charlotte Warren, and Keith Luke

Trustees absent: Kirsten Hebert

Attendees: Brian Tarbuck, Andy Begin, Mike Payne

Guests: Meredith Strang Burgess

At 18:00 Chairman Knight called the meeting to order.

At 18:02 Corey moved to approve the minutes from December 6. The motion was seconded by Sawyer. The motion was approved unanimously.

At 18:03 Meredith Strang Burgess reviewed the 2022 draft goals with the Board. The draft goals will be revised based on feedback from the board and ask for adoption at the January meeting. Financial goals include transitioning from catch basin fees to ERUs for stormwater fees; actively pursuing grants; annually reviewing rates; replacing 1% of pipe per year. Communications goals included working on ways to reach customers in an emergency and enhancing crisis communications plans. Human resources goals included adopting the organizational risk plan; improving redundancy and succession planning; and providing some social engagements for Board members.

Paradis asked if some of the work the construction crews do to share with the public. Most people don't understand the work that goes into this underground work.

At 18:17 Begin reported that the District is eligible for \$400k additional grant funding for the drinking water pipe beneath the river. This is the third grant for this project.

Tarbuck provided a brief update related to current employees.

Munson asked if the County had provided any additional information related to the \$24M in America Rescue Plan Act (ARP funds received by the county. There has been no new information from the county.

At 18:29 Payne presented financial information for the end of November.

Water division revenue was 8% ahead of budget at \$3.9M. Water division expenses were 15% under budget at \$3.2M. This resulted in a net gain so far of \$688k. The cash at the end of the month was \$1.6M.

Sewer division revenue was 5% ahead of budget at \$3.6M. Sewer division expenses were 9% under budget at \$3.8M. This resulted in a net loss so far of \$175k. The cash at the end of the month was \$0.4M.

Stormwater division revenue was 2% ahead of budget at \$3.7M. Stormwater division expenses were 15% under budget at \$2.5M. This resulted in a net gain so far of \$1.2M. The cash at the end of the month was \$2.0M.

At 18:30 Meredith Strang Burgess provided a public relations update to include the annual budget for 2022. The budget for 2022 is about \$120k. In 2021, the amount spent was about \$51k. Strang-Burgess hopes to create a few instructional videos in 2022 to help move customers more toward paperless billing.

At 18:38 Corey provided an update from the rate committee's recent meeting. Corey explained that the work tonight is to conduct a thorough review of the budgets for 2022. Corey reviewed the cash flow forecasting model developed initially by Greg Leighton. Estimates of water rates needed are close to 30%. Sewer rates need approximately 60% additional revenue. A sewer rate decrease in July, 2019 has resulted in diminishing cash since that time coupled with increased inflation since 2019. Corey explained that current debt of \$1M for 10 years is about \$93k in interest making it a good time to borrow money.

At 18:52, Munson asked about the number of positions on the organizational risk plan. Munson asked which positions were needed most. Tarbuck explained the positions and why they are needed. Munson reinforced his need for the most important of the six positions.

Paradis expressed some concern about approving a budget first, then approving rates for the budget after the fact.

Munson expressed concern about the optics of hiring people while asking for increased rates. The board discussed the need for the additional personnel.

There was discussion about whether or not the budget discussion required a public hearing. Warren noted that the public hearings are required for rates. But all of the meetings are public.

Warren reminded the board that the six positions are not entirely new. Some were eliminated years ago and now the need for replacing them is becoming evident.

Corey noted that the Board wants to replace about 1% of the pipes each year and to do that, more personnel will be needed to plan for, inspect and oversee construction of projects.

At 19:22 Paradis asked for a 10 minute break which was seconded by Munson. The vote to approve the motion was five in favor, Sawyer opposed.

At 19:33 the meeting resumed. Some concern remained about the rate increase and the additional personnel needed but there will be rate hearings in the spring and several meetings before the hearings to continue to discuss how the Board will meet its goals.

Corey noted on the water division there are two projections. The first alternative showed a 30% rate increase to go into effect on or about July 1. The second alternative showed a 12% increase in 2022, a 10% increase in 2023 and a 10% increase in 2024. Of the two alternatives, Corey feels the single 30% increase is preferred because it achieves financial goals sooner.

On the sewer division, a 60% rate increase was projected to meet capital spending goals. Corey believes that 30% in July, 2022 is preferred followed by an additional increase in 2023 of about 25%. Borrowing should also be on the table. Corey recommended that the sewer division borrow now to reline more sewer sooner.

The storm division is in better condition due to the recent reduction in debt service owed by the stormwater division.

Corey noted that because much of the work done in the utility is shared. Therefore, if one of the divisions is insufficiently funded then the other divisions are unable to spend.

The Board clarified that they are not voting tonight on a rate increase; just the budget for 2022. To fund the budget, the Board is recommending that rate increases are needed to fund the budget.

At 19:49, Corey moved to approve the operations and maintenance budgets as presented to this meeting for drinking water, sewer and stormwater for 2022. The motion was seconded by Sawyer. The motion was approved unanimously.

At 19:50, Corey moved to approve the capital improvement budgets as presented to this meeting for drinking water, sewer and stormwater for 2022. The motion was seconded by Sawyer. Tarbuck noted that the CIP as presented for sewer could not be funded wholly by cash and would need to be funded by loans or other methods. The motion was approved unanimously.

Corey noted that how the budgets would be paid for needs to be part of the January meeting.

At 19:53 Sawyer moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Corey. The vote to approve the motion was unanimous.