

Monday, January 30, 2023

Greater Augusta Utility District Board Minutes

Location: Augusta City Center, Council Chambers

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

Absent: Kirsten Hebert

Attendees: Brian Tarbuck, Andy Begin, Mike Payne, Alan Burton (remote)

Guests: none

At 1800 Chairman Knight called the regular board meeting to order.

At 1801, Corey moved to approve the minutes from December 19, 2022. The motion was seconded by Paradis. The vote to approve the motion was unanimous.

At 1802 Corey provided an update from the rate committee. The committee met with Tarbuck and Payne on January 19 to review the draft budgets. The budgets were approved in December, 2022. The committee recommends a 10% increase to water; 30% increase to sewer and 0% to stormwater to fund the budgets.

Corey moved to increase drinking water and fire protection rates in an amount not to exceed 10% with a desired effective date of July 1, 2023. The motion was seconded by Munson. The vote to approve the motion was unanimous.

Corey moved to increase sewer rates in an amount not to exceed 30% with a desired effective date of July 1, 2023. The motion was seconded by Paradis. The vote to approve the motion was unanimous.

At 18:03 Begin provided updates relating to significant projects. Pipe jacking beneath the rail trail is underway now with St Laurent & Son and Vortex. Contract 3 will begin soon. Contract 3 extends a drinking water pipe from the eastern shore of the river to Hospital street and then to the Hospital Street drinking water booster station. This project provides a redundant river crossing and a secondary supply to the Hospital Street station. Contract 4 is nearly design. Contract 4 will connect the west side of the river to State Street and complete the drinking water interconnection project. The Front Street pump station project is nearing the end of the design phase. The new submersible pump station will replace the existing 1963 pump station which is prone to flooding when the river rises. Highland Avenue is a joint project with the City of Augusta that will be constructed this summer by McGee Construction. A small segment of water main on Turtle Run in east Winthrop will be completed this summer. A short section of water pipe will be installed under Riverside Drive near the Vassalboro town line. We are working with St Laurent and Son to eliminate a CSO overflow pipe near the police station that is currently under construction at Willow Street.

At 1811 Tarbuck provided updates for the Board. Tarbuck noted that the recent census could create conditions that would make the District into a MS4 community. This would increase the amount of responsibility that we would have for stormwater in Augusta and result in increased costs and higher rates.

There is legislation to set the drinking water limit for PFAS in Maine at zero parts per trillion. The legislation is being actively tracked by the local water and wastewater associations.

At 1819 Payne noted that the financials for December are in draft form. The table below summarizes the District's financial position as of the end of December:

Budget Summary 2022		Revenue			Expenses			
Month	Division	Budget	Actual	Act / budg	Budget	Actual	Act / budg	Ending cash
12	Sewer	3.9	4.4	112%	4.7	4.6	97%	0.5
12	Stormwater	4.1	4.0	99%	3.0	2.8	93%	1.2
12	Water	4.2	4.6	109%	3.9	3.7	96%	2.2

Total liens outstanding for the utility district is about \$1,200 or about 0.01% of the combined budgets of the utility. Liens in the past have been as high as \$15,000.

Payne noted that the City of Augusta foreclosed on the following properties which required us to write off the following lien amounts:

- 95 Eastern Avenue on January 13, 2023; \$1,078.58.
- 102 Northern Avenue in 2019; \$638.24.

At 1827 Corey moved that the General Manager be directed to secure \$1M in new borrowing from TD Bank to support capital expenses needed to support the sewer division. The motion was seconded by Munson. The vote to approve the motion was unanimous. This is a 10 year loan at an interest rate of 4.25%. Total interest will be \$233,750.

At 1829 Corey moved that the General Manager be directed to secure up to \$2M in new borrowing in Drinking Water State Revolving Loan funds from the Maine Municipal Bond Bank to support capital expenses needed to support the water division. The motion was seconded by Paradis. The vote to approve the motion was unanimous.

At 1830 Tarbuck reminded Board members of the availability of retirement options for Board members. For the current Board members this is limited to 457b contributions.

At 1833 Alan Burton provided a human resources update.

At 1835 Tarbuck provided an update on the behalf of the communications consultants. Knight asked when the audit might be done this year. Payne thought the audit may be done by May this year.

At 1837 Sawyer moved that this body stand adjourned. The motion was seconded by Paradis. The vote to approve the motion was unanimous.

Monday, February 27, 2023

Greater Augusta Utility District Board Minutes

Location: Augusta City Center, Council Chambers

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

Absent: Kirsten Hebert, Keith Luke

Attendees: Brian Tarbuck, Andy Begin, Mike Payne, Alan Burton (remote)

Guests: none

At 1800 Chairman Knight called the regular board meeting to order.

At 1801, Corey moved to approve the minutes from January 30, 2023. The motion was seconded by Munson. The vote to approve the motion was unanimous.

At 1801 Corey provided an update from the rate committee. The committee met with Tarbuck and Payne on January 19 to review the draft budgets. The budgets were approved in December, 2022. The committee recommends a 10% increase to water; 30% increase to sewer and 0% to stormwater to fund the budgets.

The committee is tracking the public notice requirements.

At 18:02 Begin provided updates relating to significant projects. The pipe jacking beneath the Rail Trail is done. Pipes are being pulled through the sleeve that was created by the pipe jacking project. This work will connect the sewer from the east side to the west side. Submissions to replace the Front Street pump station are ongoing. That project should be out to bid in 2023. Highland Avenue will start as soon as frost is out of the ground. Turtle Run water main is under design review now. The 450' Riverside Drive water main project is out to bid now. This main extends into Vassalboro. We will remove a CSO by consolidating two old pipes into a new, deep pipe near the police station which is currently under construction. This is a difficult project. 330' of pipe will be installed. The budget for sewer relining will be reduced to pay for this project.

At 1809 Tarbuck provided updates for the Board. Tarbuck noted that Jane Carroll will retire tomorrow after 42 years of service making her the longest serving employee for the former sanitary district. GAUD hired CES to help navigate the solar landscape. Tarbuck noted that GAUD has 13 CSOs, down from 32 at the start of the CSO mitigation program. Three CSOs were removed in 2022 thanks in large part to adding sensors to overflow sites that allow for refined control measures. Tarbuck noted that Casella, the company that accepts GAUD sludge, notified GAUD that our sludge disposal costs will be about \$200k higher than anticipated at the start of January. This works out to the need for about a 3% increase in sewer fees to pay for this increase. GAUD will look into other options to dry the sludge or bring it to a different site if possible.

There is legislation to set the drinking water limit for PFAS in Maine at zero parts per trillion. The legislation is being actively tracked by the local water and wastewater associations.

At 1819 Payne noted that the financials for January are in draft form. The table below summarizes the District's financial position as of the end of January:

Budget Summary 2023		Revenue			Expenses			Ending cash
Month	Division	Budget	Actual	Act / budg	Budget	Actual	Act / budg	
1	Sewer	5.0	0.4	8%	5.0	0.4	8%	0.9
1	Stormwater	4.0	0.4	10%	3.1	0.3	9%	1.5
1	Water	5.0	0.4	8%	4.2	0.3	7%	2.1

At 1821 Alan Burton provided a human resources update. There are 4 open positions.

At 1822 Sawyer noted that the GAUD PFAS website section should be reviewed in the context of upcoming regulatory changes.

At 1823 Sawyer moved that this body stand adjourned in honor and thanks to Jane Carroll's years of service. The motion was seconded by Warren. The vote to approve the motion was unanimous.