

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE
MASSACHUSETTS CLEAN WATER TRUST**

Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: Wednesday, October 27, 2021
Time: 1:30 PM
Location: Remote
Notice: Due public notice given
Attendees Sue Perez, Executive Director, Trust
Maria Pinaud, Director of Program Development, Trust
Timur Yontar, Director of Finance & Administration, Trust
Also Present Nate Keenan, Deputy Director, Trust
Sally Peacock, Controller, Trust
Jonathan Maple, Policy Analyst, Trust
Joshua Derouen, Program Associate, Trust
Ashraf Gabour, Program Manager, MassDEP
Yvette DePeiza, Director of Drinking Water Program, MassDEP
Michael Celona, Drinking Water Specialist, MassDEP
Jessica Sibirski, Drinking Water Analyst, MassDEP
Jennifer Pederson, Massachusetts Water Works Association
Josh Schimmel, Executive Director, Springfield Water & Sewer Commission
Phil Guerin, Director of Water & Sewer Operations, City of Worcester
Alan Cathcart, Director of Public Works, Town of Concord

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS	
	<u>Open the Meeting:</u> Ms. Perez opened the meeting after confirming the attendees present.
1.	<u>Minutes:</u> The Committee approved meeting minutes from the 10/20/2021 meeting of the Executive Committee.
2.	<u>Continuing discussion on 2022 Intended Use Plan (IUP) Capacity:</u> Ms. Perez said that the next update is expected to be given in one to two weeks.
3.	<u>School Water Improvement Grant (SWIG) Program:</u> Mr. Maple said that the second round of SWIG will offer up to a total of \$2 million in grants using state funds and grant funds from the EPA. The SWIG and Expanded School Water Improvement Grant (ESWIG) programs will be capped at \$1 million each for the round. If the caps are not reached, then all eligible projects will be funded.

If the \$1 million cap for a program is exceeded, applicants will be ranked based on priority. Priority will be given to applicants in high risk communities for childhood lead poisoning, those served by public water systems with known lead action level exceedances, and those in disadvantaged communities. Applicants will then be prioritized according to the adjusted per capita income used to categorize disadvantaged communities. If the cap is still exceeded, the tier level of the disadvantaged community applicants, risk factors, and number of students at risk will be factored in.

The focus will be on awarding grants to facilities that serve elementary school-aged students and younger.

The second round will expand eligibility to private schools, childcare, and early education facilities. The grant process and award calculations will be more streamlined. The pilot round has taught us lessons that will help improve instructional materials and the process overall. Outreach e-mails have already been sent out about testing fixtures at eligible facilities.

Outreach for the second round will begin next month. Organization and facility officials will be sent e-mails with a particular focus on targeted facilities. Targeted facilities are those located in disadvantaged communities, have known Lead and Copper Rule (LCR) violations, and those with positive tests for lead documented in the Lead Contamination Control Act (LCCA) Program Management Tool (PMT). The high-risk communities for childhood lead poisoning and those served by public water systems with known lead action exceedances will be prioritized over disadvantaged community APCI in any ranking scenario.

E-mails will also be sent to superintendents, parent teacher organizations, Massachusetts Association of School Committees, Massachusetts Facilities Administrators' Association, Massachusetts Association of 766 Approved Private Schools, Association of Independent Schools in New England, and any other similar contacts to help with outreach.

There will be awareness materials available to view on social media, a press release, the Trust's website, a municipality writeup, and an informational webinar that will be held in later November or early December.

Entities eligible to be awarded grants are public school districts and non-profit private schools. Public or private early education facilities and non-residential daycare facilities are also eligible.

Eligible entities must then have fixtures sampled according to the LCCA. Sample results must also be listed in the LCCA PMT and show detectable lead.

Fixtures with detectable lead and results listed in the LCCA PMT must also be universally accessible water fountains or water chillers to be eligible. Universally accessible fixtures are those in hallways, libraries, cafeterias, gyms, or other areas outside of classrooms. Fixtures can be relocated to maximize efficiency. There may also be exceptions for facilities that serve infants, toddlers, and pre-kindergarten students that have fixtures in areas like a kitchen or a food preparation station.

There will be forms to complete on both the organization and facility levels. The application period is scheduled to open in January with the organization forms due in February and facility forms due in March.

A lower percentage of applicants are expected to be ESWIG applicants, those that are not public school districts, this round because many of these facilities need to sample and enter results according to the LCCA.

The maximum fixtures awarded to applicants will be 100 students per fixture with rounding up to the highest whole number or the number of fixtures requested by the facility, whichever is less. This simplifies the calculation and data collection.

The grant awarding process will be the same as the pilot round. However, the grant expiration timeframe will be extended from 180 days to one year from when the grant was awarded.

SWIG grantees are required to procure fixtures through the Operation Services Division's (OSD), FAC100: Building Maintenance Repair and Operations Project Materials and Supplies statewide contract and encouraged to procure installation services via OSD's TRD01: Tradesperson Installation, Repair, Maintenance Services statewide contract.

ESWIG grantees must collect three detailed and itemized quotes for procured units and installation. Using the FAC100 and TRD01 contracts are recommended though.

Other Business (Items not reasonably anticipated by the Chair 48 hours in advance of the meeting)

American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funds:

Massachusetts Water Works Association (MWWA) Remarks

Ms. Pederson said that she is speaking on behalf of MWWA, a non-profit organization that represents water systems across Massachusetts. Leaders from some of the member communities are also present.

Tomorrow, the Massachusetts House of Representatives will be voting on a bill that would allocate \$100 million to be spent by the Massachusetts Clean Water Trust. There may be amendments and multiple rounds that could result in a higher amount.

MWWA communities could benefit from the Trust's focus areas like PFAS remediation and lead service line removal. However, MWWA communities would also like assistance in areas such as combined sewer overflows (CSO), replacing aged infrastructure, and meeting federal requirements. There are also several projects that could be financed or funded through ARPA funds that are not necessarily ready to begin construction right away.

These communities would like to see more grant opportunities as opposed to just State Revolving Fund (SRF) loans.

Mr. Schimmel of the Springfield Water & Sewer Commission and Mr. Guerin of the City of Worcester said that they would like to see a more user-friendly SRF program.

Mr. Schimmel said that he would like to see more flexible options. For example, there are SRFs in other states that offer loans with matching grants for projects with focus areas such as CSO and nutrient enrichment reduction.

Mr. Cathcart of the Town of Concord would like to see more opportunities for small system projects and help planning around projects that are not quite ready for construction.

Massachusetts Clean Water Trust and MassDEP Remarks

Ms. Perez said that Treasurer Goldberg and the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs' testimonies reflect the ARPA funds priorities of the Massachusetts Clean Water Trust and SRF as a whole.

ARPA funds allocated to the Clean Water Trust will be loaned or awarded to communities through the SRF and within the current parameters.

The current parameters not only allow for loans to be issued at less than 2% interest for certain projects, there has also been approximately \$20 million awarded each year in grants to affordability communities through loan forgiveness. There are also the Asset Management Planning (AMP) and School Water Improvement Grant (SWIG) programs where grants are awarded and loan portions are not required.

The 2022 IUP solicitation resulted in the largest total dollar amount for projects seeking SRF financing. Perhaps these communities were anticipating expanded capacity knowing that ARPA funds may be allocated to the SRF in time for the 2022 IUP project selection.

Prior to this year, the amount in financing being offered through IUPs has expanded tremendously.

Ms. Pinaud said that ARPA parameters require that all ARPA funds be disbursed no later than December 2026. The 2023 IUP is expected to be the cutoff for projects being disbursed ARPA funds to ensure that this deadline is met. Communities with projects that are not quite ready to proceed should be mindful of this.

Ms. Perez said that we may experience material supply chain and engineering resource limits.

Mr. Keenan said that Trust associates would like to speak at the MWWA's January 27th meeting to provide information to those attending.

Northbridge Survey

Ms. Perez said that the Trust worked with Northbridge, an EPA-funded firm, to distribute a survey to 274 communities. Responses were received from 223 community officials in decision making roles. This survey will help the Trust learn how it can better assist communities that have not used SRF financing in the past.

Mr. Keenan said that the survey results are in the process of being finalized. Results will be discussed at future Executive Committee and Board of Trustees meetings.

Adjourn the Meeting: Ms. Perez requested a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Pinaud moved the motion. A roll call was held, and all members approved the motion.

LIST OF DOCUMENTS AND EXHIBITS USED:

1. SWIG Round 2 Presentation

Minutes Approved: November 17, 2021