

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

Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: Wednesday, February 9, 2022
Time: 1:30 PM
Location: Remote
Notice: Due public notice given
Attendees Sue Perez, Executive Director, Trust
Timur Yontar, Director of Finance & Administration, Trust
Also Present Nate Keenan, Deputy Director, Trust
Sally Peacock, Controller, Trust
My Tran, Treasurer, Trust
William Kalivas, Treasury Specialist, Trust
Jonathan Maple, Senior Policy Analyst, Trust
Joshua Derouen, Senior Program Associate, Trust
Robin McNamara, Deputy Director of Municipal Services, MassDEP
Absent Maria Pinaud, Director of Program Development, Trust

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 1/19/2022 meeting of the Executive Committee.
2.	<u>MassDEP staffing plans update:</u> Ms. McNamara said that the Director of the Division of Municipal Services has submitted a staffing plan to MassDEP management for review. Increased staffing is needed to administer the expanding State Revolving Fund (SRF) Program. There is no timetable on when this plan will be finalized. A new SRF project engineer starts on the 14 th . There is a posting for an open environmental analyst position that just closed. The application review will begin soon. These positions are to replace people who have left the roles. Ms. Perez said that the Trust is available to assist with staffing resources.
3.	<u>School Water Improvement Grant (SWIG) program update:</u> Mr. Maple said that as of today, fifty-six first round applications have been submitted to the Trust. Nine applicants are not eligible to proceed under program requirements. Twenty-four applicants are eligible to move forward in the application process. Sixteen applicants are being referred to the MassDEP Drinking Water Program for testing. Five applicants have already submitted completed applications for the second round.

	<p>There are a few recommendations at this point.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The deadline for the first round applications should be extended beyond February 16th to allow for more organizations to participate. The deadline for the second round applications should remain March 16th. 2. There should be an announcement about the next application period of SWIG beginning in July. Alternatively, the current application period could be changed to a rolling basis. 3. With EPA grant funds still available through the MassDEP Drinking Water Program and some SWIG applicants needing to complete necessary testing, SWIG applicants should be provided a direct pathway from testing to the SWIG application process. <p>Ms. Perez said that even with greater than expected participation with this current SWIG application period, there will still be funds available for a rolling application period. The Trust staff should review whether or not moving to a rolling admission creates an administrative issue. If it does not, the Executive Committee agreed that it would be the simplest method.</p>
4.	<p><u>Applying for the EPA's Overflow and Stormwater Grant (OSG):</u> Ms. McNamara said that it is a priority for MassDEP to develop an OSG program. MassDEP is currently exploring two options. One option is to partner with the Trust and fund SRF projects. The other is for MassDEP to develop its own program independent of the SRF. There is approximately \$1.5 million in grant funding currently available from EPA.</p> <p>Mr. Keenan asked that MassDEP follow-up with him as soon as possible.</p>
5.	<p><u>Northbridge survey results presentation:</u> Mr. Maple walked through a presentation on the e-mail survey that Northbridge, who work as consultants for EPA on the SRF program, distributed which led to them administering a focus group to collect additional feedback.</p> <p>Ms. Perez said that the takeaways from the survey and focus group tells the Trust that it needs to better communicate its programs and benefits. For example, the effective interest rate for standard loans is below 2% when factoring in 0% interest and no fee interim financing, any applicable loan forgiveness, and reduced interest permanent financing with some special programs.</p> <p>Ms. Perez and Mr. Yontar discussed how the Trust can work with the Executive Office for Administration and Finance to create a one-stop shop for capital improvement financing options whether it is through long-standing or one-off programs.</p> <p>Mr. Keenan said that one of the takeaways from the focus group is to provide communities with design cost financing. Design cost financing has always been eligible through the State Revolving Fund loan programs. However, the decision was made years ago that due to lack of financing capacity, only construction and planning projects would be awarded financing. This could change with additional funding from the American Rescue Plan Act and Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.</p>

	Mr. Maple said that the Trust should form a working group to develop recommendations and an implementation plan on short and long-term solutions. Progress made by the working group can be reported regularly at Executive Committee meetings.
Other Business (Items not reasonably anticipated by the Chair 48 hours in advance of the meeting) None	
<u>Adjourn the Meeting:</u> Ms. Perez requested a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Yontar moved the motion. A roll call was held, and all members approved the motion.	

LIST OF DOCUMENTS AND EXHIBITS USED:

1. SRF Marketing Survey and Focus Group Results Presentation

Minutes Approved: February 23, 2022