



*Matthew A. Beaton, Secretary of Energy and Environmental Affairs  
Frederick A. Laskey, Executive Director, MWRA  
William Meehan, North Worcester County Quabbin Anglers, Quabbin Fishermen's Association  
Louis Taverna, Chairman, MWRA Advisory Board  
Fred Heyes, Swift River Valley Historical Society*

**Water Supply Protection Trust**  
March 29, 2018  
MWRA Southborough Facility

Trustees

Trustees Lou Taverna, MWRA Advisory Board  
Frederick A. Laskey, Executive Director, MWRA  
Vandana Rao, Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs  
Brigadier General William J. Meehan, North Worcester County Anglers and the Quabbin Fishermen's Association  
Fred Heyes, Swift River Historical Society

MWRA

Dave Coppes, Chief Operating Officer  
Kathy Soni, Budget Director  
Chris Lam, Assistant Finance Manager  
John Gregoire, Reservoir Program Manager  
Bethany Card, Director of Environmental and Regulatory Affairs  
Sean Navin, Director Intergovernmental Affairs  
Mike Altieri, Associate General Counsel  
Stephen Estes-Smargiassi, Director of Planning and Sustainability  
Katherine Ronan, Public Affairs

DCR

John Scannell, Acting Director, Division of Water Supply Protection  
Ken MacKenzie, Acting Director, Natural Resources Section  
Dan Clark, Director, Quabbin/Ware Region  
Dan Crocker, Environmental Analyst, EQ Section, Wachusett/Sudbury Region

MWRA Advisory Board

Joseph Favaloro, Executive Director

WSCAC

Lexi Dewey, Executive Director

Swift River Historical Society

Jane Pierce

The meeting convened at 10:09 a.m

## **1. Approval of Minutes – December 6, 2017 meeting**

A motion to approve the minutes of the December 6, 2017 meeting was made and seconded. The minutes were unanimously approved.

Trustee Laskey noted that John Scannell is currently the Acting Director of the Division of Water Supply Protection. Mr. Scannell noted that Dan Clark is now Regional Director at Quabbin and Ken MacKenzie is currently the Acting Director of Natural Resources.

Additionally, Trustee Laskey noted that MWRA has also had some recent personnel changes. Dave Coppes is the Chief Operating Officer. Beth Card is the Director of Environmental and Regulatory Affairs and will be working on permitting of the upcoming redundancy tunnel project. Mike Altieri is Deputy General Counsel.

## **2. FY18 Spending Update and Proposed Budget Amendment – John Scannell, DCR**

### FY18 Spending Update

A PowerPoint Presentation accompanied the FY18 Spending Update and is appended to the minutes of the meeting. Items discussed included the following.

- The Water Supply Protection Plan is a five-year plan ending in FY18. DWSP staff are currently writing a new plan and hope to have a draft by April. The final plan will go to DEP on June 1<sup>st</sup>.
- DWSP is working to update the Quabbin Public Access Plan.
- DWSP has a new GIS staff, Erica Tefft, who is working on various projects and was scheduled to present at this meeting. Due to a conflict her presentation will be scheduled for a later meeting.
- Proposed updates to the Land Management Plan.
- John noted that it has been a challenging facilities year. There have been heating and contracting issues at the Quabbin Headquarters which DWSP is working to resolve. Trustee Laskey asked if this was about repairs to the big wood stove and John confirmed that it was and that the work had been completed. Trustee Meehan asked if this was normal maintenance work and John answered that it was something they expected to wear out over time. The Quabbin Maintenance Building has also had some issues which DWSP is meeting with DEP to address.
- John noted that the Clinton Crew Headquarters was not yet out to bid and that this item was not in the MWRA Capital Budget but listed as Trust Capital, which is part of the Operating Budget. Dave Coppes asked about the issues and John noted they were having trouble with the Contractor who was not getting plans to DCR.
- 61% of the total FY18 Budget has been spent through February. John gave a brief description of expenditures by line item.
  - FY18 Expenditures
    - AA – To date \$6,268,767 has been spent. This reflects 61% of the budget or underspending of \$366k. After union contracts are finalized there will be an underspending balance of \$216K. Fringe benefits are expected close to budget.
    - FF - Facility Operational Supplies - Includes boating supplies and is on track
    - GG - Energy Costs - Includes fuel and is anticipated to be underspent.

- HH - Consultant Contracts - Looks low but a large portion is the UMass bill which comes later in the year.
  - JJ - Operational Services – Includes uniform cleaning.
  - KK - Purchases - Vehicle and Office - looks low but the bills come in at the end of the fiscal year. Trucks have been ordered.
  - LL - Leases and Rentals - Includes Maintenance of Vehicles.
  - NN - Construction Improvements - Spending on projects tends to come at the year end.
  - TT - Special Payments - USGS
  - UU - IT Expenses - Looks underspent but utility bills tend to come toward the year end.
- Trustee Meehan asked if the vehicle bills will come in FY18 and John reported that they will.
  - Trustee Rao asked about what happens if DWSP underspends the annual budget. John replied that DWSP can over or underspend by a certain amount and not have to come back to the trust. Kathy Soni remarked that underspending is usually between \$150,000 and \$200,000. It was noted that MWRA is reimbursing for expenses that occurred, so when there is a surplus MWRA simply keeps the money. It was also noted that money does not roll over to the next fiscal year. Kathy stated that there is an amendment policy and new projects are subject to trust approval.

#### Proposed Budget Amendment

DWSP has an old phone system and IT has recommended it be replaced. John presented a budget amendment proposal to cover the cost of a new Voiceover IP system. This project would require installation of a communication line which will cost approximately \$140,000. To cover this expense, the proposal includes transferring \$140,000 from line item AA – *Personnel* in the DWSP FY18 Budget to line *UU – IT Expenses*.

- Trustee Meehan asked if there would be sufficient residual funds in line AA – *Personnel* for FY18 and John confirmed that there would be.
- Proposed timing and the specific location of the line was discussed. John estimated that IT could start it by mid-April.
- Trustee Laskey asked if this item was included in either the FY17 or FY18 budget. John remarked that it had not been included in either budget.
- Joe Favaloro asked why this item had not been on the radar and was suddenly a priority. He commented that when MWRA needs a new phone system the Advisory Board is notified years in advance.
- Kathy Soni noted that MWRA Finance Division had heard about the proposal about two weeks prior but that it was not included in the FY18 budget.
- Trustee Rao noted that various other state offices have switched phone system within the last 6 months and Trustee Taverna suggested that DWSP is taking advantage of the opportunity presented by the state IT department to make necessary improvements.
- Trustee Laskey asked if \$140,000 would cover the entire cost of the project and if the funds would only be tied to the watershed. John answered that there are a few non-DWSP DCR staff that have phones in the office that would be served by the new system but that they have mentioned that DWSP should not pay for them.

- Trustee Laskey asked if there were any other expenses or changes to the budget on the radar and John replied that there were not.
- Trustee Laskey remarked that he had learned about the proposed budget amendment on Tuesday and that he would support the amendment because it is for a DWSP project, not part of a larger project or a specific dollar amount being contributed to a larger program.

Trustee Laskey made a motion to approve a \$140,000 transfer from line AA – *Personnel* to line UU – *IT Expenses* in the DWSP Budget and it was approved by the Trustees.

### **3. Draft FY19 Work Plan and Budget for FY19 – John Scannell**

John Scannell distributed the Draft FY19 Work Plan and Budget which is appended to the minutes of the meeting. The following items were discussed.

- The Draft FY19 Work Plan, Division Wide Highlights included the following:
  - Continuing land acquisition to target critical parcels for purchases. Trustee Laskey asked to confirm that DWSP purchases land both “on-reservation” and “off-reservation” at Quabbin. John confirmed this and noted that part of the plan is to eliminate this distinction because most land purchased is “off-reservation” and this creates confusion because it is all watershed land.
  - Land Management Plan implementation including hunting.
  - GIS and field data collection improvements.
  - Water Quality Database development with UMass.
- Highlights of the FY19 Work Plan for Quabbin/Ware include the following:
  - Dam/Dike mowing, monitoring and maintenance including Windsor Dam turf work.
  - Stream Flow Monitoring at Quabbin – In the past this has only been done at Wachusett, but DWSP has new personnel with the appropriate skills and plans to expand monitoring to Quabbin.
  - Gravel Resources at Quabbin – It was noted that there needs to be a more comprehensive plan and that DWSP must provide gravel to Petersham and New Salem
  - Ware River Public Access Plan update to begin.
- Highlights of the FY19 Work Plan for Wachusett/Sudbury include the following.
  - Dam/Dike mowing, monitoring, and maintenance.
  - Direct Discharge Projects – John noted that there is a short stretch of road on Route 110 where DWSP would like to get water captured and discharged to the other side of the road, away from the reservoir. DWSP is talking to MassDOT. Trustee Laskey noted that direct discharge would be a good thing to 100% eliminate.
- Trustee Taverna asked for an update on Ware River Public Access. John noted that DWSP has been working with Ware River Watershed Advisory Committee and that DWSP feels that Public Access Plan is not strong enough and they need to identify what is well protected and what is not. Trustee Laskey noted that the Ware River Diversion serves two purposes - Diversion and Flood Control. John agreed that improvements could be made to more clearly convey that it is watershed land.
- Trust-Funded Capital Projects in the FY19 Operating Budget include the following.
  - Clinton Crew Headquarters Building Construction
  - Boat Launch repairs
  - Heavy Equipment purchases

- Trustee Laskey asked John to discuss the Revenue section of the Draft FY19 Work Plan. John explained that there is slightly lower revenue than last year. Trustee Laskey noted that there was a 50% increase in Forestry and asked why FY18 is so much lower than FY17 Actuals. John noted that this fluctuation depends on the market.

Trustee Laskey stated that if there were no further questions, the Board would accept the report and be ready to discuss it further in June.

#### **4. Presentation – DWSP Data Management System, Presenter Dan Crocker**

Dan Crocker presented the Data Management System that DWSP has been developing, in collaboration with UMass Amherst Graduate student Nick Zink, which will enable comprehensive and long-term analysis of water quality data. This application consists of a user friendly set of applications that facilitate the management and dissemination of DWSP watershed data system-wide. This application will cut down on data management time and enable long-term trend analysis.

- Joe Favaloro asked if MWRA staff will have access to the data base and Dan replied that they could have a static version of the application. He further explained that the data is stored on the DWSP network while the application itself is stored in the cloud which enables users to fetch the most up to date version.
- Dan explained two components of the applications.
  - Watershed data Importer Tool (WIT) – This application allows staff who are in the field collecting data to directly import data into the database and features a variety of controls to ensure accurate data entry.
  - Watershed Data Analysis and Visualization Environment (WAVE) – This application allows user to browse tributary, reservoir, and forest data and to analyze data using a variety of tools including plotting, statistics, and mapping tools.
- Trustee Taverna asked how secure the data is and Dan replied that the data is stored on local servers and clarified that the only information being stored on the Cloud is the application itself. Trustee Meehan asked about redundancy and data backup and Dan explained that the server hosting the data is automatically and continuously by IT.

The Trustees congratulated Dan on the development of the Data Management System.

#### **5. Expanded Wachusett Hunting Discussion, Presenter Ken MacKenzie**

John Scannell introduced Ken MacKenzie and explained that DWSP has been working to identify the impacts of deer in the Wachusett Watershed and is proposing expanded Deer Management at Wachusett Reservoir. A PowerPoint presentation that accompanied this discussion is amended to the minutes of the meeting.

- Ken explained that, historically, hunting had been prohibited at Wachusett Reservoir. In 1996, certain areas were opened to hunting, however the area closest to the reservoir remained closed. DWSP is becoming increasingly concerned with deer impacts in this area as it has become a refuge.
- DWSP has conducted various methods to study and identify the impacts of deer including Enclosures, which allow comparison of vegetation inside and outside of an area restricted to deer, and Deer Density Studies, in which staff walk designated routes and systematically count deer pellets. These studies suggest

that there are up to 82 deer per square mile inside the Wachusett Reservoir gates where hunting is prohibited, compared to about 20-40 per square mile outside of the gates.

- DWSP proposes to permit hunting in two different zones at the Wachusett Reservoir. One area, further from the reservoir would be open during all open hunting season but would prohibit the use of dogs. Another area, more closely surrounding the reservoir is proposed for a controlled deer hunt after the close of fishing season from December 1<sup>st</sup>- 31<sup>st</sup>. This hunt would also incorporate black powder and archery as well as a two week shot gun periods. Both areas would be foot access only and would follow all state hunting laws.
- Trustee Laskey remarked on the proximity of a school and John Gregoire questioned whether there should be a buffer zone for the school. Ken said there would be designated and well mapped setbacks.
- John explained that DWSP plans to hold public meetings in the spring to roll out this proposal to local residents. Additionally, local legislators, police, and fire would be consulted and DWSP has coordinated with Mass Wildlife which would control numbers and check deer taken. John also noted that DWSP would work with the Environmental Police.
- Questions regarding noise and length of the hunt arose and Trustee Laskey remarked that he would rather start with a 30-day hunt and reduce it to two weeks if necessary. DWSP also noted that the proposed hunt is expected to be less labor intensive for DWSP staff than the Quabbin, which requires many gates to be opened.
- Trustee Laskey asked if the board was expected to vote on this proposal. John said no and explained that the purpose of this presentation was to share the proposal with the Trustees before any public meetings on the topic.
- Joe Favalaro asked why these areas were historically off limits and questioned why they would be opened to hunting now. Ken explained that the growing density of deer pose an increasing threat to the watershed and water quality.

## **6. Other Updates, John Scannell**

Other updates were provided to The Trustees.

- Winter Gull Operations - Have been routine.
- Quabbin Public Access Plan - DWSP hosted at meeting in the Fall 2017 with the Quabbin Watershed Advisory Committee (QWAC) regarding the Quabbin Public Access Plan. It was noted that there were some proposed changes that DCR would be recommending to QWAC at an upcoming meeting.

Meeting was adjourned at 12:06pm