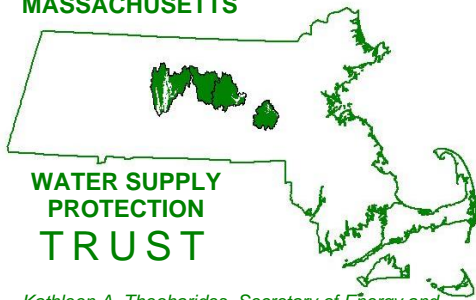


MASSACHUSETTS



Kathleen A. Theoharides, 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 3, 2020

Conducted via Zoom Meeting

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 Quabbin Fishermen's Association

Fred Heyes, Swift River Historical Society

MWRA

Dave Coppes, Chief Operating Officer

Carolyn Francisco Murphy, General Counsel

Carolyn Fiore, Deputy Chief Operating Officer

Beth Card, Director of Regulatory and Environmental Affairs

Sean Navin, Director of Intergovernmental Affairs

Katie Ronan, Environmental Analyst

Michael Cole, Budget Director

Matt Horan, Deputy Director of Finance

Tom Durkin, Director of Finance

Ria Convery, Special Assistance to the Executive Director

Angela Atchue, Associate General Counsel

Jim Coyne, Budget Manager

Valarie Moran, Director of Waterworks

John Gregoire, Reservoir Operations Program Manager

DCR

John Scannell, Director, Division of Water Supply Protection

Dan Clark, Regional Director, Quabbin/Ware Region

Ken McKenzie, Director, Natural Resources

Derek Liimatainen, Assistant Regional Director, Wachusett

Lisa Gustavsen, Assistant Regional Director, Quabbin

Joel Zimmerman, Regional Planner

Trish McNally, Budget Manager

Jamie Carr, Regional Director, Wachusett/Sudbury

Scott Campbell, Regional Engineer

MWRA Advisory Board

Joseph Favaloro, Executive Director

Matthew Romero, Deputy Executive Director

James Guiod, Director of Finance

WSCAC

Lexi Dewey, Executive Director

The meeting was convened at 10:32am.

Trustee Laskey introduced himself and called the meeting to order. He noted that the public meeting was being conducted via remote participation pursuant to Governor Bakers March 12, 2020 order suspending certain provisions of the open meeting law, that the meeting was being recorded and that all votes would be conducted by roll call.

Carolyn Francisco-Murphy called the roll to establish attendance and a quorum. All Trustees were present.

Trustee Laskey explained that the Trust consists of five members.

- Lou Taverna is the Chair of the MWRA Advisory Board, which represents the 61 MWRA cities and towns, and works for the City of Newton.
- Vandana Rao of the Executive Office Energy and Environmental Affairs represents Secretary Kathleen Theoharides.
- Brigadier General William J. Meehan represents the North Worcester County Anglers and Quabbin Fishermen's Association.
- Fred Heyes represents Swift River Historical Society.

Trustee Laskey explained that the Trust meets quarterly and was established with the primary focus to approve the DWSP Work Plan, related to the protection of the water supply in the reservoirs, and to approve the funding of items in the Work Plan.

1. Approval of the Minutes – A motion was made by Trustee Taverna and seconded by Trustee Heyes to approve the December 2, 2020 meeting minutes. Carolyn Francisco-Murphy called the roll and the minutes were unanimously approved by the Trust.

2. Financial Progress Report – John Scannell

- John Scannell explained that spending is normal for the time of year. Through January, spending is at about 43% of the budget and at about 58% through the fiscal year. Salaries and fringe benefits are down due to vacancies within the Division. Most vehicles are on order and a new log truck was recently received at Quabbin. Otherwise, spending has been typical for this time of year. DWSP is working on a number of construction projects that will begin and continue as the weather improves.
- Revenue is just under 50%. Hydro revenue is a little over 50% and forestry revenue is at about 50%. Fishing and recreation revenue is down, however the majority of revenue in this category is generated in the spring by the sale of season passes at Quabbin. The end of the fishing season was lighter than normal this fiscal year because boat rentals did not occur due to COVID19. DWSP currently plans to open fully in the spring for both boat rentals and private boats. Revenues are expected to return to normal.

Trustee Laskey noted that the report would be accepted and placed on file.

3. Transfer of funds from HH to JJ – John Scannell

John Scannell explained that DWSP performs contracted survey work to create better boundary markings and evaluate encroachments across the watershed system. Over the past few years, DWSP has received Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) funding to perform this work at Quabbin and Wachusett, however funding was not received this year. DWSP proposes transferring \$50,000 from the HH subsidiary to the JJ subsidiary, to perform contracted survey work at Quabbin in the spring.

In response to a question from Trustee Laskey, John Scannell explained that the HH subsidiary is for research and consultant contracts, which is underspent this year due in part to budgeting for drone flights, which is now being performed by MassDOT, as well as the UMass research contract, which will be underspent this year due to the amount of work being done. In response to a question from Trustee Taverna, John Scannell noted that the work would stay within the budgeted funds.

Trustee Laskey asked for a motion and second to transfer \$50,000 from the HH to the JJ subsidiary. Trustee Taverna made the motion, which was seconded by Trustee Heyes. Carolyn Francisco-Murphy called the roll and the motion was unanimously approved by the Trust.

4. Presentation of Draft FY22 Work Plan and Budget – John Scannell

John Scannell reminded the Trust that DWSP typically presents the annual Work Plan for review at the March meeting and that the Trust votes on the plan in June. John explained that there are no major changes in the proposed FY22 Work Plan, compared to FY21. FY22 Work Plan highlights include the following.

- Division Wide
 - Continue land acquisition efforts in watersheds.
 - Continue successful use of GIS to improve electronic field data collection.
 - Continue water quality monitoring and database development across the watersheds.
 - Continue contracts with UMass to assist with water quality analysis and salt/chloride issue.
 - Continue to support MWRA's invasives monitoring and removal, especially at Wachusett Reservoir.
 - Continue streamflow monitoring at both reservoirs.
 - Continue drone monitoring with MassDOT Aeronautics. This has been especially helpful at Quabbin to confirm location and numbers of birds on the reservoir. In response to a question from Trustee Meehan, John explained that this work will be funded from the UU subsidiary in FY22, which is different from past years.
 - Continue Deer Management Plans across the watersheds. DWSP is hoping to continue expansion from FY21, into FY22. At this time, the proposed Quabbin Park Hunt is still on hold, pending the ability to host in-person public meetings. In response to a question from Trustee Laskey, John Scannell and Ken Mackenzie explained that the number of deer in Quabbin Park remains high.
 - Continue work on controlling wildlife including gull program, deer, and aquatic animals such as beaver in the pathogen control zone.
 - Continue forestry operations across the watersheds.
 - Continue ranger presence and monitor public access.

- Quabbin and Ware
 - Continue improvement work at Quabbin Park Cemetery with MWRA.
 - Continue water quality monitoring.
 - Continue to work with MWRA on the Quabbin Administrative Complex design study.
 - Continue forestry operations and work on land management plan.
 - Continue to maintain lands surrounding the reservoir and Quabbin Park.
 - Continue monitoring of major dams at Quabbin Reservoir and smaller dams within the watershed.
 - Continue use of Boater Identification cards. Use credit card sales to streamline boat rentals.
 - Work to finalize Ware River Public Access Plan, pending the ability to host in-person public meetings.

Trustee Taverna asked about the Quabbin Administration Building Water Supply. John Scannell explained that investigations have identified a well as an adequate water source. MWRA is currently working on design and

permitting. He noted that MassDEP deadlines will be met, and that the new well is not expected to have water quality issues or require significant treatment or filtration.

Trustee Taverna asked about the Gravel Management Plan. He noted that gravel is a finite resource and that certain watershed communities have the right to take as much gravel as they need. Dan Clark explained that it can be a challenge to find locations with sufficient resources for the two communities. He explained that gravel is expensive and that it is preferable for DWSP to sustainably manage and use its own sources. There was discussion regarding DWSP's legal requirements related to community gravel supply, the timeframe of these requirements and the possible need to consider limits.

- Wachusett/Sudbury
 - Continue forestry operations to manage land at and around the reservoir.
 - Continue gull program.
 - Maintain ranger presence within the watershed.
 - Continue to remove structures on properties that DWSP has purchased for watershed protection.
 - Continue work on road salt issues.
 - Continue design of stormwater improvement along Route 110 in Sterling.
 - Continue to work with MWRA on preparedness for both road and railroad incidents.
 - Finalize Sudbury Public Access Plan update. The update includes no major changes.
- FY22 Major Project Highlights
 - Quabbin Gate 40 culvert replacement.
 - Quabbin Park Cemetery improvement work will continue into FY22.
 - Final Design work for Route 110 Direct Discharge at Wachusett.
 - Building demolition on Hulick and Cush properties.
 - Heavy Equipment purchases - DWSP will reduce FY22 passenger vehicle spending to purchase a mini-excavator at Wachusett for direct discharge BMP maintenance.
- FY22 Draft Operating Budget – The FY22 operating budget of \$20.47 million includes a 3% increase, mostly for personal costs due to step raises, pay raises, and associated fringe benefits. \$1.02 million is projected for revenue.

In response to a question from Trustee Meehan, John Scannell explained that DWSP accelerated annual tree work in the Quabbin Park Cemetery in FY21, so that funds can be used for the Gate 40 culvert replacement project at Quabbin in FY22. He noted that the same amount of tree work is being performed in the cemetery and that this change is just a shift in schedule.

Trustee Taverna asked whether any of the building improvement work at Quabbin Park Cemetery can be performed by DWSP staff. John Scannell explained that after the hazardous material abatement work is complete, some work will be performed internally. Lead paint has prevented painting these buildings in the past.

Trustee Laskey noted that the FY22 Work Plan and Budget would be accepted and placed on file. The Trust will vote on the Work Plan and Budget at the June meeting.

5. Personnel and Hiring Update – John Scannell

John Scannell explained that DWSP is currently at 137 FTEs. In December, the count dropped to 132 FTEs, but DWSP subsequently received approval to fill eight positions, which were all filled. DWSP then lost two additional staff, but has been authorized and is in the process of filling those two positions. John further explained that two important DWSP staff at Wachusett are retiring soon. Nancy McGrath, the planner who implements the

Watershed Protection Act at Wachusett and has been at DWSP since the mid-1990's, retires at the end of next week. Larry Pistrang, who leads the Environmental Quality Group at Wachusett, coordinates between watershed groups, and has been at DWSP since the mid-1980's, retires in early April. John noted that these are critical positions and DWSP has received approval to immediately post and backfill the positions upon vacancy.

Joe Favaloro expressed appreciation that positions have been filled, but questioned the status of authorization to fill remaining vacant positions. He stated that the issue has not been fixed and that it is unacceptable that A&F and EEA decide the needs of DWSP. Trustee Rao suggested the need to recognize the progress that has been made. Eight positions have been filled and two more are in the process, which shows a commitment to move in right direction. She commended John Scannell and DWSP staff for filling positions so quickly and noted that this process takes time and effort. She expressed understanding that there may be more work to be done, but stressed the accomplishment of filling ten positions and continuing in the right direction. Joe Favaloro expressed his frustration that A&F and the Secretary decide when DWSP positions are filled and noted that he would continue to advocate on the issue until authorization to hire resides with the Trust. He stated that the problem is not solved when 15 positions remain unfilled. He noted that the purpose of the Trust is to approve the DWSP budget and work plan, but that this does not seem to be the case in practice. Trustee Rao acknowledged Joe Favaloro's concerns. She reiterated that the progress made in recent months indicates a commitment to getting positions filled and move in the right direction.

Trustee Meehan agreed with Joe Favaloro and expressed frustration. He noted that the Trust is vested by law with the responsibility to approve DWSP's budget and work plan for the year, yet restrictions are imposed. He expressed hope that legislation could fix the law to clarify that DWSP hiring approval resides with the Trust and that funding comes from MWRA, not the General Fund.

Trustee Taverna requested an updated list of vacant positions. He also noted the importance of environmental quality positions at Quabbin and Wachusett, and asked if those positions were adequately staffed. John Scannell explained that while those positions are currently fully staffed, the two upcoming retirements would pose concerns if not quickly backfilled, as authorized. In response to another question from Trustee Taverna, John Scannell explained that DWSP staff have worked well remotely and are in the field when necessary.

Trustee Laskey noted that the report was accepted and would be placed on file.

6. Miscellaneous Updates

- Quabbin Park Cemetery – Dan Clarke provided a brief update on activity at the Quabbin Park Cemetery
 - As usual, all burial operations have been suspended until conditions allow in the spring.
 - DWSP is doubling tree removal efforts in the cemetery this year. Various trees will be addressed within the cemetery as well as a line of overhanging trees along the road. Trustee Laskey asked about replacing trees and John Scannell explained that a plan to appropriately replace trees as necessary will be developed with input from DCR foresters and Cultural Resource staff. Trustee Laskey noted that sugar maples were strategically planted across the water system and stressed the importance of maintaining that legacy.
 - Building demolition and abatement work is scheduled to begin soon. Dave Coppes explained that the contractors are expected to mobilize in mid-March and begin abatement work in April. Although the contract goes through August, the goal is to complete as much work as possible before Memorial Day. MWRA will coordinate with DCR to clean up the site prior to Memorial Day if work is not complete. Dan Clarke explained that after completion of the demolition and abatement work, DCR staff will perform repairs, painting, etc. DCR Cultural Resource staff have reviewed proposals for the office building and submitted them to the Massachusetts Historic Commission for review. Pending approval, repairs and improvements are planned to begin in FY22.

- Dan Clarke acknowledged DWSP civil engineering and GIS staff for creating a new, centralized cemetery database, which will be used internally to track burials and made publicly available.
- River Road - John Gregoire, explained repair work to River Road at Wachusett that is expected to begin in April. MWRA will coordinate with DCR to set up equipment, barriers and address public access. MWRA has four other upcoming contracts in the area, which will result in a lot of activity at that location in the coming years.

Trustee Laskey suggested postponing discussion about Green Certification until the June meeting to allow staff more time to prepare. He noted that the MWRA Board of Directors recently requested a briefing on Green Certification, which MWRA staff are working on. Lexi Dewey noted that WSCAC would be reviewing the staff summary.

Trustee Laskey thanked everyone for coming and asked for a motion to adjourn. A motion was made by Trustee Taverna and seconded by Trustee Meehan. Carolyn Francisco-Murphy called the roll and the motion was unanimously approved by the Trust.

The Meeting was adjourned at 11:27am.