

**Meeting of the Finance Committee of the
BRISTOL COUNTY WATER AUTHORITY**

**Thursday, November 13, 2025
450 Child Street, Warren Office, Warren, RI**

The committee meeting was called to order at 5:00pm by Committee Chairman Stephen Gross.

Committee members in attendance: Stephen Gross, Richard Fournier

Other Directors present: Juan Mariscal, Thomas Kraig, David Fales

BCWA staff present: Stephen Coutu, Daniel Hughes

1. Review of Draft FY2027 Budgets – Discussion

a) Capital Budget

Executive Director Coutu started the discussion by informing the Committee that the Capital Budget for FY2027 was driven by three (3) significant projects: The proposed Operations Garage for \$15 million (bond funded), Expansion of the High Service Area for \$5 million (cash funded) and \$2 million for water main rehab (cash funded). Additionally, for the out years, the Pawtucket Pipeline project continues to be budgeted for the upper limit of \$70 million, water main rehab work continues annually at \$2 million per year, and the second phase of the High Service Area expansion for \$4 million in FY2028. Director Coutu further explained that the two phases of the High Service Area expansion were expensive due to work required within two State roadways, Hope Street and Metacom Avenue. Additionally, each project would improve pressure for approximately 130 customers at each location. Committee members expressed that the cost of High Service projects was high for a relatively low number of impacted customers. More information on the High Service Expansion projects will be provided to the Board at the December 11th meeting.

Committee Member, Richard Fournier, noted that the Operations Garage budget had increased from \$8 million (last year) to \$15 million. Director Coutu responded that the \$8 million figure was based on an early estimate prior to the pre-design work that was recently completed by BCWA's consulting engineers/architects. Based on the completed needs assessment and pre-design work completed the construction estimate for the building is \$15 million. The conceptual project design and cost estimates for the project will be presented to the Properties Committee at an upcoming meeting.

Richard Fournier inquired on the timing of the project and interest rate used for the bond. Finance Manager Hughes responded that the interest rates were obtained from our bonding financial consultant. The rates provided and inserted in the 10-year budget calculation were conservative as detailed within the Capital Budget document.

b) Operations and Maintenance

Finance Manager Hughes explained the process of pulling together the Operations and Maintenance (O&M) Budget. Meetings are held with the managers of each Department to discuss operational needs and prior years of line-item expenses. Details are provided within the O&M Budget Document. Notable increases are in health care premiums (increased 20%). Dan Hughes noted that plan options are being reviewed and that the 20% increase budgeted reflects the maximum potential increase. Executive Director Coutu noted that since FY2022, the O&M Budget has remained relatively flat with an overall increase of just 4% over 5 years.

2. Recommendation of Finance Committee

Director Fournier recommended that the \$9 million for the High Service Expansion projects be re-allocated to water main rehabilitation work in areas throughout the district, which would increase the water main rehabilitation line from \$2 million to \$3.8 million for the next 5 years. Executive Director Coutu noted that he could provide a 5-year water main rehab plan to the Board at the next meeting.

Director Fournier made the following motion seconded by Director Gross

MOTION: To accept and recommend the FY2027 Operations and Maintenance Budget and Capital Budget as presented with the exception of re-allocating the \$9 million for the High Service Area Expansion projects to Water Main Rehabilitation for the next 5 years.

Motion passed unanimously by aye vote.

3. Adjournment

Director Fournier made the following motion seconded by Director Gross

MOTION: To adjourn.

Motion passed unanimously by aye vote.

Meeting adjourned at 6:08pm.



Stephen Gross
Committee Chairman