

# MINUTES OF THE BOARD MEETING OF THE BRISTOL COUNTY WATER AUTHORITY

Thursday, February 27, 2025  
450 Child Street (Boardroom), Warren, RI

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## **Board Members Present:**

Juan Mariscal, Chairman  
Thomas Kraig, Vice-Chairman  
Christopher Stanley, Secretary/Treasurer  
Robert J. Martin, Board Member  
John M. Jannitto, Board Member  
William F. Gosselin, Board Member (*arrived 5:13pm*)  
Stephen Gross, Board Member  
David E. Fales, Board Member

## **Board Members Absent:**

Richard E. Fournier, Board Member

## **BCWA Staff Attending:**

Stephen H. Coutu, Executive Director  
Michael Crawford, Deputy Executive Director  
Daniel Hughes, Finance Manager  
Joseph Granata, Customer Service Manager  
Colin O'Hara, Engineering Project Manager  
Lauren DeRuisseau, HR/Executive Assistant

## **Others Attending:**

Legal Counsel Joseph Keough

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### **1. Call to Order**

Pursuant to proper notice, the Board Meeting of the Bristol County Water Authority was called to order by Chairman Mariscal at 5:00pm.

### **2. Public Input**

There was no public input.

### **3. Minutes**

#### **a. Public Hearing – 1/23/25**

Director Gross moved the following motion seconded by Director Stanley

**Motion: To approve.**

**Motion passed unanimously by aye vote.**

## **b. Board Meeting – 1/23/25**

Vice-Chairman Kraig made the following motion seconded by Director Gross

**Motion: To approve.**

**Motion passed unanimously by aye vote.**

### **4. Executive Director's Report**

- Pawtucket Pipeline Connection – Beta is advancing the plans to 90% completion. The current schedule calls for plans to be completed in spring/summer of 2025.
- Demo of Water Treatment Plant – A meeting is tentatively scheduled for March 13<sup>th</sup>. Community members will be invited to attend.
- Dam Removal Project – There will be some minor grading in the spring.
- We received a federal grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation for \$1.9M. A pause has been put on federal grant funding, which has since been rescinded. We are still waiting to receive a recent reimbursement request of \$304,519.
- Lead Service Line Program – We are waiting to hear from the contractor as to when the 21 public side services will be scheduled to be replaced. We will be reaching out to those customers who have galvanized iron services to determine their level of interest in having their private side service replaced utilizing our 5-year no interest program.
- We recently completed an ethics training by the State Ethics Commission for all of our employees. This training is also available for our board members.
- We have two RFPs out for bond counsel and financial advisor as those 3-year terms are about to expire.
- We are currently advertising for a Water Utility Operator and we will be doing testing on March 5<sup>th</sup>.

Operations report:

- Crews are responding to water main breaks.
- Preparing to support the improvement contractor from last year and the potential one that is currently being solicited.

Engineering report:

- Request for bids for the 2025 Water Distribution Improvement Project was published yesterday in the Providence Journal and posted on our website. The bids are due on March 19<sup>th</sup>, and the bid award date is scheduled for March 27<sup>th</sup>.
- Waiting for response from the State regarding funding to determine the scope of work for the lead service replacements.

*Director Gosselin joined the meeting at 5:13pm*

### **5. Financial Report**

(Appendix A)

Finance Manager Dan Hughes provided a financial summary for January 2025.

### **6. Board Member Town Council Reports**

There were no reports.

### **7. Quarterly Write-Offs: For Distribution Only**

For information only.

## 8. Board Vote on Annual Write-Offs Report

Director Stanley moved the following motion seconded by Director Gross

**Motion: To acknowledge Annual Gross Write-Offs in the amount of \$46,684.60 less Recoveries of \$16,953.12 resulting in net annual write-offs of \$29,731.48.**

**Motion passed unanimously by aye vote.**

## 9. Board Vote on 3-Year Auditing Services Agreement

Finance Manager Dan Hughes stated that we received one proposal from CBIZ, which has purchased Marcum. The proposed audit fees for 2025, 2026, and 2027 are \$40,000, \$41,000, and \$42,000 respectively. Single audit fee is \$4,500 per major program. We expect a single audit in FY2025 and potentially for FY2026. The fees appear reasonable and recommend approval.

Chairman Mariscal recused himself from voting due to a business relationship with Marcum. Vice-Chairman Kraig assumed oversight of the vote.

Director Stanley made the following motion seconded by Director Martin

**Motion: To approve.**

**Motion passed by 6 aye votes, with one recusal by Chairman Mariscal and one abstention by Director Gross**

## 10. Report on Fountain Avenue Tank

Executive Director Coutu provided an overview of the Fountain Avenue Tank. Pare Engineering conducted a water age analysis and a pressure and flow analysis using the hydraulic model. In September 2024, a tank inspection was performed and found that the tank required a full rehabilitation. Additionally, the Town of Barrington and Verizon have expressed interest in using the tank for cellular infrastructure. An RFP will be issued regarding the availability of the tank for cellular infrastructure.

## 11. Executive Session

Director Gross moved the following motion seconded by Director Stanley

**MOTION: To go into Executive Session.**

Enter into Executive Session as stated in the agenda for the meeting tonight.

**(re. Litigation of North Farm pursuant to RIGL s. 42-46-5 (a)(2); Litigation – RIDOH Notice of Violation pursuant to RIGL s. 42-46-5 (a)(2); Investment of Public Funds – Evaluation of Legal Services Proposals pursuant to RIGL s. 42-46-5(a)(7); Investment of Public Funds – Evaluation of Labor and Employment Law Services pursuant to RIGL s. 42-46-5(a)(7); Executive Director Performance Review – Pursuant to RIGL s. 42-46-5(a)(1); Executive Session Minutes – Board Meeting 1/23/25)**

**Motion passed unanimously by aye vote.**

The Board entered Executive Session at 5:35pm.

The Board returned to open session at 6:24pm.

Director Martin made the following motion seconded by Director Stanley

**MOTION: To seal the Executive Session minutes.**

**Motion passed unanimously by aye vote.**

## **12. Board Vote on 3-Year Legal Services Agreement**

Vice-Chairman Kraig moved the following motion seconded by Director Gross

**MOTION: To approve the 3-Year Legal Services Agreement (Keough & Sweeney).**

Approval to Keough & Sweeney for the 3-year Legal Services Agreement.

**Motion passed unanimously by aye vote.**

## **13. Board Vote on 3-Year Labor and Employment Law Service Agreement**

Director Jannitto moved the following motion seconded by Director Stanley

**MOTION: To approve the contract for 3-Year Labor and Employment Law Services Agreement with Whalen, Corrente, and Flanders LLP .**

**Motion passed unanimously by aye vote.**

## **14. Board Vote on Executive Director Salary**

Director Martin moved the following motion seconded by Director Gross

**MOTION: Approve the Executive Director's evaluation and his salary increase of 5%.**

**Motion passed unanimously by aye vote.**

## **15. Board Vote on Executive Director Annual Goals**

Director Gross made the following motion seconded by Director Martin

**MOTION: To table the Executive Director's annual goals.**

**Motion passed unanimously by aye vote.**

## **16. Next Scheduled Meeting(s):**

- i. Board Meeting – March 27, 2025

## **17. Adjournment**

Director Martin made the following motion seconded by Director Gross

**MOTION: To adjourn.**

**Motion passed unanimously by aye vote.**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:29pm.

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Christopher Stanley  
Secretary