

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

**Thursday, March 26, 2026
450 Child Street (Boardroom), Warren, RI**

Board Members Present:

Juan Mariscal, Chairman
Thomas Kraig, Vice-Chairman
Christopher Stanley, Secretary/Treasurer
John M. Jannitto, Board Member
Robert J. Martin, Board Member
Stephen Gross, Board Member
Richard E. Fournier, Board Member
David E. Fales, Board Member
Frank J. Alfano, Board Member

Board Members Absent:

None

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

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 5:01pm.

2. Public Input

There was no public input.

3. Minutes

a. Personnel Committee Meeting – 2/26/2026

Director Martin moved the following motion seconded by Director Jannitto

MOTION: To be approved.

Motion passed by (7) aye votes and two abstentions by Vice-Chairman Kraig and Director Fournier

b. Board Meeting – 2/26/2026

Director Martin moved the following motion seconded by Director Stanley

MOTION: To be accepted.

Motion passed with (7) aye votes and two abstentions by Vice-Chairman Kraig and Director Fournier

c. Finance Committee Meeting – 3/11/2026

Director Jannitto moved the following motion seconded by Director Martin

MOTION: To approve.

Motion passed with (8) aye votes and one abstention by Vice-Chairman Kraig

4. Executive Director's Report

- Pawtucket Pipeline Project – A design review workshop was held at BCWA on March 6th with members from Beta Group, the City of East Providence, and BCWA. We received comments from DEM Wetlands group for the application that was submitted back in mid-December. The application for the underground pipeline crossing at the northern extent to G&W Railroad was forwarded on March 5th and they received a verbal approval on the occupancy license. The utility bridge application was also recently submitted.
- New Maintenance Garage – The Industrial Equipment engineering team was here on March 12th and 13th to review equipment needs. Pare has started work on the plans and specs for the demo of the former water treatment plant. We expect to have those bid documents by end of April/early May.
- Dam Removal Contractor – The contractor returned on site the week of March 9th to perform a few days of maintenance work. We sent notices to the six remaining properties who did not participate in the private well testing. Work on the Shad Factory Pipeline continues and we expect to have permit documents completed and applications submitted in late April/early May. An award was made to Peter Scotti and Associates in the amount of \$11,500 to prepare three appraisals reports.
- Lead Service Line Replacement Program – RIRWA has commenced reach out activities to customers who are within our service line validation pool. Approximately 400 notices were sent out as we need to validate 20%, which equates to 380 presumed non-lead service lines.
- Fountain Avenue Tank – Upon DOH approval, we will be scheduling to disconnect the tank from the distribution system.
- A customer letter regarding the water rate increase and BCWA's projects and programs will be mailed out to all customers within their water bills.

Operations/Engineering Report:

- We had the bid opening on March 12th for this year's capital improvement projects. We received two bids. Our recommendation for the acceptance of Boyle &

Fogarty's bid is in a subsequent memo.

5. Financial Report

(Appendix A)

Finance Manager Dan Hughes provided a financial summary for February 2026.

6. Board Member Town Council Reports

There were no reports.

Chairman Mariscal noted that the Ethics Form for Board members is due by April 24th.

7. Finance Committee

(Appendix B)

i. Pension Plan – Board Vote on Finance Committee Recommendation

Director Gross stated that the Finance Committee met on March 11th to discuss the following:

- Investment Policy – Dan Hughes reached out to US Bank to find a better product for us to park our money that we set aside relative to the Pawtucket Pipeline extension and place that money into a longer asset to get a more favorable return.
- Pension Plan – At the conclusion of last year's audit, there was a 94 ½% funded status for the plan. We discussed whether the plan should be closed out and placed into an annuity so that this is resolved from our books.
- Purchasing Policy – Modifications were made to the levels of board approval, needing additional quotes, as well as additional wording related to federal and state grant awards.
- OPEB – Discussed potentially having the actuary come in to present to the Board to decide what the plan will be going forward, if we want to fund that more, when will we start using some of that balance to pay for retiree benefits, etc.

Discussion regarding the number of retirees currently in the pension plan, funding, and the potential closeout of the plan and transition to annuities.

Director Gross moved the following motion seconded by Director Martin

MOTION: To approve the actions that are outlined in Executive Director Coutu's March 18th memo.

A clarification was made by the Board that this motion is to further review the items outlined in the Executive Director's memo and not to approve the dissolution of the pension plan.

Motion passed unanimously by aye vote.

ii. Purchasing Policy – Board Vote on Finance Committee Recommendation

Director Martin made the following motion seconded by Director Stanley

MOTION: To approve as presented.

Motion passed unanimously by aye vote.

8. Board Vote on 2026 Agricultural Land Lease for Haying Fields
(Appendix C)

Executive Director Coutu provided a memo for the award of the 2026 Agricultural Land Lease.

Chairman Mariscal stated that this lease would be with Frerichs Farm in an amount to be paid to the BCWA of \$385 per month beginning April 1, 2026, through March 31, 2027, for a total of \$4,620.

Director Martin moved the following motion seconded by Director Stanley

MOTION: We approve the memo of March 19th.

Motion passed unanimously by aye vote.

9. Board Vote on Contract Award for the 2026 Water Main Improvement Program

(Appendix D)

Executive Director Coutu stated that we received two bids as not many companies do this type of work anymore due to the size of this project. Bids were received from Boyle & Fogarty and Dewcon, with Boyle & Fogarty providing the lowest responsive bid price. We are recommending their base bid price along with the alternate for the paving for a total of \$3,242,233.00. Along with police details, inspection, and contingency for a recommended overall project budget be approved for \$3.8M. This work consists of cleaning and lining water mains, installing gate valves, and renewing 65 water services in the project area. We are recommending approval as provided.

Director Alfano made the following motion seconded by Director Jannitto

MOTION: So moved.

Motion passed unanimously by aye vote.

10. Board Vote on Task Order to Pare Corp. for Engineering/Inspection Services for the 2026 Water Main Improvement Program

(Appendix E)

Executive Director Coutu stated that we have engineering services provided by Pare to provide a full-time inspector on the project to ensure that our work is done according to plans. They estimated 40 week hours from April through December. That comes to a total not to exceed number of \$222,500.000.

Director Stanley made the following motion seconded by Director Martin

MOTION: So moved.

Motion passed unanimously by aye vote.

11. Board Vote on Date of May Meeting

(Appendix F)

Executive Director Coutu proposed moving the May Board meeting to May 21st due to a conflict.

Director Gross made the following motion seconded by Director Martin

MOTION: So moved.

The board conducted a poll and chose May 27th as the date for the May Board meeting.

Director Gross made the following amendment seconded by Director Martin

AMENDED MOTION: Move the date to May 27th.

Motion passed unanimously by aye vote.

12. Next Scheduled Meeting(s):

- i. Board Meeting – April 23, 2026

13. Adjournment

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

MOTION: To adjourn.

Motion passed unanimously by aye vote.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:50pm.

Christopher Stanley
Secretary