

Tri-Town Monthly Report
Summary of Notable Activities and Reports
from the
January 23, 2025, BCWA Board of Directors Meeting
January 9, 2025, Special Board Meeting
January 23, 2025, Rates/Fees Public Hearing

For detailed information on any of these subjects presented herein, please go to the BCWA website at www.bcwari.com or contact the BCWA. Minutes and videos of all Board meeting are archived on the website.

Happy New Year!

1. **January 9, 2025, Special Meeting of the BCWA Board** - This meeting was held to review and act on recommendations for the FY 2026 Operation and Maintenance Budget and the FY2026 Capital Budget. These budgets had also been reviewed and approved at a November meeting of the BCWA Finance Committee.
 - a. The Board approved an FY 2026 O&M Budget of \$9,639,543, an increase of 0.6% over the FY 2025 budget.
 - b. The Board approved an FY 2026 of \$4,305,000 which includes funding for the continuation of funding for the Pawtucket Pipeline Project, the Water Main Rehabilitation Projects throughout the BCWA service area, as well as the Lead Service Line Replacement Program.

In addition, staff provided the Board with a 10-year Financial Plan.

2. **January 23, 2025, Public Hearing on Rate and Fee Changes** - Prior to the BCWA Board meeting, a public hearing was held on proposed rate and fee changes. The public hearing had been appropriately publicly noticed and advertised. A detailed presentation was made by the Executive Director Stephen Coutu. A copy of this presentation can be found at www.bcwari.com. The presentation includes details on the BCWA's strategic initiatives, challenges and programs, including the Pawtucket Water Supply connection, present and planned water system improvements, as well as trend analysis of water use in Bristol County.

At the Board meeting, the recommendation of a 3.00% rate increase was approved, effective March 1, 2025. This increase will result in an approximate increase of \$1.85 per month to the average residential customer's bill.

In addition to the usage rate charge, increases were made for two other administrative charges to reflect actual costs incurred by BCWA: Replacement Meter Fees and Administrative Lien Processing Fees.

3. **Connection to the Pawtucket Water Supply System Project –**
 - a. **Pawtucket Agreement** – The water supply agreement with the Pawtucket Water Supply Board is now signed by both parties.

January 23, 2025, BCWA Board of Directors Meeting Summary

- b. **Design and Permitting** – The G&W Railroad consultant accepted BCWA's design and specifications for a utility bridge crossing over the railroad in East Providence. BCWA will now be submitting an application to the G&W Railroad's real estate division for their approval.

4. Upper and Lower Kickemuit Dams Removal Project

- a. Work on the lower dam is complete
- b. For the upper dam, removal of the western earthen berm was completed. The site has been stabilized for the winter until the Spring planting season.

5. 2025 Water Distribution Projects

- a. Annual bids are expected to be requested in mid-February, 2025.

6. Shad Factory Pipeline – This abandoned, 3,000-foot long, above-ground BCWA pipeline formerly carried water from the Shad Factory in Rehoboth, MA to the BCWA Warren water treatment plant. It runs along the Palmer River in salt marshes and other wetland areas. The pipeline is in very poor condition. Portions of the pipeline are on private property with whom BCWA has contacted. Save The Bay is working with BCWA to address this pipeline and its removal.

7. Water Purchases from Providence Water Supply Board - Water purchases for the month of December 2024 were about 3% higher than last year and 4% higher for the prior five-year average.

8. Lead Service Line Replacement Program - This on-going public health project is very active and has been successful in the replacement of 38 public side (BCWA-owned) lead pipe services and 10 private (customer-owned) lead pipe services. There are 21 remaining public-side connections remaining to be addressed.

9. Contract Award for Security System Upgrades - Current building security is provided through Cox Communications, which is getting out of that business. To ensure building and property security, bids were sought to provide security services for all facilities. Using the State of Rhode Island's Master Price Agreement for such services, bids were sought from three companies. The Board awarded a contract to Shanix Technology, Inc., a major Rhode Island and New England supplier of the requested services for \$73,937.

10. Legal Services Request For Proposals - This was issued on January 15, 2025, for both General Legal Services and Labor Law Services. Present three-year contracts are expiring.

11. Staff News - BCWA Water Utility Operator Foreman **Jim Vieira** entered the New England Water Works Association's annual photo contest and won both a first and second place award for his photographs capturing BCWA projects and facilities. **Congratulations, Jim!**

A Water Utility Operator position is vacant. Advertising of this vacancy seeking candidates is expected to be done in February.

12. Next Meeting: Thursday, February 27, 2025, at 5:00pm - BCWA Offices 450 Child Street, Warren.

As noted herein, this is a summary. For detailed information on the BCWA activities, please go to the BCWA website at www.bcwari.com or contact the BCWA. Minutes and videos of all Board meeting are archived on the BCWA website.

Respectfully submitted,
Juan Mariscal, Chairman, BCWA

