

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

**Wednesday, December 11, 2024
450 Child Street (Boardroom), Warren, RI**

Board Members Present:

Thomas Kraig, Vice-Chairman
Robert J. Martin, Board Member
John M. Jannitto, Board Member
Stephen Gross, Board Member
Richard E. Fournier, Board Member
(1 Open Board Member Position)

Board Members Absent:

Juan Mariscal, Chairman
Christopher Stanley, Secretary/Treasurer
William F. Gosselin, Board Member

BCWA Staff Attending:

Stephen H. Coutu, Executive Director
Michael Crawford, Deputy Executive Director
Daniel Hughes, Finance 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 Acting Chairman Thomas Kraig at 5:00pm.

2. Public Input

Director Jannitto requested a moment of silence for former board member Joseph DeMelo.

3. Minutes

a. Policy Committee Meeting – 10/24/24

Director Gross moved the following motion seconded by Director Martin

Motion: To approve.

Motion unanimously by aye vote.

b. Board Meeting – 10/24/24

Director Gross moved the following motion seconded by Director Jannitto

Motion: To approve.

Motion passed unanimously by aye vote.

c. Properties Committee Meeting – 11/6/24

Director Gross moved the following motion seconded by Director Martin

Motion: To approve.

Motion passed by aye vote, with one abstention from Director Fournier.

d. Finance Committee Meeting – 11/13/24

Director Gross moved the following motion seconded by Director Martin

Motion: To approve.

Director Fournier requested that a discussion on the complexity and cost of the Pawtucket Water project, including how it may be managed differently from other projects and the necessary resources, be included in the minutes.

Motion passed unanimously by aye vote.

4. Executive Director Report

- Pawtucket Project – We received our cost share check from East Providence in the amount of \$302,688.79. We had a meeting with RIDOT with respect to how this project was going to relate to the Washington Bridge project. One area of concern is where the design proposes to dig the access pits to drill under I-195 as that area has been used by contractors working on the Washington Bridge.
- Demo of the Water Treatment Plant – The consultant has prepared the survey plans and specs for demo. We had a Properties Committee meeting and invited community members to attend. Since the November 6th meeting, with the individuals representing a number of different agencies, the Properties Committee gave the community members three months to come back with their proposals.
- Dam Removal Project – We are waiting on final permits to do additional work. We have received approval from the Army Corp and DEM.
- Lead Service Line Replacement Program – Since the beginning of the program, we have replaced 35 on the public side and 10 on the private side. Our inventory list was accepted and approved by DOH. 1,300 letters were sent to customers who have a lead, galvanized iron/steel, or an unknown service line on the private side, along with information associated with the hazards of lead. This letter will go out every year until we have identified all service line materials.
- I attended the RI Drought Steering Committee meeting where they voted to go to a drought advisory.
- Providence Water has filed a new rate filing with the PUC. We have a proposed rate decrease due to varying wholesale rates.
- The budget was presented to the Finance Committee on Nov. 13th and we were going to present it today, however there are not enough members present to vote on it.

Operations report:

- We have been utilizing a drone that has a hose attached to clean our taller tank. Due to high winds, the drone will need to be utilized at a later date to complete the cleaning.
- We are still looking at design work for next year's project.

Engineering report:

- Service renewals have been completed in Barrington and Warren.
- Permanent asphalt restoration was done in Barrington and Warren.
- 2023 System Improvement Project – The Board approved additional funding at our last meeting to close that project out.
- 2022 System Improvement Project was closed out.

5. Financial Report

(Appendix A)

Finance Manager Dan Hughes provided a financial summary for October 2024.

6. Board Member Town Council Reports

Director Gross noted that the Barrington Town Council reached out to discuss potentially putting in a cell tower on one of our water towers in western Barrington. More information will be provided to the board at the next meeting with respect to our findings and plans for the tower. We will then need to go out for an RFP.

7. Finance Committee

- i. **FY 2026 Draft Operations and Maintenance Budget – Board Vote on Finance Committee Recommendation**
- ii. **FY 2026 Draft Capital Budget – Board Vote on Finance Committee Recommendation**
- iii. **Draft 10 Year Financial Plan for Information Only**

(Appendix B)

Acting Chairman Kraig noted that only five Board members were present, therefore no vote can be taken.

Director Martin made the following motion seconded by Director Gross

MOTION: To table this until the next meeting.

Discussion regarding the scheduling of a special meeting in advance of the Public Hearing on Jan. 23rd for the rate adjustment. It was recommended that a meeting be scheduled for January 9th.

Motion passed unanimously by aye vote.

8. Energy Management Program – For Information Only

(Appendix C)

Executive Director Coutu stated that BCWA will be participating in an Energy Management Program offered by the RI Infrastructure Bank. They will review our energy usage and look at opportunities with respect to green energy, such as solar or net metering, and also anything with respect to emission reduction, such as electric vehicle charging stations. If there are feasible projects to implement, the Infrastructure Bank does provide low-cost, cash-flow positive financing.

9. Executive Session

Director Gross moved the following motion seconded by Director Martin

MOTION: To enter Executive Session pursuant to RIGL s. 42-46-5 (a)(2) (re. Litigation of North Farm v. BCWA pursuant to RIGL s. 42-46-5 (a)(2); Executive Session Minutes – Board Meeting 9/26/24)
Motion passed unanimously by aye vote.

The Board entered Executive Session at 5:48pm.

The Board returned to open session at 6:04pm.

Director Martin made the following motion seconded by Director Gross

MOTION: The meeting minutes from the Executive Session be sealed.
Motion passed unanimously by aye vote.

10. Next Scheduled Meeting(s):

- i. Special Board Meeting – January 9, 2025
- ii. Board Meeting – January 23, 2025

11. Adjournment

Director Gross made the following motion seconded by Director Martin

MOTION: To adjourn.
Motion passed unanimously by aye vote.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:04pm.

Thomas Kraig
Acting Chairman