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Commissioner



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Minutes of Meeting #152 Feburary10, 2021

The Maine Public Drinking Water Commission (DWC) held its 152nd Meeting on February 10, 2021 via Zoom.

Present Were:

Members: Jeff LaCasse, Kathy Moriarty, Carol White, Lee Worcester, Brian Richardson, Mike Abbott (DWP Director) and Jim Willis (Board Clerk).

Non-members: David Welch, DWP

Time: Kathy called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM

A. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes from the last meeting were approved as written.

B. RECURRING BUSINESS:

1. DWC ELECTION OF CHAIR/ VICE-CHAIR/ MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

The Drinking Water Commission voted to retain the current Chair- Kathy Moriarty and Carol White is Vice-Chair for 2021. Jim Willis reported that we have no updates from the Governor's office regarding membership (removing past members and establishing new members and positions) within the DWC.

2. SFY 2021 AFM FEE COLLECTION STATUS

David Welch from the Drinking Water Program updated the commission on collection status of the AFM. We are currently at 98.6 percent collection rate which is on par with previous years. There was discussion on the higher rate of system inactivation/deregulation due to COVID-19.

3. DWP FINANCIAL REPORT

Mike and David Welch discussed the DWP Financial Report. David stated that we are currently staying within budget.

There was discussion on needing to increase the AFM fee for fiscal year 2023 to \$70.00 for the base fee and 65 cents for each additional person for population over 100. AFM fee for bottled water companies need to be increased. The amount of the increase was not available at the meeting. The DWC voted to direct the DWP to start the process of making these changes in the Rules and adopting those changes through in the rule making process. Jeff made the motion Carol seconded the motion. The motion passed.

4. DWP GENERAL UPDATES (DWSRF, STAFFING, ETC)

Mike stated that the DWP has filled the position of the Maine Drinking Water Program Director. Amy Lachance will be starting on February 22nd. We have also filled the ES-IV position (Jim Jacobson's former position). David Welch, who was a NEIWPC employee working with the DWP, has accepted the ES-IV position. Mike stated we are looking at hiring another NEIWPC contractor to replace the position David Welch previously held. This position would assist the Data management team and the Sub-Surface Wastewater program.

Mike stated that most DWP staff are still working remotely from home. The Data Management team has been taking turns coming into the office to complete tasks that can't be done from home.

Mike discussed that staff members from the DWP have been helping the CDC response effort in various ways such as assisting Heath Inspection Program with COVID complaints, and contact tracing. Mike stated we still are not sure what the new "normal" will look like going forward. Mike stated that, to his knowledge, no one at the DWP has yet received a COVID shot and we are waiting until we are eligible. Mike discussed concerns raised by water districts about the fact that utility operators are not prioritized to get vaccinated at the current time.

Mike also gave an update on SRF project applications that the DWP has received so far this year.

5. LEGISLATION AND RULEMAKING UPDATE

Mike discussed several bills being discussed. LD 129 and LD 164 both dealing with PFAS. LD 206 lead in schools. LD 311 requiring professionals who do corrosion control to be regulated. Mike stated that we are continuing to work on resubmitting proposed changes to the Drinking Water Rules.

6. PUBLIC WATER SYSTEM ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION (OPEN FORUM)

Kathy discussed how COVID has impacted the Bangor Water District and safety measures she has taken to protect her staff.

7. SUGGESTED TOPICS FOR NEXT MEETING

Mike will introduce Amy Lachance the new Drinking Water Program Director.

8. 2021 DWC MEETING LOCATIONS

May 5, 2021 via zoom-9:00 AM

September 1,2021 TBD- 9:00 AM

November 17, 2021 TBD - 9:00 AM

Meeting adjourned

Respectfully Submitted

Jim Willis (Board Clerk)