

**MERRIMACK VILLAGE DISTRICT
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
FEBRUARY 26, 2024
MEETING MINUTES
(approved March 18, 2024)**

A regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners was conducted on February 26, 2024, at 5:00 p.m. at 2 Greens Pond Road, Merrimack, NH.

Chairman, Donald Provencher presided:

Members of the Board present: Kenneth Ayers, Vice Chairman
 Wolfram von Schoen, Personnel Liaison
 John Lyons
 Erin Clement

Members of the Board Absent:

Also in Attendance: Ron Miner, Superintendent
 Jill Lavoie, Business Manager
 Kristen Maher, HR/ Finance Director

REGULAR SESSION

1. Board of Commissioners to review the report evaluating PFAS polishing and piloting options with Underwood Engineers, Inc.

At this time, Lynnette Carney, of Underwood Engineers, explained to the commissioners that Underwood had met with various media suppliers and pitched to them the idea that MVD had pitched. They had explained to the suppliers that MVD had GAC filters and was looking for something to replace or to polish with at the end, that would handle the short chains better than the GAC is. According to Carney, most of the suppliers came back saying that they do not want to polish, because their media won't do much better with the short chains at the end. She did explain that there are a couple of novel medias that are still being piloted and seem like they may be worth looking into. Carney stated that she thought it may be worth piloting the novel medias at Wells 4 & 5. She noted that there was no data that she could find that dealt specifically with PFBA and PFPeA, the two PFAS compounds that break through really quickly. She noted that pending the pilot data, they may find something to be viable for polishing or replacement media. Chairman Provencher asked about the Lanxess resin. Carney explained that they are a resin manufacturer and may not be someone that MVD would deal with directly for providing and servicing media. She noted that the resins don't do much better, if any, than the GAC does as far as breakthrough. She stated that this does not seem like a viable option to consider giving the price and the performance. Chairman Provencher stated that he had been doing some research and found that the resin is better at the small chain sulfonic PFAS parameters as opposed to the PFAS acids, however, MVD has more of the acids, which are the more difficult short chains to remove. He stated that they are then posed with the question as to how MVD wanted to run the column test. It can be done on either raw water, with the anticipation that they may want to use some of the resins or carbon to replace what is currently in use, or run the pilot test with the effluent that is already going through the carbon filters, with the anticipation that it will be done as a polishing study. Commissioner E. Clement suggested using raw water at one treatment plant and finished water at another in order to test both. Superintendent R. Miner informed the commissioners that all of the plants are currently set up to use

raw water and he would have to run a clean line from the finished water. Carney explained that if it was run with raw water, it would provide more data. She also explained that if you're feeding finished water from an existing treatment plant, you will have variation with flows and water quality. It was also noted that if MVD is currently running non-detect PFAS in the finished water as the pilot test influent, they would have nothing to test if the PFAS is non-detect. Commissioner W. von Schoen expressed his opinion that the more data they could get, the sooner, the better. He stated that he does not want to have the board decide how to do this, he wants Underwood to tell the board how much time and money is needed to do this project, and the board will take it from there. Chairman Provencher shared that Underwood had come up with six proposed media / resin columns to test. It was noted that Dexsorb is willing to work with MVD and set up their own columns for testing and do the analysis. Chairman Provencher stated that the 6th media that Underwood suggested was the Purolite resin and he noted that he would be interested in swapping that out to test Lanxess resin. He noted that Lanxess is claiming to reduce so much more PFAS than Purolite is. Chairman Provencher noted that he felt Underwood did a great job getting the information that MVD was looking for.

Commissioner von Schoen asked if Dexsorb, coming from overseas, would require MVD to ship media back overseas for regeneration. Carney explained that when Underwood had spoken to them, it seemed as though they were still in the early stages, but their vision was to have a plant set up on both the east and west coasts. Carney stated that she believes their plan was to have a plant in Massachusetts. Chairman Provencher stated that he would still like to test Dexsorb. Chairman Provencher asked if this was something MVD could do on their own, with Underwood, or if Underwood would suggest bringing in a third party such as Blueleaf. Keith Pratt, of Underwood, explained that Blueleaf is pretty flexible and could help out in a pinch. Commissioner Lyons shared that he has worked with Blueleaf in the past. Chairman Provencher expressed that he just wanted to make sure MVD would not be paying double for the services, but it was determined that if a third party was used, Underwood's scope of work would decrease. Carney stated that she would collect a few quotes from third parties.

At this time, Commissioner von Schoen asked if Underwood had looked into any risk with any of the new media of receiving media contaminated with Iron & Arsenic, like had happened previously with GAC. Carney answered that Fluoro-sorb did have a little bit of data, which she believed to be on their backwash. She stated that she believed it to be in the information that the board received. She also stated that Underwood was recommending additional testing within the first hundred bed volumes to try to assess what would be coming off of the media. Commissioner von Schoen stated that there could be a lot of value in switching to media that does not have this issue because MVD had previously wasted a lot of water and a lot of money getting the iron and arsenic out. Chairman Provencher suggested having Blueleaf make a recommendation as to whether they should test Purolite in the 6th spot, or something else. He also suggested getting a proposal from Blueleaf. Carney referred to Blueleaf as a "wealth of knowledge" when it comes to these medias. Chairman Provencher asked if Carney thought it would be possible to have a proposal from Blueleaf, and possibly Underwood to coordinate all of this, by the March Board of Commissioners meeting. Pratt said that he would check in with Blueleaf and report back.

It was determined that the Board agreed to continue with the proposal for pilot testing the raw water at wells 4/5, and that Underwood would discuss piloting with Dexsorb in regards to their setup and doing their own skid.

FINANCE/HUMAN RESOURCES REVIEW – Kristen Maher

A. Analysis of Revenue and Expenditures

Director Maher informed the commissioners that being through the month of January, MVD is 58% through the fiscal year. The net ordinary income is at \$1.2M and the revenues are running at 58% of the total revenue budget. In terms of expenses, MVD is at 58% of the overall budget, and is running roughly 29% less through the month of January. Maher explained that this was in part due to the lack of chemical usage. Salaries are running about 5% less than the salary budget. Account 70010.1 (Equipment) required a transfer of \$6,608 from FY '23. That amount had initially been paid out of the operations budget. This transfer puts the account into the negative to make sure everything is where it should be now.

B. Capital Reserve Balance

Director Maher informed the commissioners that the Unrestricted Fund Balance was at roughly \$8.2M for operating, and the total for all accounts was roughly \$22.9M. She noted that this is despite having a 33% reserve for the unknowns.

Director Maher stated that as of right now, in the accounts there is \$1.6M for land, equipment is at \$3.7M, system development is at \$300,000, legal is at \$108,000, and water purchase & water treatment plant O&M is at \$266,000. Maher noted that these totals are after what they plan on putting in for the warrant articles.

REGULAR SESSION

2. Board of Commissioners to discuss MVD cybersecurity.

Commissioner W. von Schoen informed the commissioners, as well as the public, that a few weeks prior there had been a news article regarding a hearing that had been held in front of a Federal Committee. This was specifically addressing cybersecurity concerns for water suppliers. Commissioner W. von Schoen had shared this article with Chairman Provencher, as well as MVD Staff. Commissioner von Schoen explained that he works in information security management, which includes cybersecurity. He stated that MVD is likely covering a lot of the typical stuff, in terms of cybersecurity, but not so much in terms of general information security. Commissioner von Schoen stated that he did send questions over to Block5 and shared that some of them were answered very well, but some of them came back with answers that did not align with the question. Commissioner von Schoen clarified that this was not a criticism of Block5, as they were not all IT related questions.

At this time, Superintendent R. Miner informed the commissioners that MVD had just had an audit from Primex. It was noted that part of the discussion was for MVD to do tabletop exercises to determine where any holes may be. K. Maher shared that a vendor was suggested to aid in this. Vice Chairman K. Ayers asked what would happen if someone were to hack into the system and shut down the wells, and if there was a way to manually run the wells. Superintendent R. Miner answered that yes, this can be done, and explained that the only thing MVD actually logs in for is if staff is off site. He explained that everything can be run manually if needed. Commissioner von Schoen stated that there are much more than just online hackers, and suggested starting with “smaller” things, such as who may have keys to the building and how many building keys exist. He stated that the concern is, without a proper program in place to look at these things, it is unknown how vulnerable MVD truly is.

It was noted that MVD had a third party audit a few years back and they helped write the cybersecurity procedure. It was also noted that MVD has applied for the website to be a “.gov” which will provide added security.

3. Board of Commissioners to review the minutes from the January 22, 2024 regular BOC meeting.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Board of Commissioners Regular Meeting.....January 22,
2024

No amendments were offered.

**MOTION BY COMMISSIONER W. VON SCHOEN TO ACCEPT THE MEETING MINUTES
OF THE JANUARY 22, 2024 BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS REGULAR MEETING AS
PRESENTED**

MOTION SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER K. AYERS

A Viva Voce Roll Call was conducted, which resulted as follows:

Yea: Donald Provencher, Wolfram von Schoen, Kenneth Ayers, Erin Clement

4

Nay:

0

MOTION CARRIED

4-0-1

Commissioner J. Lyons abstained

4. Board of Commissioners to review Action Items from previous meetings and those to be added from this meeting.

The Commissioners reviewed the list of Action Items, removing tasks that have been completed, and making necessary additions. At this time, the commissioners requested street names to be added to action items #79 and newly added #95, to help them recall location.

5. Old Business

At this time, Vice Chairman K. Ayers asked if there were any updates regarding the vandalism at the Turkey Hill booster pump station. Superintendent R. Miner answered that MVD is looking into adding security cameras to all MVD buildings. There has not been another incident since. The bullet holes have been covered in order to keep the moisture out of the siding, as well as to make it easier to determine if new holes are added.

6. New Business - None

7. Superintendent's Report

Superintendent R. Miner informed the commissioners that the GAC was picked up from Wells 2 & 9 on January 30, 2024, for the media exchange. It was then returned on February 13, 2024. When this media was returned, the media at Wells 7 & 8 was picked up. That media was returned on February 20, 2024. The media exchange for Wells 4 & 5 has been scheduled for April 16, 2024. The cost for Wells 2 & 9 was \$48,000 per vessel, with a roughly \$97,000 change out rate, which was under the budgeted amount of \$140,000. Wells 7 & 8 came in at \$56,000 and the estimate for Wells 4 & 5 is \$44,763.48. This estimate is on 15% makeup, and MVD has been requiring less than 8% makeup media. It was noted that the new company has been “night and day” compared to the previous company.

8. Questions from the Public/Press - None

RECESS

MOTION BY COMMISSIONER K. AYERS TO RECESS

MOTION SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER E. CLEMENT

A Viva Voce was conducted, which resulted as follows:

Yea: Donald Provencher, Wolf von Schoen, Kenneth Ayers, Erin Clement, John Lyons

5

Nay:

0

MOTION CARRIED

5-0-0

The public session of the MVD Board of Commissioners was recessed at 6:53 pm to be reconvened after the Public Hearing.

PUBLIC HEARING

The Public Hearing regarding the 2024-2025 Proposed Operating Budget and Warrant Articles for the 2024 Annual Meeting was opened at 7:00 p.m. and was closed at 7:20 p.m.

RECONVENE THE REGULAR SESSION

MOTION BY COMMISSIONER W. VON SCHOEN TO RECONVENE THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS PUBLIC MEETING

MOTION SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER E. CLEMENT

A Viva Voce was conducted, which resulted as follows:

Yea: Donald Provencher, Wolf von Schoen, Kenneth Ayers, John Lyons, Erin Clement

5

Nay:

0

MOTION CARRIED
5-0-0

The commission reconvened at 7:20 pm.

REGULAR SESSION

At this time, Vice Chairman K. Ayers noted that there was a minor error on the Warrant Articles, stating that it jumped from number seven to number nine. This will be amended.

**MOTION BY COMMISSIONER W. VON SCHOEN TO APPROVE THE OPERATING
BUDGET AND WARRANT ARTICLES, AS AMENDED, TO MOVE FORWARD TO THE
ANNUAL MEETING**

MOTION SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER E. CLEMENT

A Viva Voce was conducted, which resulted as follows:

Yea:	Donald Provencher, Wolf von Schoen, Kenneth Ayers, John Lyons, Erin Clement	5
Nay:		0

MOTION CARRIED
5-0-0

At this time, Chairman Provencher stated that the next Board of Commissioners meeting is scheduled for March 18, 2024, and the Annual Meeting is scheduled for March 26, 2024.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION BY COMMISSIONER K. AYERS TO ADJOURN
MOTION SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER W. VON SCHOEN

A Viva Voce Roll Call was conducted, which resulted as follows:

Yea:	Donald Provencher, Wolfram von Schoen, Ken Ayers, John Lyons, Erin Clement	5
Nay:		0

MOTION CARRIED
5-0-0

The February 26, 2024 meeting of the Board of Commissioners was adjourned at 7:25 p.m.

Submitted by Amanda McKenna, Recording Secretary