

**MERRIMACK VILLAGE DISTRICT  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
NOVEMBER 18, 2024  
MEETING MINUTES  
(approved December 16, 2024)**

A regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners was conducted on Monday, November 18, 2024, at 5:00 p.m. at 2 Greens Pond Road, Merrimack, NH.

Donald Provencher, Chairman, presided:

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

Members of the Board Absent:

Also in Attendance:                    Ron Miner, Superintendent  
   Jill Lavoie, Business Manager  
   Kristen Maher, HR/Finance Director  
   Keith Pratt, P.E., President, Underwood Engineers  
   Peter Pitsas, P.E., Underwood Engineers

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**FINANCE/HUMAN RESOURCES REVIEW**

**A. Analysis of Revenue and Expenditures**

A financial report was provided (through 11-13-24). Four months into the fiscal year (33.33%), shown is revenue in the amount of \$3,058,425 (48.69% of budgeted amount) and expense of \$1,654,025 (26.33%). Net Ordinary Income is \$1,404,400.

The higher revenue is attributed, for the most part, to the hot summer and tiered rates for irrigation along with interest rates for income remaining high.

In terms of expenses, everything seems to be falling in line. Line Item #60300 - Water Purchase, the amount identified (\$52,520.57) represents the first two months. As we get closer to year-end we will be able to determine if there is the need to look at a transfer from capital reserves.

With regard to Line Item #70040 New Entrance/Meters, there is a good deal of new construction occurring around town. We are now at the point where meters, etc. are being received, which has resulted in an increase.

Line Item #70675.6 - Janitorial- Chemical Disposal, was for chemical disposal at wells 7 & 8.

Asked if Line Item #81950.9 – Professional Fees – Accounting, was the cost of the audit, Director Maher stated that to be correct. Member von Schoen questioned whether all deliverables had been received, and was told the final report has yet to be delivered. The term of the contract is net 15 and normally we would

have received all deliverables by this time. Payments are made in two installments; at the onset of preliminary work in September and a final payment in the October/November timeframe when the invoice is received (typically have final report by that time). Although payment in full has been made, we continue to wait for receipt of the final report.

The existing auditors have been utilized for the past 6-7 years. It was suggested that the time has come to consider a change. It is typical to switch every 5 years.

## **B. Capital Reserve Balance**

As of the end of October, the Unassigned Net Balance (operating) is \$22,071,388. Added was the Convertible Cash amount of \$3,792,355.

This is the last year of the payment for the five years of O&M from Saint-Gobain at MVD Wells 4/5 treatment plant.

The current balance under Land Acquisition is \$1,576,928.55, Equipment & Facilities \$4,076,898.53, System Development \$1,304,575.66, Extraordinary Legal \$111,572.79, and Water Purchase & Water Treatment Plant (WTP) GAC media Operations and Maintenance (O&M) \$576,640.03.

Trust activity, as of October 31, 2024; \$5,617.42 for Land Acquisition and \$14,522.95 for Equipment & Facilities.

In terms of activity, \$121,320 was paid out for the dump truck. Submission for repayment was done earlier in the day. The truck has been received. Regarding other items for equipment & facilities, the new finance/utility software remains on target; will be deciding shortly (\$186,000). There remain a lot of items listed as TBD. Both of the items listed under System Development Charge are on hold. In terms of Water Purchase, we are in the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of the Pennichuck contract. There were two additional planned Granular Activated Carbon (GAC) replacements for wells 2&9 and 7&8.

## **REGULAR SESSION**

### **1. Board of Commissioners to review the draft Conflict of Interest Policy as required for recipients of federal APRA funds.**

Policy #24-02-B – Conflict of Interest  
- 1<sup>st</sup> Reading: October 21, 2024 (as presented)  
*Given its second reading;*

The suggestion was made that the appendix be removed and a reference to State law be included in the language of the policy given the likelihood that State law could change over time necessitating the need to update the policy.

Member von Schoen questioned reference to RSA 673:14 – Disqualification of Member. After a brief discussion, the Board noted the language refers to an instance where a member believes a potential violation/conflict of interest may exist. In such an instance, at the request of the member or another

member of the Board, a vote shall be taken on the question of whether that member should be disqualified from the discussion/vote.

“Such a vote shall be advisory and non-binding and may not be requested by persons other than board members”.

**MOTION BY MEMBER VON SCHOEN TO ACCEPT THE SECOND READING OF POLICY 24-02-B – CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

**MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER CLEMENT**

**MOTION CARRIED**

**5-0-0**

*There being no objection, the Board went out of the regular order of business to take up Item #4.*

**4. Board of Commissioners to review the minutes from the October 21, 2024 regular Board of Commissioners Meeting**

Board of Commissioners Regular Meeting . . . . . October 21, 2024

**MOTION BY COMMISSIONER CLEMENT TO ACCEPT THE MEETING MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER 21, 2024, MEETING, AS WRITTEN**

**MOTION SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER AYERS**

**MOTION CARRIED**

**4-0-1**

*Member von Schoen Abstained*

*The Board returned to the regular order of business.*

**2. Board of Commissioners to revisit the distribution hydraulic model information as discussed in the Worksession on June 12, 2023 with Underwood Engineers, Inc.**

Member von Schoen spoke of hearing less concerns around chlorine concentration in the water. The number of complaints decreased after we switched wells back and forth when the construction projects came online.

It seems those who reside close to the wells or the tanks continue to have issues with chlorine smell and taste. He asked if the chlorination concentration is known for those first customers after the tanks and wells. There was discussion of perhaps doing taste testing at the first couple of connections after the wells and tanks (under various conditions, e.g., hot days, days when we have flushing, etc.). He spoke of a conversation he had around MVD having previously been named one of the best tasting waters in the State. In terms of cleanliness, he believes we are one of the best in the state as no one else is filtering (PFAS) to the levels we do.

Chlorine is one issue and the other is iron and manganese in some areas of town.

Keith Pratt, P.E., President, Underwood Engineers, spoke of the June 2023 data. That data was gathered during a period of transitioning from the different wells (some were online some were offline; we were

under construction and making up water elsewhere). MVD staff were not able to use the chlorine systems like they were used to, and as a result we were dosing chlorine higher on one side of town. Everything was different during that period. A lot of times, in his experience, when things change that is when people seem to notice it.

What they did back then was show those changes. The charts gave an impression of the number of times the chlorine concentration was greater than 1 milligram per liter during construction and how it reduced after construction. His sense is there is probably now some more stability in the chlorination systems because we are no longer in construction.

He suggested, now that there is a nice benchmark, that it be checked again and records kept along the way so that we understand what works in Merrimack and what our target zones are. If you fall out of those target zones you will be prepared for some complaints. It is a little hard with chlorine residuals because they can change day to day (different on a hot day, etc.).

Mr. Pratt commented that while he was in school working on his master's degree he tried to model predict chlorine residuals, and it was impossible (too many variables). What we do want to know is that we are consistently sending water with the right residual out of the treatment plants (we are in those required levels). Perhaps every year or so we check distribution residuals and compare it to what it should be. He believes what will be seen is things sort of settle in.

Member von Schoen commented there is no data beyond 2022 or 2023 depending on what chart you are looking at. The peak of the complaints was in 2022.

Mr. Pratt responded that what they did there was try to compare the chlorine residuals during the peak of construction versus post construction. They picked the 2022-2023 data as post construction because they believed it was starting to get back into normal operations.

On the left side of the first grid, the top number is the number of times during that sampling period we exceeded chlorine residuals of 1.2 mg/L during the period of 2016-2021. On the right, after construction, it shows the number of times we exceeded a chlorine residual of 1.2 at that site. What they noticed is that, especially when you got close to wells 7&8 (Tinker Road/Continental Boulevard), there were a lot more times that they had high residuals pre 2022 than post 2022. It was just an attempt to see if we saw a time period effect. During construction we definitely saw a little bit of the high residuals, but what they noticed was the low residuals. If you look up at the north side of town when wells 4&5 were offline, we had residuals less than 0.2 at Bedford Road 39 times during that period during construction but post construction we were now maintaining a residual because 4&5 was back online.

This was just an attempt to show the variations in the system, and the wells being on and off are an operator's nightmare. It is very challenging as shown here by the data. Things got better once the treatment plants were back online and were in a steady state condition.

He stated they could go back and see what the last year or two has done.

Member von Schoen noted the complaints he received that provided an address were in the areas of Continental Boulevard and Tinker Road; related more to Wells 7&8 and 2&3, as compared to Wells 4&5. It seemed to be a lot more in the areas of the southern/western part of town than D.W. Highway or the north

end of town. That would make sense because that is where the most wells are with the highest concentration of fresh water – where the water resides the shortest in the distribution lines.

Mr. Pratt stated that to be the case. He added, during construction, when Wells 4&5 were off, the operators were probably pushing up the chlorine residuals to try to maintain residuals in the north where they knew the water was being tanked. The highest residuals we saw were in the vicinity of Wells 7&8 during construction. Now we don't see that as much. Now that Wells 4&5 are back online that has dropped off.

The Board had Underwood previously update the hydraulic model. The hydraulic model historically has just been an ischemic sized model that allowed them to predict flows and pressures in certain areas of town at certain times of day. It was a static model (point in time), which was good for certain things but there were a lot of things it couldn't do. Now, we can take your model and predict water age and other things. We can put what they would call a conservative tracer in the system and actually can do a fairly good job of predicting what water from what source is going where and when. We know for example, at a point in the north end of town, on a max demand day with this pump pumping at one rate and another at a different rate, what the blend of the water is, e.g., does most of it come from 4&5 and how much from 7&8 and 2&9. The model can do that for you now.

They used that in a few examples that were provided. Water was used as a predictor of a conservative tracer. It is not necessarily a predictor of water quality, but it can be. Water age tends to be a predictor. We use it as a predictor of water quality because the older the water is, presumably the lower the quality is.

It is a way of using a tool to help solve a water quality problem if you have one. We use it more when we start finding out there is a problem; what can we do with the modeling to make some changes in the distribution by shutting a valve, opening a valve, or looping something to create more water movement. The model is great for helping to solve some problems. It is not always the best predictor for finding them because we are just using water age. It is a great tool to use going forward whenever dealing with water quality issues.

Member von Schoen commented on Figure 4, water age map (wells 4&5), on the west end of town there are purple points surrounded by yellow points, which indicates that there is water in the lines that is younger than the surrounding areas but no fresh supply where that purple area is. He asked how that is explained in the model. Mr. Pratt stated he would have to look at the model. There could be a valve closed in the model that wouldn't be representative or something in the model that says the water is not moving in the directions you would expect. A closed valve there might explain it (in the model maybe there was a valve closed that shouldn't be). It would be something like that. He will ask his guys to look at that.

Mr. Pratt referred to Figure 6 noting this is more about the blending/primary source. It is hard to schematic in a model, but this is the one where he can say, up in the orange area, the primary source is well 2 and in the yellow/red zones it is primarily 7&8. If given an address, he could show in the model how much of it is actually blended, what the proportion of blends are from the various sources. Chair Provencher noted the map was done before well 9 was even in service. Mr. Pratt remarked these charts were to help illustrate what capabilities you have there now, more than they were trying to solve a problem. We were just trying to show you what you couldn't do before.

Member Sabens noted Figure 7 (well 2) shows 60% and 80% surrounded on both sides by 100% and asked how that is possible. Mr. Pratt responded it could be a rounding thing. He is not certain why it would bounce back and forth. He will look to gain an answer to that. They run the model 360 hours, and this is what it looks like at the end of 360 hours. Pumps cycle on and off, there are different times of demand, etc. It probably has something to do with the snapshot taken at the end of the 360 hours.

Member von Schoen commented that the model is showing representative maps of water age and/or well source based on system usage the length and diameter of pipe, pump rates, etc. Mr. Pratt stated all of that is there in the hydraulics, but the most challenging part is putting in the pump curves and tank cycling. We can actually now predict how the tanks cycle, can look at water age in the tanks so they can watch the fill draw cycles of the tank. Then they put in the curves during the day so that when you have a higher demand in the morning, more pumps are running. We have to understand how the operators have the set points for the wells so we know when they come on and off. It is all built into the model. That is why it is so much more powerful than just a simple hydraulic model. There is a lot built in there. Anything can change. If we have set points in the wells that change, have a pump on or reduce its flow, all of that will impact how the model output is. We have to estimate what the demands are. We put in a typical max day demand to give you a prediction.

Ron Miner, Superintendent, noted two years prior they went to different places in town and did some fire flows tests in the field for calibration of the model.

Member von Schoen commented that maybe someday with this model we can find out the unsatisfying discrepancy between non-revenue and revenue water (overall pump rate versus revenue metered consumption). There is a discrepancy that isn't fully explained between how much water we pump and how much water we meter and bill/account for. We know we lose some water because of flushing, fires, etc., but we have never been able to fully understand the differentiation.

Chair Provencher asked for clarification that when hydrants are flushed, is there a meter placed so that the volume can be added into identified revenue loss. Superintendent Miner responded they try to account for as much lost water as they can. They don't necessarily put a meter on, but do estimate what is lost.

Chair Provencher commented there is a threshold for unaccounted-for-water, that when reached, the State will ask be addressed. If we can account for as much lost water as we can and add that to the non-revenue water, our unaccounted water would decrease, which would keep us out of the red list. Member von Schoen noted the MVD has never been on the red list.

Member von Schoen remarked we are comparing the metered water with the produced water. The produced water is measured by very few flow meters at the six wells. We have an error on every meter that we use for billing (just the accounted water in the end). The metered is assessed by thousands of meters, every one of which has a little bit of an error. He wonders if that is accumulative of that error. There are thousands of them to be compared against 6.

Noted was that the 6 used at the pump houses are probably more accurate. Member von Schoen suggested that could be an interesting discussion for the engineers to compare if it is just an accumulated error versus the 6 that we have where we have a very precise measurement.

Mr. Pratt remarked about 15 years ago they did a water audit; looked at all the meters and made some suggestions or tried to look at if there was anything there. There is a dated report that is the basis for what we look at when we do a little bit more auditing. The industry goal is 15%.

Member von Schoen suggested, as the data is already available, it could be a nice chart for trending (trending of non-revenue water). Right now, all we have is the difference between the two. The chart ends in 2018.

Mr. Pratt stated it is typically reviewed every year. Business Manager Lavoie added it is in a report submitted to the State.

Mr. Pratt asked if the desire is for more current information to be shared. He displayed a chart of production versus authorized billed consumption through 2023. It showed non-revenue water trending up and dropping back down. That was odd. Production has been flat and consumption has dropped a little.

Noted was that the 2023 data may not reflect typical years as GAC treatment facilities were still being put online and startup operations likely resulted in an increase to non-revenue water over prior years.

Member von Schoen suggested if unaccounted water is not on that chart, it probably should be. Mr. Pratt stated non-revenue water includes accounted for and unaccounted for numbers. Member von Schoen suggested the non-revenue water should not include the unaccounted water, should be a separate line. He asked for the chart to be broken out; non-revenue water being broken down into accounted for and unaccounted for.

Asked about the chart, Mr. Pratt stated in 2017 total non-revenue water was 13.2% which aligns with the chart, 3% of that is accounted for, 10% is unaccounted for, leaks, etc. Member von Schoen responded he finds the idea of an accumulated error of those thousands of meters we have in town versus the 6 at the wells is a pretty credible explanation. Usually, you have slippage when you measure more than anything. That could be an interesting project to look into.

Mr. Pratt committed to providing an updated graph, including the requested breakdown, in time for the February or March meeting.

The Board was informed that application has been submitted for the leak location grant. Business Manager Lavoie commented there are 100 miles that they detect for us, and if any problems are identified staff will address them. Superintendent Miner noted staff will identify an area that has not been checked recently.

### **3. Board of Commissioners to hear update on the Operations & Maintenance manuals for Wells 7 & 8 and Wells 2 & 9 Treatment Plants from Underwood Engineers, Inc.**

Peter Pitsas, P.E., Underwood Engineers, spoke of a discussion he had with Superintendent Miner and the desire expressed to add cybersecurity portions to the manuals, e.g., who is authorized to do what.

Superintendent Miner added there will be an operation plan set up to detail what needs to occur so that operators can react and work manually. From an operator's standpoint, he believes it needs to be at the level of a definition of who is authorized to provide the direction to do that. Even now to make changes, it is not a matter of any technician being authorized to make a change, the foreman provides that direction.

Member von Schoen stated the reason this was placed on the agenda is because we didn't have them at all. Meanwhile, there was the kickoff meeting for the cybersecurity project. It may now prolong the delivery of those manuals, but not the status that the manuals should have had until that kickoff.

The concern was when the need came about to update the standard operating procedures and emergency operating procedures, staff couldn't really work on those because they didn't have the normal operating manual. We need to ensure there is at least a draft version of the manual (minus the needed changes for the cybersecurity aspects).

Superintendent Miner responded that he and Mr. Pitsas discussed that. An email was sent identifying a drop-dead date of December 31<sup>st</sup> for those draft manuals to be provided.

Member von Schoen stated the point was to ensure those are provided. If we need to have another iteration because of the need for additional changes, that is a separate discussion.

Mr. Pitsas stated if the desire is for an interim manual he can do that. Superintendent Miner stated, at this point, he would suggest concentrating on what we need for the instruction documents to finish the project and then we can work on the supplement once that is closed out.

Chair Provencher asked for clarification that this is all under the existing tasks/approved scope, and was told it is.

Mr. Pitsas noted Superintendent Miner had asked about Mitchell Woods and doing the conversion from single phase to three-phase as opposed to running a three-phase line in. He has spoken with the electrical engineer and is hopeful he will receive the information to provide an update for the next meeting.

Chair Provencher noted it was unclear if there is a horsepower limit on inverting single-phase grid power into three-phase power to the well pump. Mr. Pitsas stated his belief there is a limit, but also as you get up there the efficiency drops off. Chair Provencher stated the desire is to understand if it is more feasible to utilize single phase to power whatever the proposed pump size is. When last brought to the Board we were running three phase power to the site from miles away, which was very expensive. The question was asked about single phase as it is already present at Mitchell Street.

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

The Commission reviewed the Action Items, removing tasks that have been completed and making necessary additions. New dates were added to several of the items.

- Results of PFAS sample points in the distribution system

Chair Provencher noted there was some PFOA in some of the distribution samples as a result of the timing of changeout of carbon vessels.

- Mineral Graphs



Chair Provencher commented that after being steady for recent years, it appears that sodium and chloride are on the rise in wells 7&8. Superintendent Miner stated he originally said we were going to do a GAC media changeout in November. It is actually planned for December. They flipflopped Wells 4&5 for 7&8. GAC at Wells 4&5 was due to be changed in October.

- No Salt Signs – Exit 10

During the salt reduction meeting, expressed was a willingness to participate in a work session; sit down and discuss additional salt reductions.

Chair Provencher noted he was informed by the DOT at the last Salt Mitigation Committee meeting that the “no road salt area” and “limited road salt area”, signs on Continental Boulevard and Industrial Drive, respectively, are not those of the NH DOT, and that they were installed illegally. DOT stated that there is nothing on the NH DOT books that indicate any no salt or reduced salt areas on Continental Boulevard or Industrial Drive.

Superintendent Miner spoke of having heard that the signs were put up years ago for a trial period, and it didn't go over well. He is curious about where the signs originated. Chair Provencher stated that he asked Town Manager Paul Micali via an e-mail about the origination of those signs and never received a reply.

Member Clement wondered if there is anything for the State DOT about any roads being low salt. It is probably not even a classification they are going to make. Member von Schoen suggested a one-to-one meeting be scheduled with the NH DOT, specifically on the topic.

Chair Provencher remarked that the subject was brought up when the NH DOT said they cannot change anything (create low areas) until they have received the signed letters from the Town and School Board. When he pointed out to NH DOT that these roads had already been designated as no salt and limited salt, is when it was stated by DOT that those are not NH DOT signs.

- Salt Reduction Letter

Business Manager Lavoie stated the district continues to work with Emery & Garrett. They are writing up a letter that will be used for all watersheds. Should be before the Board for review in the near future.

- Vendor Plan - Pilot Testing

Superintendent Miner stated a meeting is scheduled with the Dexsorb on Thursday.

Asked if anything has been addressed with Merrimack TV regarding our test columns; explaining what they are and why this is something that is pretty spectacular that nobody else is doing, Superintendent Miner stated that has not yet been addressed.

Asked if what he desires is a formal presentation, Member von Schoen commented when the walk-thru was conducted it was stated it would be a great idea to do a special with Merrimack TV that shows how they look, what their purpose is, and how MVD is leading the charge in investigating different treatment alternatives for PFAS mitigation.

- Cost of Flushing Water wasted at wells 7&8.

A letter was sent (October 24<sup>th</sup>, delivery confirmation requested) without response/confirmation. Another was delivered to the Post Office (November 12<sup>th</sup>). We will need to give it time for delivery confirmation to be received.

- Update on waterline extensions

Superintendent Miner stated the watermains on Christopher and Wildcat Falls have been installed. Brenda Lane has been completed. All of the service lines to the homes have been completed on those roads. SUR Construction West, Inc. is doing the random hookups.

- Cybersecurity/Information Security

Member von Schoen suggested closing this item out and creating a new one identify ongoing, quarterly cybersecurity updates beginning in January.

## 6. Old Business

Chair Provencher asked for clarification on the PFAS Monitoring Summary (sample date 10/22/24). Areas highlighted in red were identified as “changeout criteria alert (effluent detection or 8 months)”.

Under LEAD (vessel) it states “Date of 1<sup>st</sup> detection in effluent” followed by the date for each of the treatment plants. The next line states, “Date of 8 mo of lead operation” and is followed by the date for each.

He asked and was told the policy is to change GAC media in the lead vessel within 8 months from the time the vessel went into lead position.

For Wells 4&5 the date of 8 month of lead operation should be listed as 6/08/2025.

For wells 7&8, the intent is for that to be done in December, 2024.

Information provided with receipt of certificate of extraction and replenishment notice will be shared with Underwood.

Chair Provencher commented that the 8 months was more of a budget consideration. He is uncertain that if wells are offline for a month we should bump it out to 9 months. It would have breakthrough in that period into the drinking water, which is really what we are trying to avoid. Superintendent Miner replied he does not think we were having breakthrough at the time (8 months) for 7&8, and we were at 4&5. That was the reason for switching them.

Member von Schoen commented if we allow the short chains to break through the lead vessel and start saturating the LAG vessel, then the LAG vessel is now already at the 75% breakthrough that means that the LAG media is spent by the time that we do the lead vessel changeout. We have to replace both of them. That has always been his issue with the policy that we decided upon. We had that discussion at the time, the 8 months for him, as a minimum timeframe, never made sense because we had always said once we can project that it is going to break-through we plan the changeout because we want to avoid any kind of PFAS in the finished water.

Chair Provencher noted doing that comes at a price. There are possibly rate impacts too. That was the compromise. It can be revisited.

Member von Schoen remarked that the real problem is that we don't know what dictates the short chains part because there is not really any good health advisories out there for those. There is a higher tolerance supposedly, for the short chains, but we have nothing to go by.

Chair Provencher commented that there are only health advisories for the short chains that breakthrough first at MVD's GAC filters. For PFBA he is uncertain if there is one, and for PFBS it is high.

Member Clement added the hard part is the timeframe on how long it takes short chains to get through a GAC vessel isn't a definite thing because it depends on what well we are pumping and not pumping. You could probably figure out an MGD (millions of gallons per day) to get through one of those. But it is not going to be a set time.

Chair Provencher commented when you use more water in the summer you will break through faster. You will have breakthrough in the finished water, and when you change the vessel in the fall and then have very low use for the winter you probably won't break through. We did very well in the distribution system; we went through a long time with non-detect for all PFAS. He believes we are seeing the results of what he just said; through the summer the 8-month period was not short enough to change out the media.

Member Clement asked if the budget anticipates two changeouts per year per well even though in some years you may only need one changeout. Chair Provencher stated his belief that they look back to the last time it was changed and project ahead when we have to change them again.

Director Maher remarked since we are still learning, she would rather keep the two planned GAC vessel changeouts in the budget. Member Clement commented she does not think two is bad, but if already budgeting for two per year, then maybe we should say every 6 months, pay attention, and do a little more proactive changeouts. Since we are budgeting for twice a year let's try to do it twice a year.

Chair Provencher stated he would consider changing that procedure to 6 months. Director Maher stated the way it was done was one for changeout at Wells-2&9 and 7&8 coming out of the budget, and one changeout for Wells-2&9 and 7&8 coming out of capital reserves. We started learning what is really needed. She can start moving everything that is needed into the budget. Noted was that the cost came in lower than projected. It was suggested the timeframe can be reduced without too much impact on the budget (should identify the budget as the funding source).

Member von Schoen suggested the Board restart the discussion around polishing. We could look to Underwood to provide a ballpark cost for an additional polishing and infrastructure and could compare that with making our media exchange decisions based on the short chains that we are considering polishing out. If it is going to cost several million dollars to polish them out but is only costing a hundred thousand dollars a year to just replace, then we are done with that discussion. Chair Provencher spoke of his recollection of a cost analysis being provided previously. He is uncertain of how long ago it was.

Director Maher noted they will be factoring in Wells 4&5 GAC changeouts into the budget in the next 2-3 years, because Saint-Gobain's escrow payments are ending in 2025.

Member von Schoen suggested there may already be enough data to decide whether or not to do the polishing. Chair Provencher remarked he is uncertain if they will know how to predict the polishing life. Superintendent Miner commented he wonders if operationally we do our changeouts during off times; do a GAC and then a resin polish with existing filters and have a swing load come in. The filter is down for a day and then back up within a couple of days.

Member von Schoen asked if what was being suggested was to use the LAG vessel as a polishing vessel not as a GAC vessel and was told that was accurate. He recalled a previous discussion where it was stated that could not be done. Superintendent Miner noted Wells-4&5 came with the diffusers for resin. We actually had to change them out and put a different diffuser in for the GAC. Member von Schoen felt that to be well worth investigating. Right now, we are wasting the LAG vessel basically 90% of its lifetime the way it looks, if we are to replace it with short chains breaking through. Superintendent Miner remarked if we could do a swing load and a changeout at the time, it might be something worth looking at.

## **7. New Business**

### **Grant Acceptance**

Superintendent Miner informed the Board the district was approved for the gap funding by the NHDES Drinking Water and Groundwater Trust Fund (DWGTF). It will now be before the Governor and Executive Council for approval.

The grant amounts of \$325,000 and \$525,000 represent the total amount of the gap.

Asked how the result came about, he explained Brandon Kernen, Administrator, Drinking Water and Ground Water, NHDES, made the argument that the affordability index may not be the most appropriate metric to base a decision on. The point was that PFAS contamination was not caused by the district, and was just something that happened. We are trying to rectify something and should not be penalized for it by this coming back to the ratepayers.

Business Manager Lavoie had provided a breakdown of the rates over the last 3 years. Showed we had skin in the game via increased rates to our customers.

Chair Provencher commented on Farmer and Mason Roads; when you look at the Maximum Contaminant Levels (MCLs) from the EPA, something like 95% of the private wells in those neighborhoods are going to be in violation. It made sense to focus on that area because there are a lot of contaminated wells that cannot tie into our waterline now, until we run new water mains to them.

Superintendent Miner stated they have requested some current testing (PFAS) on private wells.

A letter will be distributed to the gap areas that will include a link to where residents can sign up to have their well tested. They are not just testing for PFAS.

Superintendent Miner noted they have also asked to be informed of next steps, e.g., is there a plan for hooking anyone else up. He will work on putting something together just to have at the ready.

**MOTION BY MEMBER AYERS THAT THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE MERRIMACK VILLAGE DISTRICT ACCEPT A DRINKING WATER GROUNDWATER**

**TRUST FUND GRANT IN THE AMOUNT OF FIVE HUNDRED TWENTY-FIVE THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$525,000) TO COVER THE COMPLETION OF THE FARMER, FOSTER, MASON MAINLINE EXTENSION PROJECT. THE BOARD IS ALSO GIVING AUTHORITY TO SUPERINTENDENT RONALD MINER, JR. TO EXECUTE ALL GRANT DOCUMENTS ON BEHALF OF THE MERRIMACK VILLAGE DISTRICT. THE GRANT IS CONTINGENT UPON ACCEPTANCE BY GOVERNOR AND COUNCIL.  
MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER CLEMENT  
MOTION CARRIED  
5-0-0**

**MOTION BY MEMBER CLEMENT THAT THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE MERRIMACK VILLAGE DISTRICT ACCEPT A DRINKING WATER GROUNDWATER TRUST FUND GRANT IN THE AMOUNT OF THREE HUNDRED TWENTY-FIVE THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$325,000) TO COVER THE COMPLETION OF THE PALMERI, GERARD, WILSON HILL, MULLIKIN MAINLINE EXTENSION PROJECT. THE BOARD IS ALSO GIVING AUTHORITY TO SUPERINTENDENT RONALD MINER, JR. TO EXECUTE ALL GRANT DOCUMENTS ON BEHALF OF THE MERRIMACK VILLAGE DISTRICT. THE GRANT IS CONTINGENT UPON ACCEPTANCE BY GOVERNOR AND COUNCIL.  
MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER AYERS  
MOTION CARRIED  
5-0-0**

### **Cybersecurity**

Member von Schoen informed the Board of a meeting with Primex and ATOM. He, Member Sabens, and staff met with the risk assessment consultant and a third-party contractor (ATOM). They discussed where we are, where we want to be, etc., in terms of cybersecurity/business continuity and how they can help us get there. He believes it to be clear that this will be an ongoing activity. He questioned the will of the Board in regard to adding a budget line item for that going forward. Director Maher stated she has already added that so that it can be discussed during the budget work session. Member von Schoen commented it will be a big project initially and then an ongoing effort. We should define a budget for it and track it. Director Maher commented that she believes there will be matching grant opportunities. We will need a budget line item for training, etc. relating to cybersecurity.

Asked if it should be specific to cybersecurity or security in general, Member von Schoen suggested it should be security and business continuity. He explained that insurance premium costs could be improved through these efforts.

### **PFAS Documentary Film**

Superintendent Miner spoke of having received an email from Laurene Allen regarding a documentary filmmaker who is working on “community successes in battling PFAS”. The desire is for a short video about the Merrimack story. Laurene is working with them to create a basic timeline. They will be here January 2<sup>nd</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup> to film the footage and have asked, if possible, if they could visit MVD, one of our wells or a site of our choosing.

Noted was that the information was not very specific around the topics the documentary would focus on. It was suggested the request be reviewed by legal counsel. Chair Provencher stated the desire for the Board to receive an outline. Caution needs to be taken not to violate an existing agreement.

**HR 7944 Support Letter**

Business Manager Lavoie spoke of an email from the New England Water Works Association (NEWWA) regarding H.R.7944. The letter will be sent to legal counsel for review and the resulting opinion will be shared with the Board at a future meeting.

The American Water Works Association (AWWA) is suing the EPA to try to get the new PFAS MCLs to be raised. Chair Provencher commented he did not renew his AWWA membership (after 25 years) in the AWWA because of that. NEWWA is no longer affiliated with AWWA.

**8. Superintendent's Report**

Superintendent Miner noted the new dump truck has been received. It is fully outfitted, and one pound under the requirement for a driver to need a CDL.

Member von Schoen suggested a discussion item for the next meeting. Following the last meeting, he engaged in a discussion around the radio system and the potential of needing to review whether or not we want to be on the same system as police and fire. There was an incident with their contractor making unplanned changes to our system.

The next meeting is scheduled for December 16, 2024.

**9. Questions from the Public/Press - None**

**ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION BY COMMISSIONER AYERS TO ADJOURN**

**MOTION SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER SABENS**

**MOTION CARRIED**

**5-0-0**

The October 21, 2024, regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners was adjourned at 7:32 p.m.

Submitted by Dawn MacMillan, Recording Secretary