

Minutes of Freeport Sewer District
REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING
Wednesday, February 26, 2025, at 6:00 P.M.

Trustees and Staff in Attendance: Chair Michael Ashby, Vice-Chair Chad Coffin, Vice-Treasurer Kathryn Wallingford (via Zoom), Timothy Whitacre, Molly Lincoln, Clerk Marissa Elliott, General Manager Sara Randall, and Construction Manager Leonard Blanchette.

Members of the public in attendance: Wendy Whitacre (3 Sandy Beach Rd). Michael Benoit, Garth Adams, Jeanne Adams, Abby Westbury, and others on zoom.

1. Call to Order: Meeting called to order at 6:03 pm. Chair Ashby opened the meeting with a reminder that the planned administrative building will include a conference room equipped for recording meetings. It was noted that at the previous Board meeting it was agreed that establishing an ongoing communications channel to broadcast recorded meetings was important but not a top priority at this time and could wait until the new administration and laboratory building was finished.

2. Public Comment: Moved by Trustee Whitacre to open Public Comment, seconded by Vice-Chair Coffin. Unanimous approval. Michael Benoit noted that Zoom will summarize meeting minutes. Clerk Elliott moved to close the Public Comment period, seconded by Vice-Chair Coffin. Unanimous approval.

3. Approval of Minutes of January 22, 2025: Vice-Chair Coffin moved to accept the minutes of January 22, 2025 Board meeting. Second, by Clerk Elliott. Unanimous approval.

4. Financial Reports (January 2025): The Board reviewed the updated financial reports, which were generated after an upgrade of FSD's accounting software. GM Randall noted an unexpected increase in electricity costs. FSD participates in Net Meter Billing with the solar project and some of the credits from last year have been expended, and there also was a 7% increase in CMP's rates. Vice-Chair Coffin moved to accept the January financial Reports, seconded by Trustee Lincoln. Vice-Treasurer Wallingford abstained. Unanimous approval by remaining Trustees.

5. WWTP & Pump Station Facilities Upgrade

a) **Permitting:** The District is planning to submit a site plan application for phases I and II to the March 26 Project Review Board meeting. The state's historical preservation commission (SHPO) continues to review the USDA's submittal containing information about the archeological dig and historical architectural review, and once FSD obtains a letter from SHPO it will be included in submission to the Project Review Board. The information will also be included in the supplemental Environmental Assessment.

b) **Inclusion of all three Treatment Units in Bid Package:** Upon review of the bid package for the Unit 2 emergency repairs, USDA recommended that all three units be included in the bid package. Both Woodard & Curran and FSD agreed. As such, the bid package is being

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amended to include all three units. This will allow all the units to be upgraded at the same time and with the same contractor. The original preliminary cost estimate for Unit #2 was \$595,000, all three units now estimated at \$2.1M.

c) **Amendment to Owner-Engineer Agreement:** The engineers submitted an amendment to the agreement to cover additional scope of work and cost not anticipated in the original agreement. For Phase 1 it included additional surveyor work on the proposed driveway layout to S. Freeport Road for the Project Review Board's site walk, along with traffic study on S. Freeport Road requested by Project Review Board, the revision of Environmental Assessment, including the assessment of the historic impact of project with additional contractors such as the archaeologist and architectural historians and their studies (\$34,490). It also includes design of multiple layout options for the admin and laboratory building, parking lot and driveway, cost estimates, and meetings with the Board and community, town planner and public works (\$22,510). Also, Phase 2 preliminary design and bid preparation for the repairs to treatment unit #2 (\$25,910). Total additional cost: \$82,910. This amends the engineer agreement from \$2,370,000 to \$2,452,910. Vice-chair Coffin motioned to approve the amendment, seconded by Trustee Whitacre, Unanimous approval.

d.) **Pump Station Easements and Authorization for Release of Deed:** Letters requesting easements as needed for pump station upgrades have been completed for Desert Road, Dixon (Yacht Club) Road, Harraseeket Park, Hawthorne House, and Rivers Edge pump stations and will be mailed out to the property owners. Ownership of the property next to the Cushing Briggs station has now been determined and the attorney is preparing the easement deed.

On the matter of the Café pump station easement: Several years ago, two sewer liens on the property matured creating an automatic foreclosure. The lien amounts have since been paid. The liens may not have been properly noticed to all parties and the attorney is not able to certify title to the property. It was recommend that the District deliver a quitclaim deed to 31 Route One, LLC to release any ownership interest it may have in the property. It was moved by Vice-Chair Coffin that the Board of Trustees authorize its attorney to prepare, for execution and delivery by the District, a quitclaim deed to 31 Route One, LLC to release any ownership interest that Freeport Sewer District has in the property by virtue of the automatic foreclosure. Second by Clerk Elliott. Unanimous approval.

Once the quitclaim deed for the Café PS property is completed the easement deed will be submitted for the owners' consideration.

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e.) **Design of Phases 2 and 3:** The remainder of the plant's design is at 60% and will be presented to Staff for review. Phase 3, pump stations, is also at 60% design and will remain at that level until easements are finalized.

6. **Audit for 2024.** Auditors are now on site with the audit report expected sometime this spring.

7. **SSO - Rte. 1 Force Main Repair:** A force main break occurred on Route 1 on February 5th. Same cause as the earlier breaks, poor backfill material. While MDEP has been understanding, at some point they will require replacement of that line. There was also a force main break at the Dixon Road pump station on February 17th during the snow storm which caused a closure in the river.

8. **Bid Acceptance and Award for the 2025 Dump Body.** CM Blanchette reminded the Trustees that there was a separate bid for the dump body that will go on the 2025 Ford F350 cab/chassis that has just been ordered. The low bidder was Messer Truck and Van of Westbrook, for \$16,689. The dump body is a lighter duty and better suited to the District's needs. The vehicle that will be replaced will not go out to public bid until the new truck is received which is expected sometime in April. The Ford F550 service body truck, paid for with the remaining CWSRF funds, is at Hews for upfitting and is not expected to be delivered to FSD until sometime in April.

9. **Plant Operations: Superintendent's Report for January 2025:** Highlights.

- Total flow for January was 8.747 MG compared to 14.450 MG for the previous January.
- Average Daily Flow (ADF) 0.282 MGD.
- Dealing with settling issues due to low nightly flow and cold weather.
- Replaced failed cell modem at the Mast Landing pump station.
- A bisulfite pump dosage control unit has been ordered.
- Callouts for January:
 - Market PS Comm - Cell modem failure
 - Rte. 1 PS Comm – Cell modem failure
 - TP Blower fault – Power surge faulted the cooling fan

10. **Communications:** The Community Forum with the Town Council went well. Has opened a new line of communication between the District and the Town. GM Randall was commended for her excellent presentation.

11. **Staffing Update.** GM Randall noted the District has “reinvigorated” the search and selection for a new operator. Interviews are currently being conducted and there are some promising candidates. There may be an opportunity for a second operator. She also plans to seek an administrative staffer.

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12. **USDA Loan:** Trustees noted a concern regarding status of USDA funding considering the current federal funding freezing/issues. GM Randall noted she has spoken with USDA and currently there is no change in funding status and interim financing is secured. Trustee Whitacre suggested identifying the upgrade projects' priorities in case funding becomes an issue. The Board decided to stay the course until more is known about this issue.

13. **Upcoming Meetings:** Meeting calendar was reviewed, with the next meeting being Monday, March 17, 2025 at 6:00 P.M.

14. **Adjournment:** Vice-Chair Coffin moved, seconded by Trustee Whitacre to adjourn the meeting at 7:03 P.M. Vote was unanimous of those present.