

Minutes of Freeport Sewer District
REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING
Monday, January 22, 2025, at 7:00 P.M.

Trustees and Staff in Attendance: Mike Ashby, Chad Coffin, Kap Wallingford, Tim Whitacre, Tom Hudak, Molly Lincoln, Marissa Elliott, Sara Randall (GM), Len Blanchette (Construction Manager).

Members of the public in attendance: Wendy Whitacre (3 Sandy Beach Rd), Reggie Lease, Abby Westberry, another attendee on zoom.

1. Call to Order: Chair Ashby called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm. A Moment of Silence was conducted for the Residents of Southern California involved in the devastating wildfires.

2. Public Comment: No public comments were offered. Chair Asby moved to close the Public Comment period, seconded by Trustee Elliott. Unanimous approval.

3. Approval of Minutes:

Public Rate Hearing. Trustee Hudak moved to accept the minutes of December 16, 2024, Public Rate Hearing as presented, seconded by Trustee Wallingford. Unanimous approval.

Regular Trustee Meeting. Trustee Whitacre remarked that he wished his comment regarding a District website was included in the minutes. Trustee Elliott noted that the agreement from the last meeting was that the minutes were not a verbatim transcription, rather a summary of discussions and decisions. It was agreed that while establishing an ongoing communications channel was important it was not a priority at this time and could wait until the new administration and laboratory building was finished and in the meantime to place this as a standing topic on the agenda. Trustee Whitacre moved to accept the minutes of December 16, 2024 Trustee meeting as amended, seconded by Trustee Wallingford. Unanimous approval.

4. Financial Reports (December 2024): The District completed the fiscal year operating at 98% of its budget. Based on the financial reports, it appears that the District may end its fiscal year with a surplus as expenses have remained within the budgeted projection, and User Revenue has surpassed the conservative estimate in the 2024 budget. For the purposes of the report, “User Revenue” includes the \$106,000 collected from the 5% CIP Surcharge which is deposited to the 5% CIP Reserve account. Potential uses for the surplus include increasing the USDA Loan Escrow Reserve Account to meet USDA requirements and/or adding to the 5% CIP reserve account. The latter would potentially lessen the CIP Surcharge increases that are required to fund the annual USDA loan payments starting in 2027. Trustee

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Coffin moved to accept the December Financial Reports, seconded by Trustee Wallingford. Unanimous approval.

I. Old Business

5. **\$20.1M USDA/RD Upgrade – WWTP & Pump Stations**

a.) **Treatment Unit #2 Repairs:**

Woodard and Curran is finalizing the design and is preparing the draft bid package for staff discussion and review. The goal is to go to bid within the next few weeks. This work would have occurred as part of the Phase 2 upgrade to the Plant but is being fast-tracked due to the advanced corrosion of some metal components which is both an operational and a staff safety issue. Funding will come from the USDA loan.

b.) **Status of Permitting and Design for Phases 1, 2, & 3.**

Phase 1 Admin/Lab building is at 90% design. Awaiting finalization of the Town's planning review board process to see if any changes may be required. Phase 2 WWTF is at 60% design. The engineers are now focused on the new Process Building and Solids Storage Tank design. Phase 3, the Pump Stations, are also at 60% design. Both are moving forward.

As previously discussed, the archaeological survey for the WWTF site was completed and it recommended “no further archaeological survey” needed. Likewise, the historical architectural review for the pump station and plant has been completed and concluded there will be “no adverse effect”. Based on those findings, the USDA completed its findings letter to the State Historic Preservation Commission, with copies sent to consulting parties, regarding the significance and intactness of the properties. Chair Ashby asked Trustee Lincoln if she remained a consulting party, to which she confirmed that she was. The State Historic Preservation Commission has 30 days to respond.

GM Randall noted the possibility of being able to be on the Plan Review Board's March agenda.

c.) **Pump Station Easements.** Staff, Engineers, and Legal are focusing on obtaining the required pump station easements. Parcel ownership and contacts have been determined. Legal is preparing the draft easement. Woodard & Curran's rendering of what the typical building will look like at the stations was presented at the meeting. These will be included in the packet sent to the landowners.

d.) **Community Forum on January 30th.** Community Forum meeting with Town Council and the public is scheduled for 6:00 P.M., January 30th at the First Parish Church/Meetinghouse Arts.

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6. Audit for 2024. The 2024 financial audit is scheduled for February by RKO (Runyon Kersteen Oullette).

7. Ford F350 Chassis/Cab Truck Bids and Dump Body Bids. CM Blanchette reported he received the bids today for the Ford F-350 Chassis/Cab truck. The bid log was included in the Trustees' meeting packet. Of the three (3) bids received, Casco Bay Ford appeared to be the lower bidder at \$53,324. Blanchette noted they would review the bids and award to the "lowest responsible bidder". He then reported he was notified today by Casco Bay Ford that the previously awarded Ford F-550 chassis/cab had been delivered to CBF. He and the Superintendent would check out the vehicle to make sure it met the specs and authorize the dealer to send it to Hews for the mounting of the service body, crane, and power lift gate previously authorized. Expect delivery to the District by mid-February.

He then noted that he requested separate bids on the dump body intended to be mounted on the F350. The dump body bids were due Thursday, January 23rd, at 1:00 P.M. Blanchette noted the same procedure will involve reviewing the bids and awarding to the lowest responsible bidder that meets the needs of the District.

a.) Action Item: Approval to Sell the 2019 Ford F-350 Truck. Blanchette noted that in his experience as a former GM, the district has usually received higher bids for surplus vehicles than by offering to trade in the vehicle. He noted that the District's Procurement Policy requires staff to obtain the Board's approval to sell any surplus vehicle and the District will advertise for bids for the vehicle. The proceeds from the sale will be used to offset the cost of the new 2025 Ford F-350. At the Trustee's inquiry, Blanchette noted that he expected bid offers in the high \$20,000s, and that he had already, by word of mouth, received an offer of \$27,500 but noted to the offeree that the District will need to use a public bid process. Trustee Coffin moved to authorize staff to sell the 2019 Ford F-350 through a public bid process, seconded by Trustee Whitacre. Unanimous approval.

8. Action Item: Procurement Policy Revision. Based on a discussion at the December Trustee's meeting, the Board requested staff to provide draft language to revise the Procurement Policy to increase the GM's single purchase authority, without Board approval, from the current \$3,500 to \$10,000 and to increase the base amount in the "Informal Bidding" section from \$3,500 to \$10,000. Other sections were also revised to increase the limit to \$10,000. Following review of the Procurement Policy's revisions, it was moved by Trustee Coffin, seconded by Trustee Hudak to approve the revisions to the Procurement Policy as presented. Unanimous approval.

9. Plant Operations: Superintendent's Report for November 2024: Highlights.

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- Total flow for December was 11.767 MG compared to 156.848 for the previous December.
- Average Daily Flow (ADF) 0.511 MGD.
- No Process issues this month, even with the cold weather.
- Annual preventive maintenance at the Mast Landing pump station completed.
- The compressors for the heat pumps for the shop and chemical room faulted with low-pressure condition and electric heaters were installed as a temporary heat source.
- The Lab's 1976 analytical scale has been replaced.
- No callouts or odor complaints for December.
 - The last rounds of analytical chemistry sampling required during the fourth year of the discharge permit have been completed.

II. New Business

10. Annual Luncheon Postponement. Due to a busy schedule the annual luncheon typically put on by the District has been postponed in lieu of a celebration around the groundbreaking ceremony.

11. Upcoming Meetings. Following a discussion of whether to start the monthly Board meetings earlier, it was moved by Trustee Coffin, seconded by Trustee Wallingford, to begin the regularly scheduled monthly Board of Trustee meetings at 6:00 P.M. Unanimous approval.

12. Adjournment to Executive Session: Trustee Wallingford moved, seconded by Trustee Hudak, to enter into executive session at 7:48 P.M. to discuss a personnel matter per MRS Title 1, §405, (6)(A)(1). Motion approved by vote of six Trustees. Trustee Elliott abstained. Trustees returned from the executive session at 8:02 P.M. without having taken any action during the session.

Discussion followed in which the Trustees decided that Trustees Elliott and Wallingford would conduct the exit interview with the employee in question.

Trustee Wallingford departed the meeting at 8:03 P.M.

It was moved by Trustee Coffin, seconded by Trustee Elliott, to adjourn the Board of Trustees meeting at 8:04 P.M. Vote was unanimous of those present.