

Adopted Minutes of Freeport Sewer District
REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING
Monday, September 15, 2025, at 6:00 P.M.

Trustees and Staff in Attendance: Chair Michael Ashby, Vice-Chair Chad Coffin, Treasurer Thomas Hudak (arrived at 6:55pm), Vice-Treasurer Kathryn Wallingford, Clerk Marissa Elliott, Trustee Timothy Whitacre (via Zoom), Trustee Molly Lincoln, General Manager Randall and Construction Manager/Senior Advisor Leonard Blanchette (via Zoom).

Members of the public in attendance: Rose St. Pierre, Chalmers Hardenburgh (zoom) and Reginald Leese (Zoom).

Chair Ashby called the meeting to order at 6:04 pm.

- 1. Public Comment:** Chair Ashby opened the Public Comment period, seconded by Wallingford. Mr. Leese asked about the status of the 2024 financial audit. GM Randall responded that the audit is not completed, and the auditor has been unable to confirm when it will be completed. Mr. Leese then asked if the report will be available during 2026 budget process. GM Randall answered that it may not be available and emphasized that the 2026 budget is developed based on current needs and projected operating revenues and expenses. There being no other public comment, Vice-Treasurer Wallingford moved, seconded by Clerk Elliott, to close the public comment period. Unanimous approval of Trustees present.
- 2. Minutes:** Vice-Treasurer Wallingford moved, seconded by Clerk Elliott, to accept the minutes of the August 2025 board meeting as presented. Unanimous approval of the Trustees present.
- 3. Financial Reports:** The August 2025 financial reports were reviewed. Vice-Treasurer Wallingford moved, seconded by Vice-Chair Coffin, to accept the August Financial Reports. Unanimous approval of the Trustees present.
- 4. 2026 Operations Budget and Rate Hearing.** The draft 2026 Operations Budget along with the User Rate and CIP rate recommendations, as well as a budget for the upgrade and rehab project, was shared and discussed. For 2026 it is recommended that the CIP charge be increased from a 5% surcharge to 10% to fund debt service for the \$12.6M loan associated with the \$20.1M upgrade and rehab. The discussion will continue at the October Trustee meeting. Vice-Chair Coffin moved, seconded by Clerk Elliott, to hold the public hearing on November 17, 2025, at 6:00 PM, followed by the regular Board meeting.
- 5. WWTP & Pump Station Facilities Rehab & Upgrade.** The bids for the Wastewater Treatment Facility Upgrades will be opened on Tuesday, October 8th at 2:00 PM. The Pre-Bid meeting was well attended.

CM Blanchette noted that work on Contract #3 for the repairs and upgrades to the treatment units, awarded to T. Buck Construction, will probably not start until March or April due to the long lead time required for the metal components. Site work for the Phase 1 (Contract #1) Administration & Lab Building, awarded to Doten's Construction, should start in October,

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pending contract finalization. The CM mentioned that the work for the actual admin building construction may be delayed until early next spring to avoid the extra cost involved with winter construction, potentially saving the District up to \$300,000.

CM Blanchette reported that the property owners next to the Harraseeket Park pump station will meet again with the District on Tuesday, October 8th to continue discussion regarding the requested easements. Vice-Treasurer Wallingford departed the meeting at 6:34 PM.

6. Executive Session pursuant to MRS 1, §405, 6. E. to discuss a Legal Matter. It was moved by Clerk Elliott, seconded by Trustee Lincoln, to enter executive session at 6:35 PM, to discuss a legal matter with a representative of SL Environmental Law Group. Unanimous approval of Trustees present. Vice-Chair Coffin moved, seconded by Clerk Elliott, to return from executive session at 6:51 PM. Unanimous approval of Trustees present.

Following return to the public meeting, it was moved by Vice-Chair Coffin, seconded by Trustee Whitacre, to have General Manager Randall enter into a client agreement with SL Environmental Law Group to join other Maine municipalities and sewer districts as a member of the firm's class action suit against PFAS manufacturers. Treasurer Hudak arrived.

7. Communications. GM Randall and Clerk Elliott provided a preview of the district's new website they have been working on. Clerk Elliott noted that the site has not yet gone live, as there are some minor adjustments and edits she wishes to complete.

8. Staffing. GM Randall reported that the Operator-in-Training successfully completed the probation period and is now a full-time member of the Operations staff. Also, the Superintendent was nominated by the District and chosen for an Excellence in Management award from JETCC to recognize his commitment to employees, the facility, and community. He will be presented the award at the annual Maine wastewater conference next week. The Trustees offered their congratulations.

9. Superintendents Report. The Trustees reviewed the August Superintendent's Report. GM Randall reported on the spill from Maine Beer, noted in the report. The spill had such an oxygen uptake (high BOD-Biochemical Oxygen Demand) that it depleted the oxygen required in the treatment units and upset the whole treatment system. The Superintendent had the blower units that supply air to the units on as high an output as he could to get oxygen into the units. It took over a week to get back to normal operating conditions. Staff met with Maine Beer and drafted an industrial discharge permit for the brewery. Following some testing of the brewery's discharge, the permit will be finalized.

10. Other Business: Following a discussion regarding the proposed 2026 budget for the Trustee stipend, it was agreed that Trustee leadership has taken on many additional duties during the

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upgrade project, and that stipends have seen few increases over the years. Given this, Chad Coffin motioned, seconded by Clerk Elliott, to increase the Chair's annual stipend to \$1,500 and the Treasurer's stipend to \$1,000, with the other Trustees remaining at \$600, retroactive for 2025 and moving forward into 2026. Vote, all in favor, with Hudak abstaining.

11. Schedule. Upcoming meetings will be held Monday, October 20. A Public Hearing followed by the Regular Meeting will be held on Monday, November 17.

There being no further business before the board, it was moved by Vice-Chair Coffin, seconded by Clerk Elliott, to adjourn the meeting at 7:10 P.M. Unanimous approval of Trustees present.