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Minutes of Meeting #150 September 2, 2020

The Maine Public Drinking Water Commission (DWC) held its 150th Meeting on September 2, 2020 via Zoom.

Present Were:

Members: Jeff LaCasse, Kathy Moriarty, Carol White, Bob McKinnon, Lee Worcester, Mike Abbott, DWP Director, and Jim Willis, Board Clerk.

Non-members: Tom Brennan, DWP

Time: Kathy called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM

A. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes from the last meeting were approved with change to the members of DWP Staff Merit Award Committee.

B. RECURRING BUSINESS:

1. DWC MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

Bob McKinnon announced he is retiring from the Yarmouth Water District at the end of the month. Bob will be resigning from the DWC. Tom Brennan has accepted a position with the Maine Drinking Water Program as a senior geologist. Tom will be resigning from the DWC as well. Bob did suggest some names of people who were interested in applying for the vacant seats on the DWC. Jim is going to send out applications to those interested people. The Governor's office has received Jeff's and Rebecca's paperwork. The Governor's office has also indicated that Commission appointments are on hold during this COVID-19 response.

2. SFY 2021 AFM FEE COLLECTION STATUS

David Welch from the Drinking Water Program updated the commission on collection status of the AFM. We are currently at 88.5 percent collection rate which is on par from previous years. There was discussion on the higher rate of inactive/deregulated systems because COVID-19.

3. DWP FINANCIAL REPORT

Mike and David Welch discussed the DWP Financial Report. David discussed the need for an AFM rate increase for the July 1, 2022 (SFY 2023) billing in order to maintain the current level of carryover. The Commission made a motion that passed unanimously to start the process of rule-making to have the base fee increase from \$65.00 to \$70.00, and the Per capita rate increase from \$.60 to \$.65. Overall the DWP is in good shape financially.

4. DWP GENERAL UPDATES (DWSRF, STAFFING, ETC)

Mike stated that the DWP currently has two vacancies. The Maine Drinking Water Program Director position and the ES-4 position that was held by Jim Jacobsen before he retired at the end of June. Mike noted that he has accepted the position of Director of the Division of Environmental and Community Health. Mike is continuing to cover as Director of the DWP until that position is filled. The DWP has hired Jennifer Harris for the Rule specialist position. We have permission to fill Jim Jacobsen's old position. We are waiting on permission to fill the DWP Directors position.

Mike stated that most DWP staff are working remotely from home. The Data Management team has been taking turns coming into the office to complete tasks that can't be done from home.

Mike discussed that staff members from the DWP have been helping the CDC response effort in various ways such as assisting Heath Inspection Program with COVID complaints, and contact tracing.

Mike noted that even with COVID issues the DWP is catching up on Sanitary Surveys.

5. LEGISLATION AND RULEMAKING UPDATE

Mike discussed several bills currently waiting to be reviewed during the next legislative session. Mike stated that we are continuing to work on resubmitting proposed changes to the Drinking Water Rules. We are looking to submit those once the legislature is working again.

6. PUBLIC WATER SYSTEM ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION (OPEN FORUM)

Mike stated that Maia Ferris and Christina Trufant with our rules group are working with schools and the lead testing in schools and possibly looking for new funding to help pay for the new testing.

Mike discussed that the PFAS project is complete and information was sent to the task force.

7. DRINKING WATER PROGRAM STAFF MERRITT AWARD

Kathy announced that the recipients for this year's award is the whole DWP Staff.

8. 2020 DWC MEETING LOCATION

November 18, 2020- Yarmouth Water District, Yarmouth Maine or via Zoom.

Meeting adjourned

Respectfully Submitted
Jim Willis (Board Clerk)