

**Acton Water District  
Finance Committee Meeting Minutes  
October 27, 2023  
693 Massachusetts Avenue  
Acton, MA 01720**

In attendance were Finance Committee members Ron Parenti, Bill Guthlein, and John Petersen. Also in attendance, District Manager: Matthew Mostoller, District Treasurer: Christine McCarthy  
Public Present: Kim Kastens

Mr. William Guthlein called the Finance Committee meeting to order at 8:00 AM.

**Accept Minutes from the September 8, 2023 meeting**

Mr. Petersen made a motion to approve the September 8, 2023 minutes. Mr. Parenti seconded, and it was approved by a roll call vote:

Mr. Guthlein, yes, Mr. Parenti, yes, Mr. Petersen, yes

**Comments from the Public**

Kim Kastens- shared a conductivity data set from Nashoba Brook. Kim will provide a digital copy following the meeting.

**Old Business**

- Review draft of updated financial policies
- FY 24 1<sup>st</sup> Qtr reports
- Formatting of meeting agendas
- Update on Rate Study

**Review draft of updated financial policies**

The finance committee briefly reviewed the Draft of the updated financial policies. Following the meeting, the finance committee members will review the draft in depth and provide Ms. McCarthy with their suggested edits. Ms. McCarthy indicated that she will be adding a section for each of the District's Revolving funds that will explain their purpose and how they function. Ms. McCarthy will email the Microsoft Word version of the policy to the committee following the meeting.

Mr. Petersen spoke about the importance of separating high-level items from policy. Kim Kastens found the draft of the document to be readable, though she did have a few questions. Her first question was related to disaster planning. Mr. Mostoller said the District coordinates with the Town on disaster planning and we have found that we have a finer level of detail in comparison to the Town. Kim also asked for clarity on the Article 97 fund. Ms. McCarthy and Mr. Mostoller spoke about different aspects of the fund. Additional questions that Kim raised were related to the equalized value of the Town of Acton, a clearer definition of inside debt limit versus outside debt limit, and the District's Master Plan. Ms. McCarthy will provide Kim with literature on Municipal Borrowing that explains debt limits in depth.

### **FY 24 1<sup>st</sup> Qtr reports**

Ms. McCarthy then directed the finance committee to the FY 24 1<sup>st</sup> Qtr results. The finance committee would like the reports to be modified going forward. Ms. McCarthy said she is happy to accommodate any requests and asked the finance committee to let her know what modifications they would like to see. Ms. McCarthy also explained to the finance committee that some additional reports were included this time that they have not received before and she will include these in future updates as well. The additional reports include the projected cash flow forecast, bank & investment reconciliation report, and a copy of the Treasurer/Collector report.

### **Formatting of meeting agendas**

Mr. Petersen would like to see "Discussion of Commissioners Meetings" as a standing agenda item on the finance committee agendas.

The contents of the annual report were also brought up and it was discussed that the 10-year comparison be incorporated into the annual meeting instead of the audit report. A discussion then ensued about how the finance committee fits into the annual meeting. A future agenda item will be the annual meeting presentation-potentially a 10 minute block at the annual meeting. Kim Kastens mentioned that she likes the idea of having a presentation incorporated into the annual meeting.

### **Update on Rate Study**

Mr. Mostoller then provided an update on the rate study. Mr. Guthlein asked if the committee was still feeling good about doing the rate study? Mr. Parenti said that he is feeling conflicted and Mr. Petersen isn't committed to it either way but we have to have a follow up at the next annual meeting regardless of the decision.

Mr. Mostoller then mentioned that he will be bringing the following up to the Board of Commissioners. He is planning to recommend that we finish updating the master plan, then conduct an independent review of MWRA and then follow up with a rate study/financial analysis and see how the engineers results translate to a financial model.

Kim Kastens said she is glad this is still being discussed. She is open to the idea of the rate study being part of the master plan and the non-binding resolution call this out. She also feels it's a good idea to get the master plan update back on track, but doesn't think the MWRA should not be part of the study.

Mr. Mostoller stated that the Board of Commissioners has been clear that the rate study should not be part of the master plan.

Mr. Petersen motioned to adjourn the finance committee meeting at 9:30 AM. Mr. Parenti seconded, and it was approved by a roll call vote:

Mr. Parenti, yes, Mr. Guthlein, yes, Mr. Petersen, yes.