

**DISTRICT COMMITTEE- GREATER NEW BEDFORD REGIONAL REFUSE MANAGEMENT
DISTRICT MEETING**

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, July 27, 2023

The District Committee Greater New Bedford Regional Refuse Management District held a publicly posted meeting on **Thursday, July 27, 2023, at 8:00 AM** at the Dartmouth Town Hall - Room 309, 400 Slocum Road, Dartmouth, MA 02747.

District Committee Members in attendance: John Beauregard, Dan Patten, Christine LeBlanc.

Michael Gagne participated remotely via Microsoft Teams.

Kelley Cabral-Mosher was absent

Also in attendance: Scott Alfonse, Executive Director; Anthony Novelli, Assistant Executive Director; Leonor Ferreira, Secretary; Tom King, Accountant; Shari L'Italien, Scale Operator (8:00 a.m. to 8:15 a.m.).

Call to order / Salute the flag

Chairperson Beauregard called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m.

1. Legal notices

Pursuant to Section 20 of Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2021, as amended by Section 3 of Chapter 107 of the Acts of 2022 Michael Gagne, a member a member of the District Committee, is participating remotely in this meeting.

Chairperson Beauregard reminded the members that texting and private chats on Microsoft Teams, or any other channel are not an acceptable method of remote participation. He also wanted to remind members that all members can be heard when they are speaking and if he or any member cannot hear another member, please let him or the Executive Director know.

Finally, he wanted to state that if Mr. Gagne's remote connection is lost, he should attempt to sign back in. If remote connection is lost, the time of disconnection and the time of reconnection will be noted.

Pursuant to the Open Meeting Law, any person may make an audio or video recording of this public meeting or may transmit the meeting through any medium. Attendees are therefore advised that such recordings and transmissions are being made, whether perceived or unperceived, by those present, and are deemed acknowledged and permissible.

All legal notices of the meeting were posted in Dartmouth and New Bedford more than 48 hours prior to the meeting.

3. Roll call of members

Chairperson Beauregard - yes; participation in person
Daniel Patten - yes; participation in person
Christine LeBlanc - yes; participation in person
Michael Gagne - yes; participation remotely via Microsoft Teams
Kelley Cabral-Mosher - absent

4. Approval of Minutes

Approval of Minutes of June 13, 2023, regular session and executive session, and Minutes of July 7, 2023, regular session.

Motion to approve the minutes from June 13, 2023, regular session, June 13, 2023, Executive Session, and July 7, 2023, regular session made by Ms. LeBlanc, seconded by Mr. Patten. All voted in favor.

Motion carried 4 to 0.

5. Warrant Report and Ratification

Warrant 23-23 dated June 9, 2023; Warrant 24-23 dated June 9, 2023; Warrant 25-23 dated June 23, 2023; Warrant 1-24 dated July 12, 2023.

Motion to approve Warrant 23-23 dated June 9, 2023; Warrant 24-23 dated June 9, 2023; Warrant 25-23 dated June 23, 2023; and Warrant 1-24 dated July 12, 2023, made by Mr. Patten, seconded by Ms. LeBlanc. All voted in favor.

Motion carried 4 to 0.

6. New Business

a. AMCS Scale Software Contract

Motion to approve and authorize the Executive Director to sign the AMCS scale software contract for years 2 and 3 made by Mr. Patten, seconded by Ms. LeBlanc.

Mr. Novelli reviewed the memo. He recognized Shari L'Italien, Scale Operator, who provided an update on the ongoing scale computer software system upgrade with AMCS. She noted that it's a cloud based system that will provide real time information from the scale to the office staff for reporting review and billing.

Mr. Beauregard asked if it was related to the TNS Group. Mr. Novelli replied noting that TNS was related to cyber security.

Mr. Alfonse noted that there has been discussion in the past about upgrading the scale software, but it never materialized. With Mr. Novelli and Ms. L'Italien's support, the District was able to get the implementation of the software by the beginning of this fiscal year.

Ms. L'Italien noted that the previous scale software was no longer maintained by the company. The new software is maintained and supported by AMCS Scale. She also noted that other landfill staff are being trained to use the scale software computer system.

Ms. LeBlanc asked if there have been any changes to the haulers. Ms. L'Italien noted the only change is the ticket formatting.

Mr. Beauregard asked if there were any other capabilities available that District could be utilizing. Mr. Novelli described the different options available with the software and noted that the District does not currently have the need to use them.

The group discussed the process for tracking and charging banned items from the landfill. Mr. Novelli noted that the District paid for the software for the first year, and approval is needed for years two and three of the contract.

Motion to approve made by Mr. Patten, seconded by Ms. LeBlanc. Roll call vote: Chairperson John Beauregard, yes; Daniel Patten, yes; Christine LeBlanc, yes; Michael Gagne, yes; Kelley Cabral-Mosher, absent.

Motion carried 4 – 0.

Ms. L'Italien left the meeting at 8:15 a.m.

b. Staff Reports

Motion to receive staff reports made by Mr. Patten, seconded by Ms. LeBlanc.

Mr. Alfonse reviewed the memo.

Mr. Beauregard mentioned the New Bedford Public Schools dishwasher grant information. Mr. Alfonse said the grant involved the purchase of installation of 10 school dishwasher systems and reusable trays to replace the Styrofoam trays that were previously used. He noted that the usable trays have saved 1.6 million trays in one year from going into the landfill (roughly 50 tons of waste).

Mr. Beauregard noted that such an accomplishment should be reported in the newspaper.

It was noted by Ms. LeBlanc that the Town of Dartmouth does not use Styrofoam trays.

Mr. Novelli noted that the District conducted an auction and sold surplus property which was something Mr. Peckham, Operations Manager, has been working to get accomplished since 2015. It generated approximately \$158,000. He noted that the District is requesting quotes for the cutting and removal of hay and grass on two District owned properties, including the field behind the District office.

7. Old Business

a. Buffer Property Renovations

Motion to approve the transfer of \$193,600 from the Building Capital Improvement Reserve into the BayCoast Money Market account and to award the contract to DDC Construction, Inc. for window and HVAC replacement at 74 and 612 Quanapoag Rd. Motion made by Mr. Patten, seconded by Ms. Leblanc (for discussion only).

Mr. Alfonse reviewed the memo. He noted that the item was tabled at the last meeting. Since then, it has been determined that the District cannot award only the window replacement portion of the project. The applicable bidding laws require the District to award the entire project. To move forward with only the window replacement, but not the heating system, District would be required to reject the current bids and re-bid for the window project only. It was advertised as one project. There would be an expense with the architects and advertising for the project. He noted that it could be a more competitive bidding since DCAMM certification would not be required.

Mr. Novelli noted the additional expense of \$5,000 for the JMBA architects and readvertising.

Mr. Alfonse said the property at 74 Quanapoag Rd would still need a heating system before renting the property. He described public construction procurement versus private procurement requirements.

Ms. LeBlanc noted that her preference would be to reject the current bid, rebid for the window replacement at 612 Quanapoag Rd property and get it ready for the winter. She acknowledged the extra \$5,000 for the architects to revise the specifications and advertisement. She suggested that the group have a discussion regarding what to do with the property at 74 Quanapoag Rd (sell it, rent it going forward, and what the future costs would be so it can be rented).

Mr. Beauregard recognized the cost of the project, but was not in favor of rebidding because both houses are in decent condition. He also noted that he was not in favor of demolishing 74 Quanapoag Rd which needed the heating system because it is an asset. He prefers moving forward with the bid as is.

Mr. Patten noted that consideration should be taken with other repairs and expenses, besides the heating system at the 74 Quanapoag Rd property. The District will not get paid back right now with just the heating system. The payback is going to be over three years. It would probably take over five years for the District to break even on the expenses.

Mr. Gagne noted that he agreed with Ms. LeBlanc and Mr. Patten's comments. District should address the house that has the occupants in it. He suggested the project rebid.

Mr. Alfonse noted that the architects would have to prepare bid specifications for the window portion into a new set of bid specifications.

After further discussion the group agreed to rebid the project for the window replacement only at 612 Quanapoag Rd.

Motion to authorize the District to authorize JMBA to prepare new bid specifications for windows only at 612 Quanapoag Road and to advertise that for construction. Motion made by Ms. LeBlanc, seconded by Mr. Patten. All voted in favor.

Motion carried 4 – 0.

b. Discuss District Staff and Organization

Motion to discuss District staff and organization made by Mr. Patten, seconded by Ms. LeBlanc.

Comparison of Costs for In-House Legal Counsel Vs. Outside Counsel

Mr. Alfonse noted that at the last two meetings the Committee discussed the prospect of retaining in-house legal counsel as a part time employee approximately 20 hours per week. He was asked to confirm the total number of hours per week an employee could work before they would be eligible for benefits. The Committee also asked him for a transitional plan, including an organizational chart and position tasks, in preparation for the Executive Director and Operations Manager's retirement.

Mr. Alfonse reviewed the memo noting the "Comparison of costs for in-house legal counsel vs. outside counsel" tables.

Ms. LeBlanc referred to the "District Counsel Utilization" table and expressed concern over the increase from 2 or 3 hours per week to 20 hours per week. Mr. Alfonse said the information presented did not reflect his opinion. He presented the facts on something that he was asked to gather by the board.

Ms. LeBlanc asked if the threshold for benefits (health insurance and participation in retirement system) was 20 hours a week . Mr. Alfonse said that it was, to his understanding.

Mr. Beauregard noted that from a business decision, it makes more sense financially to hire counsel as a part time employee rather than paying him on a contract basis.

Mr. Alfonse noted that anything less than 20 hours a week would not require the District to offer benefits.

Ms. LeBlanc noted that typically when there's a need to hire, there's an advertisement for that position. She asked if District had to do the same for this position. Mr. Alfonse noted that it's a policy decision for the Committee.

Mr. Gagne noted he favored a 6 month agreement. He offered to send Mr. Alfonse a copy of his contract with the city because it addresses provisions raised by Mr. Alfonse and how to deal with them. He said that with the upcoming expected transitions, he would suggest starting with a six month contract at 20 hours per week. This would provide some latitude to adjust dependent on the circumstances change over the period before the next 6 moth renewal. He noted that for Counsel he recommended starting a 15 hours per week contract with some hours dedicated each day of the week at the District. Ms. LeBlanc recommended the language be changed to up to, not exceeding, 10 hours a week.

Mr. Beauregard noted the reason he recommended the part-time position initially. He saw it as a resource for Mr. Novelli to reach out to for guidance on legal issues after the current Executive Director retired.

The group discussed whether to hire counsel part time at 20 hours or less with or without benefits. Mr. Patten and Ms. Leblanc did not favor the 20 hours per week and showed concern with justifying it.

After further discussion the group decided to keep counsel contract as is.

Draft Transitional Plan

Mr. Alfonse reviewed the transitional plan. He said Ms. Cabral-Mosher requested the plan at the last meeting.

Ms. LeBlanc clarified that the part-time positions at 10 hours per week did not include benefits. Mr. Alfonse said that as retirees they are eligible for health insurance benefit.

Mr. Beauregard asked if hours were up to 10 hours a week or not to exceed 10 hours a week. Mr. Alfonse said that it would have to be decided.

Mr. Patten asked if Mr. Alfonse checked with retirement on limits on the number of hours a retiree can work post-retirement. Mr. Alfonse said yes, and described the limits.

Mr. Alfonse noted that there's not a significant budgetary impact in this fiscal year for the new part-time positions. He encouraged the group to review some of the assumptions and provide comment for the next meeting.

8. Items That Could Not Be Reasonably Anticipated 48 Hours In Advance

None

9. Set Meeting Schedule

The September meeting is scheduled for Thursday, September 21, 2023, and the October meeting is scheduled for October 19, 2023.

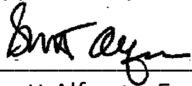
10. Adjourn

Motion to adjourn made by Ms. LeBlanc, seconded by Mr. Patten. All voted in favor.

Motion carried 4 – 0.

Meeting adjourned at 9:19 a.m.

Approved by vote of District Committee on August 22, 2023.



Scott Alfonse, Executive Director

MEMOS

- 6a. AMCS Scale Software Contract dated 7/27/2023
- 6b. Staff Reports dated 7/27/2023
- 7a. Buffer Property Renovations dated 7/27/2023
- 7b. Discuss District Staff and Organizations