

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

Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, August 22, 2023

The District Committee Greater New Bedford Regional Refuse Management District held a publicly posted meeting on **Tuesday, August 22, 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, Kelley Cabral-Mosher, Michael Gagne.

Also in attendance: Scott Alfonse, Executive Director; Anthony Novelli, Assistant Executive Director; Leonor Ferreira, Secretary; Tom King, Accountant, and Matthew J. Thomas, Counsel.

Call to order / Salute the flag

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

1. Legal notices

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 John Beauregard – yes

Daniel Patten - yes

Christine LeBlanc - yes

Kelley Cabral-Mosher – yes

Michael Gagne - yes

4. Approval of Minutes

Approval of Minutes of July 27, 2023, regular session minutes

Motion to approve the minutes from July 27, 2023, made by Mr. Patten, seconded by Ms. LeBlanc. All voted in favor.

Motion carried 5 to 0.

5. Warrant Report and Ratification

Motion to ratify Warrant 2-24 dated July 26, 2023 and Warrant 3-24 dated August 9, 2023 made by Mr. Patten, seconded by Ms. LeBlanc. All voted in favor.

Motion carried 5 to 0.

6. Old Business

a. Discuss District Staff and Organization

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

Mr. Alfonse reviewed the memo noting that it was a continuation of last meeting's discussion. The District Committee asked for a transitional plan, including an organizational chart and position tasks which was presented at the last meeting. The organizational chart has been revised since then. He review the revised assumptions, and total salaries for FY 2024. He asked Committee members if they had any comments on the assumptions provided.

Mr. Beauregard asked if Mr. Alfonse prorated the Executive Director's current pay into an hourly rate. Mr. Alfonse said yes and noted that all proposed pay rates and hours are open for discussion.

Mr. Beauregard asked if there were any internal employees interested in Team Leader position. Mr. Alfonse said that there doesn't seem to be any interested candidates internally and that position may have to be advertised. Mr. Beauregard asked if the position required a certain level of expertise and/or experience. Mr. Alfonse said that Mr. Peckham preferred a candidate who had some level of managerial and supervisory experience. Mr. Beauregard noted the hourly rate for the Team Leader position and asked if Mr. Alfonse believed it would be an adequate rate to attract potential candidates. Mr. Alfonse said he wasn't sure, and said the pay rate would depend on the candidates experience.

Mr. Gagne asked if the candidate must be someone who specialized in landfill operations or could it be someone with construction management experience. Mr. Alfonse described the requirements. Mr. Gagne agreed with Mr. Beauregard's comments and noted that pay rate was low compared to other municipalities. Mr. Alfonse said that it was the lowest step for the grade of the position and suggested the committee could review and/or revise the grade or salary schedule. Mr. Gagne described the city advertises the full salary range. Mr. Patten suggested adding the pay range.

Mr. Beauregard asked if the Operations Manager was in agreement with the 10 hours per week schedule. Mr. Alfonse said yes.

Mr. Gagne asked if the allocation of hours involved onsite presence. Mr. Alfonse said that as proposed, he and Mr. Peckham would be part-time hourly employees without benefits. He said he wasn't anticipating either part-time position functioning as a consultant. The board would determine if onsite presence was required and if so, they could be onsite once a week. Mr. Gagne noted that being onsite one day or half-day per week would be beneficial to the new staff. He suggested that District could cover Mr. Alfonse's travel expenses when he has to be onsite.

Mr. Beauregard noted that he and Mr. Alfonse were going to meet and discuss further. A formal plan would be presented at the next meeting.

After further discussion the group said that they will continue to work through the process.

7. Old Business

a. Anaerobic Digester Future Plans

Item to be discussed in Executive Session at the end of open session.

Committee moved to discuss item 7b.

b. Presentation of Draft Employee Handbook

Motion to review the Draft Employee Handbook made by Ms. LeBlanc, seconded by Mr. Patten.

Mr. Alfonse thanked the Personnel Subcommittee for their thoughtful input in the draft Employee Handbook. He reviewed the memo noting some the additions and changes to the handbook.

Mr. Beauregard asked if there were any major changes made or added to the handbook. Ms. LeBlanc noted that it provides clarification to employees. Mr. Beauregard asked if the District offers an EAP (Employee Assistance Program). Mr. Alfonse said it is offered through MIIA.

Mr. Patten noted the language on item 4.6 bereavement time about attending the funeral or service. Mr. Alfonse noted that the intent was to give the employee time to grieve and/or spend with family and not require attendance at a service.

Mr. Patten referred to the language on item 4.9 and item 4.5 and suggested language between the two items were similar which could be confusing to employees. Mr. Alfonse clarified the language between item 4.5 and item 4.9. Attorney Thomas described the qualifying events under item 4.9 Family Leave (FMLA). Mr. Patten referred to the 12 weeks of paid family leave and asked if that was a requirement or if it was District's policy. Ms. LeBlanc noted that it was federal law. Mr. Alfonse noted that Parental Leave is subject to the Executive Director's approval.

Mr. Alfonse replied to Mr. Patten's question on withholding employee wages for unreturned uniforms and said there are restrictions on withholding wages, and that in general employee uniforms are returned.

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

Motion carried 5 – 0.

c. Executive Director Work Schedule

Motion to consider a request from the Executive Director for a hybrid work schedule made by Mr. Patten, seconded by Ms. LeBlanc.

Mr. Alfonse reviewed the memo with his proposed work schedule. The request is for a hybrid work schedule (2 days onsite, and 3 days remotely) beginning October 1 through the end of the year until his full time employment is completed. District Committee agreed to request.

Motion to approve the request made by Mr. Gagne, seconded by Ms. LeBlanc. All voted in favor.

Motion carried 5 – 0.

d. Staff Report

Motion to receive the staff report made by Mr. Patten, seconded by Ms. LeBlanc. Motion carried 5 to 0.

Mr. Novelli reviewed the staff report memo.

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

Mr. Beauregard noted that he and Ms. LeBlanc have been discussing disposal of natural disaster debris. He described the recent natural disaster events in other states (i.e. Hawaii, California, etc.).

Attorney Thomas noted that debris from natural disasters has been accepted at the Crapo Hill Landfill in the past. Mr. Alfonse described the items prohibited from the landfill and noted that when there's a natural disaster and there's a public health emergency, typically MassDEP will suspend those bans (wood, construction material, etc.).

Ms. LeBlanc said the town has a very general disaster plan. She believed the town would assume debris would be disposed of in the landfill. Mr. Alfonse said that there needs to be a comprehensive plan that identifies sites in the communities where residents, city, town or contractors would bring the material and a plan for segregating material.

The group discussed using another town's emergency preparedness plan as an outline for the District.

Mr. Gagne described Mattapoisett's emergency preparedness plan.

Ms. LeBlanc noted that the Town of Dartmouth's plan was considered confidential and a public records request would be needed for the District to obtain a copy. She suggested District invite town and city administrators or representatives and discuss District's concerns noting the limited landfill capacity, and ask them to devise a plan. It was also suggested that the District state in writing that it could not accept the material. Attorney Thomas said the District Agreement makes the District legally responsible for managing the town and city's solid waste. He agreed that the group should discuss an emergency preparedness plan with the city and town. Attorney Thomas suggested asking them to review the document.

Ms. LeBlanc asked if the District had an obligation in perpetuity to provide waste management for the City of New Bedford and the Town of Dartmouth. Attorney Thomas said yes, noting that as long as the District exists it's supposed to be the facilitator. Ms. LeBlanc asked if the District would be obligated to enter into contracts to collect materials (i.e. wallboard) at designated locations. Attorney Thomas said yes or it could contract with the city and noting that there would be part of their assessment.

The group discussed FEMA's rules for emergency procurement and reimbursements (parameters) during a natural disaster.

Mr. Gagne suggested the Executive Director meet with Brian Nobrega, Director of Emergency Management for the City of New Bedford. Ms. LeBlanc and Mr. Novelli would also participate in the meeting.

Mr. Alfonse described the town's community resilience plan workshop done by the Comprehensive Environmental Inc., (CEI) Consultants through the Conservation Commission Office. Ms. LeBlanc said she would contact them.

9. Set Meeting Schedule

The November meeting is scheduled for November 14, 2023.

Mr. Gagne expressed his concerns with the Dartmouth Transfer Station staffing issues especially on Saturdays. He wanted to inform the group that he would be contacting the transfer station and echo his concerns not as a District member but as a citizen.

10. **Executive Session** – To comply with, or act under the authority of, any general or special law or federal grant-in-aid requirements.

Motion to go into Executive Session pursuant to General Laws Chapter 30A, Section 21(a)(7). The District will discuss policies that have not been fully formulated. The draft documents are exempt from the public records law under Mass. General Law Chapter 4, Section 7, Clause twenty-sixth (d), so any discussion regarding those non-public documents should be in executive session. Once the document is fully formulated, the document and the discussion will become part of the public records. Upon conclusion of Executive Session, the Committee will adjourn and will not return to Open Session, and going into Executive Session pursuant to 38 Section 21(a)6 to consider the lease of District property since discussion and open session would have a detrimental effect on the negotiating decisions. Motion made by Mr. Patten, seconded by Ms. LeBlanc. Roll call vote: John Beauregard, yes; Daniel Patten, yes; Christine LeBlanc, yes; Kelley Cabral-Mosher, yes; Michael Gagne, yes.

Committee entered into Executive Session at 8:58 a.m.

Committee returned to open session at 9:28 a.m.

Motion to authorize the Executive Director and Assistant Executive Director to speak to CNBE regarding their request to increase the use of the lease area they presently occupy. Motion made by Mr. Patten, seconded by Ms. LeBlanc. All voted in favor.

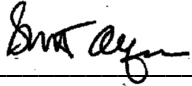
Motion carried 5 – 0.

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

Motion carried 5 – 0.

Meeting adjourned at 9:29 a.m.

Approved by vote of District Committee on October 19, 2023.



Scott Alfonse, Executive Director

MEMOS

- 6a. Memo - Discuss District Staff and Organization dated 8/22/2023
Attachment – Draft Interim Organizational Chart Jan. to June 2024
Attachment – PERAC memo #1/2023
- 7a. Memo - Anaerobic Digester future plans dated 8/22/2023
Attachment – CRMC letter re: Proposal to Expand the Existing AD Project within the CNBE Site Lease Area
- 7b. Memo - Presentation of Draft Employee Handbook dated 8/22/2023
Attachment – Draft Personnel Handbook
- 7c. Memo – Executive Director Work Schedule dated 8/22/2023
- 7d. Memo – Staff Report dated 8/22/2023
Attachment – commercial and Municipal Tonnage – March 2021 to July 2023
Attachment – Budget to Actual – Operating Revenues and Expenses for the Twelve Months Ending June 30, 2023
Attachment – Budget to Actual – Operating Revenues and Expenses for the Twelve Months Ending June 30, 2024