

## GREATER NEW BEDFORD REGIONAL REFUSE MANAGEMENT DISTRICT MEETING

### Meeting Minutes

Thursday, November 17, 2022

The Greater New Bedford Regional Refuse Management District Committee held a publicly posted meeting on **Thursday, November 17, 2022, at 8:00 A.M.** at the Dartmouth Town Hall, Room 315, 400 Slocum Road, Dartmouth, MA.

**District Committee Members in attendance:** Chairperson, John Beauregard; Daniel Patten, Christine LeBlanc, Michael Gagne, Kelley Cabral-Mosher, Ken Blanchard.

**Also in attendance:** Scott Alfonse, Executive Director; Leonor Ferreira, Secretary; Matthew J. Thomas, District Counsel.

**Other attendees:** Anthony Novelli, arrived at 8:00 a.m. and left at 8:35 a.m. Marissa Perez-Dornitzer, Waste Reduction Manager, arrived at 8:00 a.m. and left at 9:02 a.m.; Shawn Peckham, Operations Manager, arrived at 8:00 a.m. and left at 9:02 a.m.; Tom King, District Accountant, arrived at 8:00 a.m. and left at 10:11 a.m. Mary Sahady, Hauge, Sahady & Co., arrived at 8:50 a.m. and left at 9:26 a.m., and Andrew Lima, Hauge, Sahady & Co., arrived at 9:00 a.m. and left at 9:26 a.m.

#### 1. Call to order / Salute the flag

Chairperson Beauregard called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m. and led a salute to the flag.

#### 2. Legal notices

Mr. Beauregard noted that legal notices of the meeting were posted in Dartmouth and New Bedford more than 48 hours prior to the meeting.

Chairperson Beauregard read the following statement:

“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.”

#### 3. Roll call of members

Chairperson John Beauregard, yes  
Daniel Patten, yes  
Christine LeBlanc, yes  
Michael Gagne, yes  
Ken Blanchard, yes  
Kelley Cabral-Mosher, yes

#### 4. New Business

- a. Interview finalists for Assistant Executive Director / Operations Manager; Discussion of candidates.

**Motion to interview and discuss finalists for the position of Assistant Executive Director / Operations Manager made by Ms. LeBlanc, seconded by Mr. Patten. All voted in favor.  
Motion passed 6 – 0.**

Mr. Beauregard asked Anthony Novelli (the candidate) for his feedback on his visit to the office and facility. He offered his impressions on his site visit and District staff.

Mr. Beauregard reviewed the screening process to date and asked the candidate to give those that did not attend the screening meeting a brief overview of his background. He described his background and his work in the solar industry and recycling/waste management efforts with Island Green Living Association (IGLA) in St. John, USVI. He recently relocated to Massachusetts to be closer to family and is now looking to engage in the waste management field.

Mr. Patten referred to the candidate's major in college and asked him what his thoughts were at that time about what he would do upon graduation. His initial thoughts were in the biomedical field, but he gravitated more towards ecology and the environmental aspects of biology. Experiences in St. John (debris management from 2 hurricanes and witnessing the lack of recycling) helped shape his interest in waste reduction and management.

Mr. Patten asked about his involvement with EPA. He said that at IGLA, he managed the compost program in accordance with EPA standards for compost management and described the standards. Ms. LeBlanc asked if he was responsible for reporting to EPA on the compost program. Mr. Novelli responded that reporting on the program was more a condition of a grant from the Community Foundation of Virgin Islands.

Mr. Patten asked about his experience with business owners and local officials which was noted on his resume. He responded that he promoted and expanded recycling programs for IGLA. He described the details of their interactions with the government waste management authority and the National Park Service (NPS). Mr. Beauregard asked how the interactions were received by NPS. He described some of requirements for receptacles and how they were able to focus on concessions on leased land and work with leaseholder/concessionaires to avoid cumbersome NPS requirements. He developed contracts with businesses to collect recycling. He promoted the services to businesses on the island. Mr. Beauregard asked how businesses received these proposals. He described initial hesitation, which eventually grew into support for providing a solution.

Mr. Patten asked him to explain the process of building the compost program. The candidate explained that IGLA received a grant for wood chipping and Bobcat, and he managed staff. Brush was dumped at a transfer station. The material contained some trash, and had to be picked through to improve quality. They planned to sell woodchips to the community. Once it was up and running, the IGLA president connected with compost system operator. The Operator was trying to sell its compost system to the USVI government. IGLA agreed to operate a pilot project for them. IGLA did not have space to run a compost program for the entire island, but they did create a pilot program. The initial grant was for wood chipping. The pilot compost project's goal was to create a larger compost project that could be sold to the USVI government.

Mr. Blanchard asked him to describe municipal waste collection in St. John. He said there is no curbside collection, only central drop off locations. Businesses can contract curbside collection. Waste is sent to St. Thomas by barge for disposal. There are no tipping fees for disposal. He noted the challenges introducing recycling, since no one has historically paid for trash disposal.

Mr. Blanchard asked about his administrative responsibilities described on his resume. He responded that at IGLA he was responsible for staffing, hiring, managing staff, scheduling, and assisting with grant writing and reporting. He worked with the executive director on the development of strategic plans.

Mr. Gagne asked about the operating budget and number of employees at IGLA. He said it was about \$200,000 per year and 7 full time employees.

Mr. Beauregard asked where he sees himself in 5 years. The candidate shared his personal and professional goals. He wants to be doing something that results in a positive impact on the environment. He is new to the area and enjoys meeting people. He is excited to network and get involved with the business community. He wants to work with an organization that is working towards solutions and wants to be in a leadership position. At IGLA, he helped the organization grow. Each employee hired was a big accomplishment for the organization. He enjoyed growing through that and managing a team that worked towards their goals.

Mr. Patten asked if the budget was from revenue, grants, or a combination. The candidate responded that a lot of funding was from donations. Recently the thrift store has been generating more income. Recycling initially did not produce net revenue, but they were able to partner with companies and backhaul material to Puerto Rico on barges that would have otherwise been empty. They found ways to cut costs.

Mr. Beauregard asked what caused him to begin these programs and if he created these partnerships. He noted that working in restaurants, he saw first-hand the opportunities for recycling. He initially wanted a bottle crushing operation and would use the glass in concrete. He had discussions with the owner of a concrete company and planned to work with him to introduce glass into the aggregate. He started to reach out to the community to source glass, and met an IGLA board member who was trying to revive the organization. They had a can crusher and land and that began the can recycling operation. Composting came about through the board president who met the compost operator. The candidate did a lot of relationship management. He helped implement the vision of others.

Mr. Patten asked for clarification on president and board members. Mr. Novelli provided an overview of the governing board of IGLA, who were volunteers.

Mr. Alfonse noted his hands-on and operational experience, and his stated desire for outdoor work. Understanding that the position is more administrative (less outdoor and operational), what is it that attracted him to this? He responded that he enjoys hands on, but enjoys building something and then delegating. He sees an opportunity to learn from both the Executive Director and Operations Manager. He enjoys being hands on, but enjoys working with people and challenges. He is not deterred by the administrative functions.

Mr. Beauregard thanked Mr. Novelli and the staff.

Mr. Novelli left the meeting at 8:35 a.m.

The group discussed Mr. Novelli's administrative experience. It was suggested that if the District moved forward with the candidate, he could benefit from additional administrative professional development.

Mr. Beauregard noted his initiative, which was one of the traits that impressed the screening committee.

Mr. Beauregard noted that the other finalist withdrew his application. Mr. Gagne described the challenging hiring market.

The group discussed the work and time necessary to prepare a candidate to assume the Executive Director's job. They discussed the idea of creating another position more project focused for a period of time, and postponed hiring an assistant for now.

District staff present at the meeting described positive interactions with the candidate and there was consensus that he is a good fit for the District.

Mr. Blanchard echoed the tight job market and asked Mr. Alfonse if he thought his background and personality would translate into success in the position. Mr. Alfonse replied yes. He noted he also has excellent, enthusiastic references.

Ms. Cabral-Mosher suggested that administrative skills can be learned in the right environment. Skills like passion and energy are harder to come by.

It was suggested that with mentoring, it would be evident within a few months as to whether the candidate would ascend to a leadership role. The position could be made provisional.

Mr. Beauregard summarized the District hoped to fill the position with someone with demonstrated administrative experience. However, the Committee is fully impressed and wants to create a position which could evolve into a management role. The District would postpone hiring the Assistant for a few months.

The Committee agreed Mr. Novelli represents an opportunity for the District. The Committee discussed the proposed salary and experience required for the position.

**Motion to table discussion on item 4a. made by Mr. Patten, seconded by Mr. Blanchard.**

Ms. Perez-Dormitzer, and Mr. Peckham left the meeting at 9:02 a.m.

- b. FY 2022 Audit presentation by representatives of Hague, Sahady & Co.  
**Motion to hear presentation from representatives of Hague, Sahady & Co. on the audited Financial Statements for FY 2022 made by Mr. Patten, seconded by Mr. Blanchard. All voted in favor. Motion passed 6 – 0.**

Mr. Lima referred to the Financial Statements and noted that there were no major findings. He noted the new standard Governmental Accounting Standards Board Statement No. 87 (GASB 87), Leases, implementation. He reviewed page 5 (Financial Highlights) noting the increase in the District's net position. He noted that OPEB Trust remains an asset as it has in the past .

Mr. Beauregard asked if deposits were being made into the OPEB trust. Mr. Lima said no. Mr. Alfonse noted that last fiscal year was the first year the District utilized \$37,000 from the trust to cover retiree portion health care costs. Mr. Lima referred to page 22 (Fiduciary Net Position) noting the Operating Expense of \$37,000.

Mr. Lima reviewed page 11 (Management's Discussion and Analysis) as presented.

Mr. Lima discussed Statement of Revenues and Expenses – Budget and Actual (Non-GAAP Budgetary Basis) on page 57, and page 58, and noted the amount available for the FY 2022 Reconciliation, which is approximately 1.2 million.

Mr. Lima discussed the Statement of Restricted Net Position on pages 59, 60 and 61 as presented, which are the District's various reserve accounts.

Mr. Lima reviewed page 48 (Financial Statements) GASB 87, as presented. Mr. Alfonse noted the basis for the payments on the lease and described the lease with Commonwealth New Bedford Energy, LLC (CNBE).

Mr. Lima reviewed page 15 and 16 (Statement of Net Position).

Mr. Lima discussed pages 53 and 54 (Required Supplementary Information) noting Net OPEB asset decrease from prior fiscal year. He noted that liabilities and actuarial estimates contributed to the reduction. Mr. Alfonse noted that previous evaluations were defendant on a computer model.

Mr. Lima reviewed page 55 (Required Supplementary Information) noting the Net Pension Liability.

Mr. Lima and Ms. Sahady concluded the presentation.

Mr. Beauregard commended Mr. King for a job well done.

Mr. Gagne noted that the District is one of six municipalities that has fully funded its OPEB liability and he commended District staff (past and present) for all their efforts. It is a significant accomplishment.

Mr. Lima, and Ms. Sahady left the meeting at 9:26 a.m.

**Motion to take item 4a. from the table made by Mr. Patten, seconded by Mr. Blanchard.**

The Committee continued discussion on salary and the idea of creating a new “project specialist” position.

The discussion focused on the Committee’s agreement that while the candidate does not currently have requisite administrative experience, they are impressed with his enthusiasm and experience. They propose to create a separate position and would like to know if the candidate is interested. This would provide a pathway to applying for the Assistant position in the future.

Mr. Gagne said there should be no guarantee that the Assistant would naturally ascend to the Executive Director.

Mr. Patten said that if the District intends to create a project specialist position, fill it immediately, and wait a few months to fill the position of Assistant Executive Director, which should be communicated to the candidate. Mr. Beauregard agreed that the District should wait to fill the Assistant Executive Director position. The District may want to look at revamping some of the job descriptions of other District staff.

Ms. Cabral-Mosher asked Mr. Alfonse for his thoughts.

He said he felt the candidate could perform the job of Assistant Executive Director/ Operations Manager. He feels a candidate’s demeanor alone can dictate whether they are successful. He feels his experience, demeanor, and willingness to learn will result in success. He has demonstrated the ability to learn and make something out of nothing. Mr. Alfonse does respect the concerns about the candidates’ limited administrative experience.

Mr. Alfonse reviewed the District’s outreach efforts to recruit and the limited response. He sees this as proof that there is not a large pool of candidates, and is not convinced that re-advertising will bring a greater response. He said that the District needs to decide the salary of a new position.

The Committee continued its discussion on salary and professional development / tuition assistance.

Ms. LeBlanc noted the position will help him get the experience.

It was decided that Mr. Alfonse should communicate the District’s intent – to create a “project specialist” position at a starting rate of approximately \$75,000 / year. He would expect he would be a candidate for Assistant Executive Director, which would likely be readvertised in a few months. This would give him experience for the position.

Mr. Gagne said it is important to put the salary into some context of the District’s pay scale. Mr. Alfonse reviewed the higher grades / positions of the District’s salary schedule. The Committee agreed that the new position would be Grade 7 (step 3).

Mr. Alfonse noted that the District may want to look at health insurance contributions and asked if it is something the Committee wants to explore. Mr. Beauregard agreed this should be discussed.

Ms. Cabral-Mosher asked about the impacts to the budget of the new positions and whether these positions are permanent additions to the budget. Mr. Alfonse said that there will be a

temporary impact on the budget resulting from a new position. But staffing levels could return to current levels through attrition.

The Committee discussed whether to engage a consultant to advise the District on its organizational structure.

The Committee agreed to meet again after Mr. Alfonse has talked with Mr. Novelli. The meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, November 23, 2022, at 8:00 a.m.

Ms. Cabral-Mosher said the District should have Mr. Novelli create his own professional development plan.

c. **FY 2022 Reconciliation and discussion of District reserves**

**Motion to discuss the draft FY 2022 reconciliation and proposed deposits to District reserves made by Ms. LeBlanc, seconded by Mr. Patten. All voted in favor. Motion passed 6 – 0.**

Mr. Alfonse reviewed the reconciliation process for the committee. He then reviewed the Draft FY 2022 Reconciliation and proposed deposits of FY 2022 revenue to reserves. He referred to the spreadsheet and discussed the table “District Reserve Balances and Goals – November 2022” as presented.

Mr. Beauregard asked if any equipment was going to be needed. Mr. Alfonse replied noting that no major equipment was needed, just small repairs, and that funds are available in the Operating Budget for those expenses.

Mr. Alfonse noted the FY 2022 Community Tonnage & Assessments. New Bedford has a credit of \$2,423 and Dartmouth has debit of \$(2,423). These will be applied to the FY 2023 assessments.

**Motion to authorize the Treasurer to certify the Fiscal Year 2022 Reconciliation and approve the transfer of the following FY 2022 revenue into the following reserve funds:**

- **\$300,000 into Future Solid Waste Management Trust Fund**
- **\$993,485 into Phase 2 Design and Construction Trust Fund**

**Motion made by Ms. LeBlanc, seconded by Mr. Blanchard. All voted in favor. Motion passed 6 – 0.**

**5. Approval of Minutes**

a. **October 26, 2022 regular session meeting**

**Motion to approve minutes of October 26, 2022, regular session meeting made by Mr. Gagne, seconded by Ms. LeBlanc. All voted in favor. Motion passed 6 – 0.**

b. **October 26, 2022, executive session meeting**

**Motion to approve minutes of October 26, 2022, executive session meeting made by Ms. LeBlanc, seconded by Mr. Blanchard. All voted in favor. Motion passed 6 – 0.**

**6. Warrant report and Ratification**

a. **Warrant 7-23 dated October 26, 2022, and Warrant 8-23 dated November 4, 2022**

**Motion to accept the warrant reports and ratify Warrant 7-23 dated October 26, 2022, and Warrant 8-23 dated November 4, 2022, made by Ms. LeBlanc, seconded by Mr. Blanchard. All voted in favor. Motion passed 6 – 0.**

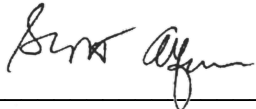
**7. Adjourn**

**Motion to adjourn made by Mr. Blanchard, seconded by Mr. Patten. All voted in favor.  
Motion passed 6 to 0.**

Attorney Thomas noted for the record that the hours noted on the agenda was guidance for the Chairperson only and it is not posted.

The meeting adjourned at 10:11a.m.

Approved by vote of District Committee on December 15, 2022.



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Scott Alfonse, Executive Director

## **MEMOS**

- 4a. Memo - Interview finalists for Assistant Executive Director / Operations Manager; Discussion of candidates dated 11/10/2022.
- 4c. Memo – Reserve Accounts / Fiscal year 2022 Reconciliation dated 11/10/2022.