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Minutes of Meeting #151 November 18, 2020

The Maine Public Drinking Water Commission (DWC) held its 151st Meeting on November 18, 2020 via Zoom.

Present Were:

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

Non-members: Matt Reynolds, and David Welch, DWP

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

A. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes from the last meeting were approved as written.

B. RECURRING BUSINESS:

1. DWC MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

The Governor's office has received Jeff's and Rebecca's, Carol's, and Matt's paperwork. The Governor's office has also indicated that Commission appointments are on hold during this COVID-19 response. Jim will notify members if he has updates from the Governor's office. Jim will reach out to Eric Gagnon another interested candidate looking to serve on the DWC. regarding paperwork being received by the Governor's office. Members also would like an updated roster once the governor's office processes applications.

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 95.5 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 stated that we are currently staying within budget.

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 is continuing to cover as Director of the DWP until that position is filled. We have permission to fill Jim Jacobsen's old position. Mike stated we have been interviewing for the ES-4 position and we are ready to offer the position to a candidate. We have had permission to fill the DWP Directors position. The position is currently being advertised.

Mike stated that most DWP staff are still 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. We are at a 90 percent completion rate so far this year.

Mike also gave an update on SRF projects that the DWP has received so far this year.

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. Mike stated that due to COVID, Rule Making is currently still on hold.

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

Kathy asked for an update on the recent issue Maine Water Skowhegan division had with water quality in the two ponds. Mike discussed the issue and what has been done to correct issue.

Mike discussed that Environmental and Occupational Health is now back under the same Division as the DWP. Mike discussed that he would like to have an additional Toxicology and DWP position to deal with the potential increase in PFAS testing/issues. The DWC as before offered to advocate for another position.

There was more discussion on the potential for additional DWSRF funds that might help fund additional projects for Public Water Systems.

Mike discussed the increase in higher lead and copper results from schools this year due to reduced water use in some buildings due to COVID.

7. SUGGESTED TOPICS FOR NEXT MEETING

DWC members will contact Jim before the next meeting if any.

8. 2021 DWC MEETING LOCATIONS

February 10, 2021- In Augusta or by zoom

Meeting adjourned

Respectfully Submitted
Jim Willis (Board Clerk)