MASSACHUSETTS WATER RESOURCES AUTHORITY

Committee of the Whole

Hearings on the Draft Final 2025 Capital Improvement Program and Current Expense Budget
May 21, 2025

A Committee of the Whole meeting was held on May 21, 2025 for the purpose of conducting Hearings on the MWRA Draft Final FY2026 Capital Improvement Program ("CIP") and Current Expense Budget ("CEB"). The meeting was held at MWRA's Administration Facility in Chelsea, and via remote participation.

Chair Tepper presided from the MWRA Administration Facility. Board Members Flanagan, Peña, Taverna, and Vitale also participated at the Administration Facility. Board Members Swett and Wolowicz participated remotely. Board Members Foti, Pappastergion, Jack Walsh and Patrick Walsh were absent.

MWRA Executive Director Frederick Laskey attended remotely. General Counsel Carolyn Francisco Murphy; Chief Operating Officer David Coppes; Deputy Chief Operating Officer Rebecca Weidman; Director of Finance Thomas Durkin; Director of Administration Michele Gillen; Chief Diversity and Equity Officer (AACU) Rita Mercado; Budget Director Michael Cole; Deputy Finance Director/Treasurer Matthew Horan; IT Asset and Configuration Manager Michael Curtis; Chief of Staff Katie Ronan; Associate General Counsel Angela Atchue; and, Assistant Secretary Kristin MacDougall attended at MWRA's Administration Facility.

Vandana Rao, EEA attended remotely. Matt Romero, Christine Bennet and Nathan Coté, MWRA Advisory Board ("Advisory Board"), attended at the Administration Facility.

Chair Tepper called the meeting to order at 1:00pm.

ROLL CALL

MWRA General Counsel Francisco Murphy took roll call of Board Members in attendance and announced that Board Members Foti and Vitale were participating remotely. The Chair announced that the meeting was being held at MWRA's Chelsea Administration Facility and virtually, via a link posted on MWRA's website. She added that the meeting would be recorded, and that the agenda and meeting materials were available on MWRA's website.

ADVISORY BOARD INTEGRATED COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE MWRA'S DRAFT FINAL FY2026 CIP AND CEB

Matt Romero, MWRA Advisory Board ("Advisory Board") Executive Director, acknowledged that FY26 marks MWRA's 40th anniversary; described the Advisory Board's roles with respect to MWRA's budgets and policies; explained that the Advisory Board reviewed MWRA's Proposed FY26 Budget through the lens of *Are we spending the right dollars, at the right time, for the right reasons?*; and, reviewed highlights of the Advisory Board's comments and recommendations ("C&Rs") for MWRA's Proposed FY26 Budget, as detailed in the *MWRA Comments and*

Recommendations document and slides presented and filed with the records of this meeting.

Current Expense Budget

Mr. Romero advised that the Advisory Board recommends approximately \$5.8 million in targeted reductions to the proposed FY26 CEB, including personnel-related cuts based on updated vacancy assumptions; either the redirection of any resulting surplus toward long-term obligations such as Pension and Other Post-Employment Benefits ("OPEB"), or the right-sizing of these categories and transparently budget for debt pre-payment; and, clear communication to rate payers about debt management strategy.

Mr. Romero then described the "Spring Revisit" (late-stage adjustment) process; summarized MWRA's anticipated FY26 changes for water and sewer operating costs budgets; and, presented the Advisory Board's assumptions for vacancy rates and fringe benefits.

Next, Mr. Romero reported that the Advisory Board recommends a 2.70% combined assessment increase for FY26; he described the challenges of sustainable rates planning over time; he suggested reconvening MWRA's Long Term Rates Management Committee ("Rates Management Committee"); and, he referenced more parity between water and sewer increases.

Capital Improvement Program ("CIP")

Mr. Romero advised the Advisory Board recommends a CIP-wide revaluation of project cost estimates and rate scenarios because MWRA was entering a period when multiple current and anticipated capital projects will be active, potentially with long-term rate impacts, and some recent projects have exceeded their expected budgets.

Next, Mr. Romero highlighted the Metropolitan Water Tunnel Program ("MWTP") as an example of a necessary, major, high-budget project that would require pacing other projects and prioritizing their budgets.

He then cited the updated Long-Term CSO control plans a large project whose value proposition has sharply increased since it originated. He discussed the difference between the updated plan's cost (\$23.50 per gallon) versus the original CSO control plan's cost (\$1.44 per gallon) and noted that inflation is not the only driver. He discussed the Advisory Board's concerns about the updated plan's return on investment for ratepayers and reiterated the value of reinstating the Rates Committee to prioritize projects, ensure maximum ratepayer benefits, and effectively move MWRA systems forward.

Policy

Mr. Romero emphasized the importance and benefits of watershed forest management and MWRA's watershed land protection program and expressed concern about recent calls for a moratorium on watershed forestry. He advised the Advisory Board recommends that MWRA advocate for an independent assessment of the efficacy of the Commonwealth's watershed forest management policy, and work with the Department of Environmental Protection to

develop a more robust communications strategy to reduce public misconceptions.

Next, Mr. Romero briefly reviewed the Advisory Board's recommendations with respect to Quabbin legislation and requested MWRA's support for service communities' positions on this matter. He also expressed concern about the loss of Department of Conservation and Recreation Ranger citation ability, which the Advisory Board viewed could put MWRA's filtration waiver in jeopardy; and, recommended that MWRA remain fully engaged with the Advisory Board to advance a successful resolution. He explained that the Advisory Board supports the Rangers and stressed the potentially high cost to ratepayers if the filtration waiver were lost.

He then discussed MWRA system expansion and the historical barriers to entry such as the entrance fee and connection costs. He noted that the costs for connecting to MWRA's systems have historically been paid by the joining communities or with outside funding. Finally, Mr. Romero explained that in the Advisory Board's view, current ratepayers should not be responsible for those costs and relayed the Advisory Board's recommendation for MWRA to develop internal financing options for new community connections.

Conclusion

Mr. Romero briefly summarized the Advisory Board's approach to budget review and analysis, and thanked MWRA and Advisory Board staff for their contributions to the FY26 budget's development.

Discussion

Chair Tepper advised that the Healey-Driscoll Administration has been working with stakeholders on a new Environmental Bond Bill, and one of the provisions that is being discussed is DCR enforcement authority and it is being considered for the Environmental Bond Bill.

Hearing no further discussion or questions from the Board, the Chair moved to the MWRA presentation. (ref. A.1)

MWRA'S FY2026 DRAFT FINAL BUDGET DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

Thomas Durkin, MWRA Finance Director, outlined MWRA's budgeting process and introduced staff's update on notable Spring Revisit FY26 budget changes as summarized in the May 21, 2025 slides presented and filed with the records of this meeting.

Notable Spring Revisit FY26 Budget Changes

Direct Expenses

Michael Cole, MWRA Budget Director, presented adjustments for direct expenses, including increases for wages and salaries (adjusted for new collective bargaining agreements, and associated standby pay increases); fringe benefits (to reflect Massachusetts GIC rate changes); and utilities (driven by higher electricity costs). He also highlighted some Direct

Expense decreases for chemicals (due to significant reductions for sodium hypochlorite and liquid oxygen), and other services, such as sludge pelletization (attributable to updated assumptions for inflation and quantities.)

Indirect Expenses

Mr. Cole noted changes to the budgets for insurance (increased to reflect FY26 premium costs) and pension and invited MWRA Deputy Finance Director/Treasurer Matthew Horan to provide more details.

Mr. Horan explained that the MWRA Retirement System updates its actuarial study annually, and described the parameters, including long-term analysis of unfunded liability based on actuarial assumptions. He advised that it preliminarily appears that assumptions for investment returns, wages, mortality and number of retirees are not in MWRA's favor, resulting in a \$21 million unfunded liability increase, which would take the fund ratio from 89% to 87%. He noted the funded ratio has ranged from 86%-89% during the last seven years, and that staff have discussed the actuarial disparity with the Advisory Board. Mr. Horan advised that the disparity may not directly impact the FY26 budget, and staff are working with actuaries and the Massachusetts Public Employee Retirement Administration Commission to develop a long-term plan.

He relayed that staff would update the Board on any potential budgetary impacts or mitigation measures at an upcoming meeting and noted MWRA's 2030 goal for full pension funding. Additionally, Mr. Horan affirmed that staff would strive to meet this goal if possible; advised that staff may need to seek an extension if meeting it is unattainable; and noted that state law allows for full funding by 2040.

Debt Service

Mr. Horan reported that since February 2025 staff closed on two State Revolving Fund transactions that will lower costs and reduce the budget. He also discussed reductions in senior debt (largely attributable to unanticipated borrowing opportunities and lower spending) and subordinate debt (partly due to lowering interest rates) and reported a \$20 million increase to the line item for defeasance.

Revenue

Mr. Horan discussed Spring Revisit adjustments for revenue, including investment income, attributable to overall reductions in future short-term rates and rising long-term rates.

Conclusion

Mr. Durkin acknowledged the Advisory Board's C&R; relayed that staff will review and develop formal responses; and outlined the next steps in the FY26 budget process.

Mr. Vitale asked how MWRA's pension funding percentage compares to other organizations'. Mr. Horan reported that based on the most recent actuarial results (2023), the MWRA Retirement System is within the top quartile for plan funding statewide. Mr. Vitale requested an

update on OPEB funding. Mr. Horan explained that MWRA's funding is consistent with the latest biannual actuarial report, which was released last year. (ref. A.2)

Ahetain

Hearing no further discussion or questions from the Board, Chair Tepper moved to Adjournment.

ADJOURNMENT

Vac

A motion was duly made and seconded to adjourn the meeting.

Nο

A roll call vote was taken in which the members were recorded as follows:

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Tepper		
Flanagan		
Peña		
Swett		
Taverna		
Vitale		
Wolowicz		

The meeting adjourned at 1:30pm.

LIST OF DOCUMENTS AND EXHIBITS USED

- May 21, 2025 MWRA Comments and Recommendations document and presentation MWRA Advisory Board Comments & Recommendations on MWRA's Proposed FY26 CEB & CIP (ref. A.1)
- May 21, 2025, 2024 presentation MWRA Fiscal Year 2026 Current Expense Budget Development Update (ref. A.2)

MASSACHUSETTS WATER RESOURCES AUTHORITY

Meeting of the Board of Directors May 21, 2025

A meeting of the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority ("MWRA") Board of Directors was held on May 21, 2025 at MWRA's Administration Facility in Chelsea, and via remote participation.

Chair Tepper presided at the MWRA Headquarters. Board Members Flanagan, Peña, Taverna, and Vitale also participated at the Administration Facility. Board Members Swett and Wolowicz participated remotely. Board Members Foti, Pappastergion, Jack Walsh and Patrick Walsh were absent.

MWRA Executive Director Frederick Laskey attended remotely on Webex. General Counsel Carolyn Francisco Murphy; Chief Operating Officer David Coppes; Deputy Chief Operating Officer Rebecca Weidman; Director of Finance Thomas Durkin; Director of Administration Michele Gillen; Chief Diversity and Equity Officer (AACU) Rita Mercado; Senior Planner Malcolm Ragan; Director of Planning and Stability Stephen Estes-Smargiassi; Chief Engineer Brian Kubaska; Director of Construction Martin McGowan; Budget Director Michael Cole; Deputy Finance Director/Treasurer Matthew Horan; MIS Director Paula Weadick; Program Manager Caitlin P. Carbonello; Deputy Deer Island Treatment Plant Director Chad Whiting; Tunnel Program Design and Construction Director Paul Savard; Associate General Counsel Michael Altieri; Construction Coordinator Alireza Kowsari; Human Resources Director Wendy Chu; Chief of Staff Katherine Ronan; Associate General Counsels Angela Atchue and Michael Altieri; IT Asset and Configuration Manager Michael Curtis; and, Assistant Secretary Kristin MacDougall attended at the MWRA Administration Facility.

Vandana Rao, EEA attended remotely. Matt Romero, Christine Bennet and Nathan Coté, MWRA Advisory Board ("Advisory Board"), attended at the Administration Facility.

Chair Tepper called the meeting to order at 1:31pm.

ROLL CALL

MWRA General Counsel Francisco Murphy took roll call of Board members in attendance and announced that Mr. Swett and Ms. Wolowicz were participating remotely. The Chair announced that the meeting was being held at MWRA's Administration Facility and virtually, via a link posted on MWRA's website. She added that the meeting would be recorded, and that the agenda and meeting materials were available on MWRA's website.

APPROVAL OF APRIL 16, 2025 MINUTES

A motion was duly made and seconded to approve the minutes of the Board of

Directors' meeting of April 16, 2025.

Chair Tepper asked if there was any discussion or questions from the Board. Hearing none, she requested a roll call vote in which the members were recorded as follows:

Yes No Abstain
Tepper
Flanagan
Peña
Swett
Taverna
Vitale
Wolowicz
(ref. I)

REPORT OF THE CHAIR

Chair Tepper advised that the Resilient Coasts Draft Plan, which represents a comprehensive review of stakeholder outreach and analysis with respect to climate change and coastal resiliency in Massachusetts, is now available for comment. She encouraged Board Members, staff and the public to review and submit comments on the plan and noted she would forward a link to the document to Board Members and staff.

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

MWRA Executive Director Fred Laskey reported that MWRA had removed all remaining prestressed concrete cylinder pipes within the MWRA water system as part of MWRA's Northern Intermediate High Section 89 Pipeline project; discussed the significance of this milestone with respect to drinking water safety and system redundancy; and commended staff for their work.

Mr. Laskey then discussed the annual actuarial valuation of the pension. He noted that there were some differences between the actual results versus the actuarial assumption for investment returns. He advised that staff are working on the issue and will keep the Board updated.

Next, Mr. Laskey announced that the Government Finance Officers Association awarded MWRA a Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting and a Distinguished Budget Presentation Award. He also noted that MWRA's Annual Water Quality Report for 2025 would soon be mailed to all homes in the water service area, and staff expect to distribute hard copies to Board Members in June.

Mr. Laskey also discussed a recent event for an updated fishing ramp at the Quabbin Reservoir, and relayed attendees' positive remarks about MWRA's stewardship of the watersheds and commitment to protecting recreational uses in the area. Next, he updated

the Board on the Quinapoxet Dam Removal Project, including a planned ceremony. Finally, Mr. Laskey briefly reported on staff's ongoing preparations for an impending heavy rainstorm. (ref. III)

ADMINISTRATION, FINANCE AND AUDIT

Information

Delegated Authority Report - April 2025

Committee Chair Flanagan invited Board Members' questions and comments on the April 2025 Delegated Authority Report. Hearing none, he moved to the next Information item. (ref. IV A.1)

(There was discussion with questions and answers about the Delegated Authority Report during agenda item IV A.2)

FY2025 Third Quarter Orange Notebook

Malcolm Ragan, MWRA Senior Planner, presented highlights of the report on Key Performance Indicators for the Third Quarter of FY25 ("Q3 Orange Notebook"). He reported that MWRA's water system ranged from mild to significant drought status during Q3 and is now in the mild drought range; and, reported that Deer Island Treatment Plant ("DITP") flows were 11% below average despite increased precipitation (13% above average), with a new flow record achieved in January 2025.

Mr. Ragan then discussed the impacts of drought on the MWRA water supply. He reported that Quabbin Reservoir elevations were below normal for short periods in February and March, prompting a small transfer from the Ware River watershed, and Quabbin levels dropped below normal on May 1, then returned to normal range on May 8.

Finally, Mr. Ragan reported that in Q3 molybdenum levels in fertilizer pellets returned to within normal Massachusetts land limits during Q3 and remained within federal limits, allowing the resumption of pellet distribution to sites in Massachusetts and New York. He described adjustments to pellet distribution during Q3, noting that MWRA's Toxic Reduction and Control staff are investigating the source of the increased molybdenum, which could potentially be a corroded bacterial inhibitor and industrial cooling tower.

Mr. Taverna requested the schedule for the next transfer of water from the Quabbin to Wachusett Reservoir. Stephen Estes-Smargiassi, MWRA Director of Planning and Sustainability, advised that the transfer is expected to take place in the coming weeks. There was discussion about how the expected heavy rains could affect the schedule.

Regarding the previous agenda item (IV A.1, Delegated Authority Report – April 2025), Mr. Vitale asked if MWRA had seen price increases for electric vehicles ("EVs"), or any reductions in funding or grants for EV programs. Rebecca Weidman, MWRA Deputy Chief Operating Officer, advised that staff would provide more information about EV pricing at a

later time (staff answered Mr. Vitale's question about EV pricing during discussion of agenda item IV B.1); reported some reductions in Eversource grant funding for EV infrastructure projects; and, advised that MWRA has taken advantage of ongoing state funding opportunities, including from the Climate Trust. Secretary Tepper advised that she would follow up with Mr. Vitale on this matter. (ref. IV A.2)

Change Orders and Amendments Update; Design and Construction Accomplishments
Brian Kubaska, MWRA Chief Engineer, presented a summary of amendments over the past
10 years. He explained that during this reporting period MWRA has procured over \$220
million in professional design contracts, with amendments totaling approximately 10% of
the original contract value. He noted that this value increased last year, mainly driven by 10
outlier contracts; however, 41 of 60 contracts had no amendments during the reporting
period, resulting in a median percentage of zero.

Next, Marty McGowan, MWRA Director of Construction, presented a review of Change Orders for the same 10-year reporting period, during which MWRA awarded 137 construction contracts with a total value exceeding \$1 billion, including the \$300 million Deer Island Clarifier Project. He reported that most MWRA construction contracts have change orders below 10% of original contract value; 48 of 137 contacts had no change orders; and change orders totaled approximately 5.3% of contract value, consistent with prior years' trends.

Mr. Vitale asked how many change orders are submitted by contractors, versus the change order approval rate. Mr. McGowan advised that MWRA does not accept all change order requests, and the general percentage for change order acceptance is approximately 80% of submitted cost. In response to a question from Mr. Flanagan, Mr. McGowan described the processes for change order review, negotiations and claims.

Mr. McGowan then presented some of MWRA's notable construction accomplishments during the last year, including Deer Island Clarifier Rehabilitation Phase 2; Braintree-Weymouth Pump Station Improvements; Hayes Pump Station; Quinapoxet Dam Removal; Wachusett Lower Gate House Pipe Replacement; Carrol Water Treatment Plant SCADA Upgrades; Norumbega Covered Storage Tank Nos. 1 and 3 Cleaning; Top of Shaft Interim Improvements; Northern Intermediate High Section 89 Replacement; Section 101 Extension; WASM Section W15 Leak Repair; and Section 4 Walnut Street Bridge Pipe Restraint Replacement.

Next, Mr. Kubaska presented the locations of 20 active construction projects and 44 active design projects across Massachusetts. Finally, he reported that staff advanced over \$100 million in capital projects from design into construction, and eight construction projects have reached substantial completion during the past year; and staff expect to achieve substantial completion on 12 active projects with a total value of approximately \$165

million next year.

(Secretary Tepper left the meeting during the presentation).

Mr. Vitale asked if any MWRA contractors have recently put projects on hold due to economic uncertainty. Mr. Kubaska responded in the negative. There was general discussion about hypothetical effects of economic uncertainty on contract bidding and procurements.

Hearing no further discussion or questions from the Board, Mr. Flanagan moved to the next Information item. (ref. IV A.3)

FY25 Financial Update and Summary through April 2025

Michael Cole, MWRA Budget Director, reported a Current Expense Budget ("CEB") variance of \$21.7 million through April 2025, which is lower than last year's \$30.6 million variance and attributable to changes in revenue driven by investment income (revenue was \$3.0 million of FY25's favorable budget variance, versus \$8.7 million in FY24); \$15.6 million in underspending for Direct Expenses, mostly due to staffing challenges; and, \$3.1 million in underspending for Indirect Expenses, largely driven by lower Watershed Reimbursements and payments in lieu of taxes ("PILOT").

Next, Mr. Cole updated the Board on the Capital Improvement Program ("CIP") budget. He reported that project spending, excluding expenditures not fully under MWRA's control such as the Community Loan Program, was 27.8% underspent through April 2025, versus 36.7% in FY24, and noted the 20-year average of 26.6%. He relayed that the top ten underspending contracts drive two-thirds of FY25's total variance value and advised that staff will continue to monitor budgets through the remainder of the fiscal year.

In reference to the projected variance for wages and salaries, Mr. Vitale asked if MWRA could reduce the budgeted headcount. Mr. Cole explained that based on the past several years and as recommended by the MWRA Advisory Board, staff will continue to look at potentially increasing the vacancy adjustment for FY26.

At Mr. Vitale's request, Rita Mercado, MWRA Chief Diversity and Equity Officer (AACU), outlined the Disparity Study's goals, parameters and timeline.

With respect to FY25 CIP underspending versus projected spending, Mr. Vitale asked if the capital spending budget could be reduced. Mr. Cole described staff's processes for budgeting and refining the CIP; reviewed how Cap Period funding is allocated and adjusted; and advised that the FY26 capital spending budget will be scrutinized.

Hearing no further discussion or questions from the Board, Mr. Flanagan moved to Approvals. (ref. IV A.4)

Approvals

Bond Defeasance of Future Debt Service

A motion was duly made and seconded to authorize the Executive Director or his designee, on behalf of the Authority, to enter into, execute and deliver all necessary agreements and other instruments and to take such other actions necessary to effectuate the redemption and defeasance of an aggregate principal amount of \$32,020,000 of outstanding MWRA senior bonds including to cause the escrow of cash and/or securities in an amount necessary to fund such redemption and defeasance, in order to reduce the debt service requirement by \$38,173,750 in the FY26 through FY31 timeframe.

Matthew Horan, Deputy Finance Director/Treasurer, requested Board approval to execute a \$32,020,000 defeasance of principal from a projected FY25 favorable variance to defease debt, consistent with past practices, to reduce MWRA's future debt service requirement. He explained that MWRA would use savings from the proposed defeasance to prepay debt service due in FY26-FY31, and limit future rate increases.

Mr. Horan then described staff's strategy to defease bonds that will provide maximum savings during expected periods of high expenditures, such as for the Metropolitan Water Tunnel Program by targeting callable bonds; this defeasance saved \$4.3 million in avoided interest costs. He noted that defeasances have allowed MWRA to avoid \$48.5 million in interest since 2006. Finally, Mr. Horan referred Board Members to a graph in the Staff Summary illustrating the significant impacts of defeasances on rate control.

Mr. Vitale expressed support for staff's defeasance strategy. There was discussion with questions and answers about MWRA's escrow agent, U.S. Bank; MWRA's escrow fund options allowable under arbitrage yield restriction rules, including US Treasury notes or funds backed by the full faith and credit of the U.S. government, such as USAID bonds.

There were also questions and answers about hypothetically defeasing debt on the lease for the Chelsea Facility, which staff confirmed was not possible.

With regards to an earlier question about EV pricing raised by Mr. Vitale during discussion for agenda item IV A.2, Michele Gillen, MWRA Director of Administration, advised that the list price for a new Chevy Silverado EV is significantly less than the list price for MWRA's last EV Eldorado purchase in 2023, primarily due to manufacturer incentive discounts.

(Chair Tepper returned to the meeting.)

Chair Tepper asked if there was any discussion or questions from the Board. Hearing none, she requested a roll call vote in which the members were recorded as follows:

Yes No Abstain

Tepper

Yes No Abstain
Flanagan
Peña
Swett
Taverna
Vitale
Wolowicz
(ref. IV B.1)

MWRA FY26 Insurance Program Renewal

A motion was duly made and seconded to approve awards to the lowest eligible and responsive proposers for insurance policies, bonds, and related broker services for MWRA's FY26 Insurance Program, and to authorize the Executive Director, on behalf of the Authority, to execute contracts for broker services, for the terms, premiums, and fees, all as described in the May 21, 2025 Staff Summary presented and filed with the records of this meeting, and incorporated by reference for the record, resulting in a total program amount not-to-exceed \$5,209,229 for FY26, including Broker fees through FY28.

Thomas Durkin, MWRA Finance Director, described the annual procurement process for MWRA's Insurance Program and summarized the coverage and policies proposed for FY26. He noted that, on the recommendation of MWRA's insurance consultant, the proposed general liability policy includes \$5 million in base coverage, with an additional layer of coverage that is currently estimated on a not-to-exceed basis. Finally, Mr. Durkin noted that the proposed FY26 Insurance Program includes a three-year Broker Services agreement.

Mr. Taverna asked if it were possible to request bids for "bundled" policies. Mr. Durkin explained that most types of commercial insurance required by MWRA are not typically available in bundles. There was general discussion with questions and answers about employer's liability and public official's insurance, the Bylaws of the MWRA Board of Directors, the MWRA Enabling Act, and general liability insurance.

Mr. Swett observed the Insurance Program's rising costs since 2015. Mr. Durkin advised that FY26 Program costs represent an 11.3% increase over FY25. Mr. Swett asked if the cost differences were attributable to significant changes in coverage. Mr. Durkin explained that there have been some adjustments over time, but the FY26 Insurance Program is generally consistent with those of past years. Mr. Swett expressed concern that the current trend is not a sustainable trajectory for an operating cost. Mr. Laskey and Mr. Durkin agreed. Mr. Swett suggested potential strategies to mitigate Program cost increases, including self-insurance. Mr. Durkin explained that the current Program structure promotes certainty and stability; staff engage annually with a consultant to advise on the

self-insured retention level, which is typically at \$2.5 million; and staff may consider increasing self-insurance in the future. There was general discussion about MWRA's strategy for Insurance Program cost-savings, including balancing self-insurance versus risk, and managing losses. Mr. Swett encouraged staff to continue evaluating policies for self-insurance and risk tolerance.

Hearing no further discussion or questions from the Board, Chair Tepper requested a roll call vote in which the members were recorded as follows:

Yes No Abstain
Tepper
Flanagan
Peña
Swett
Taverna
Vitale
Wolowicz
(ref. IV B.2)

Contract Amendments/Change Orders

Purchase Order Contract for Infor/Lawson Enterprise Resource Planning Consultant: McInnis Consulting Services, Inc. Bid WRA-5470Q, State Contract ITS77 Cat2b, Amendment 1

A motion was duly made and seconded that the Board of Directors approve the award of Amendment 1 to WRA-5470Q, Infor/Lawson Enterprise Resource Planning Consultant, to McInnis Consulting Services, Inc. in the amount of \$247,065 and to authorize the Director of Administration, on behalf of the Authority, to execute an amended purchase order increasing the purchase order amount, from \$247,065 to \$494,130, and extending the contract term by one year, from June 14, 2025 to June 14, 2026.

Paula Weadick, MWRA MIS Director, requested Board approval to amend an Infor/Lawon Enterprise Resource Planning Consultant ("ERP") purchase order contract. She explained the consultant would augment staffing due to vacancies and supplement resources for an ongoing ERP upgrade. Finally, Ms. Weadick reported on the current ERP consultant's satisfactory job performance and noted that work includes MAXIMO integration in addition to ERP, which is slightly different for the ERP Consultant contract that was amended in May 2025 (ref. IV C.1, May 21, 2025).

Hearing no further discussion or questions from the Board, Chair Tepper requested a roll call vote in which the members were recorded as follows:

Yes No Abstain
Tepper
Flanagan
Peña
Swett
Taverna
Vitale
Wolowicz
(ref. IV C.1)

Purchase Order for Data Reporting Analyst (Report Writer) Consultant Mindlance, Inc.: Bid WRA-5281Q, State Contract ITS77 Category 1A and 1B, Amendment 2

A motion was duly made and seconded that the Board of Directors approve the award of Amendment 2 to WRA-5281Q, Data Reporting Analyst Consultant, to Mindlance, Inc. in the amount of \$168,148.50 and to authorize the Director of Administration, on behalf of the Authority, to execute an amended purchase order increasing the purchase order amount, from \$336,297 to \$504,445.50, and extending the contract term by one year, from April 25, 2025 to April 25, 2026.

Ms. Weadick requested approval of an amendment to a Data Reporting Analyst Consultant purchase order contract, which is necessary to fill a vacancy that has been open since March 2022, despite multiple attempts to fill it, noting that staff were not able to engage the consultant as a full-time employee. Finally, Ms. Weadick advised that the current consultant's job performance is satisfactory, and this proposed amendment maintains the same rate as the original contract.

Mr. Vitale remarked that in his experience, the rates for MWRA's Data Reporting Analyst contacts are very competitive.

Hearing no further discussion or questions from the Board, Chair Tepper requested a roll call vote in which the members were recorded as follows:

Yes No Abstain
Tepper
Flanagan
Peña
Swett
Taverna
Vitale
Wolowicz
(ref. IV C.2)

WASTEWATER POLICY AND OVERSIGHT

Information

Charlestown Pump Station Seawall Repair

Caitlin P. Carbonello, MWRA Program Manager, discussed staff's recent findings for the Charleston Pump Station ("CPS"). She presented the CPS's location; noted it was constructed in 1895 and listed on the inventory of the Massachusetts Historical Commission ("MHC") for its architectural and industrial significance; and explained it was operational until 1993, when the DeLauri Pump Station came online.

Ms. Carbonello then noted the CPS was vacated in 2001, and the Cambridge Branch Sewer is the only active infrastructure remaining onsite. She advised this sewer, a 60-inch siphon, is a critical system asset with no redundancy.

She then described the CPS site's existing conditions, including its superstructure that bears directly onto a 179-foot long, 16-foot-high pile supported seawall. She highlighted the features and composition of the seawall, which is critical for the stability of the superstructure and sewer; and presented a cross-section of the seawall and the sewer's location.

Ms. Carbonello advised that MWRA staff have observed movement of the seawall, with the greatest movement observed at its southern end, and presented a series of monitoring photos showing the movement of its granite blocks from August 2021 to March 2025.

She reported that MWRA consultants (Hazen and Sawyer, P.C.) prepared a Preliminary Design Report that includes three alternatives to repair and stabilize the seawall, and explained that staff will proceed with the design of temporary repairs of the displaced portion of the seawall as outlined in Alternative 1 in order to provide localized stabilization for approximately ten years; protect the Cambridge Branch Sewer; and, maintain a stable foundation for the CPS superstructure.

Ms. Carbonello then noted that due to the CPS's location, temporary stabilization will require extensive permits and approval, with a construction duration of nine months beginning in July 2026, pending permit approval. Finally, she advised that several stakeholders have expressed interest in redeveloping the CPS and surrounding area.

In response to a question from Mr. Taverna, Ms. Carbonello noted the design cost for Alternative 1 is \$499,000. Mr. Taverna asked if MWRA could surplus the CPS. Ms. Carbonello explained that surplussing is not an option at this time due to the location of the active siphon.

There was discussion about the various stakeholders who expressed interest in redeveloping the CPS, and staff's priority to stabilize the seawall.

Hearing no further discussion or questions from the Board, Committee Member Peña

moved to Contract Awards. (ref. V A.1)

Contract Awards

<u>Grit and Screenings Hauling and Disposal: W. L. French Excavating Corporation, Contract</u> S629

A motion was duly made and seconded to approve the award of Contract S629, Grit and Screenings Hauling and Disposal, to W. L. French Excavating Corporation, and to authorize the Executive Director, on behalf of the Authority, to execute said contract in the bid amount of \$5,335,442.50, for a contract term of 730 calendar days from the Notice to Proceed.

Chad Whiting, MWRA Deputy Deer Island Treatment Plant Director, requested approval for the award of a Grit and Screenings Hauling and Disposal contract with W.L. French Excavation Corporation ("W.L. French"). He described the scope and duration of the proposed contract, and noted the recommended bid came in 13.68% under the Engineer's Estimate and 9% higher than the current contract value. Mr. Whiting advised that landfill costs continue to rise due to a shortage of available sites; noted that W.L. French has contracted with MWRA since 2018; described their qualifications; and, explained that this contract would serve all 14 of MWRA's wastewater facilities.

There was general discussion about how wipes that are falsely perceived as "flushable" negatively affect sewer facilities; the high cost of removing wipe debris from MWRA equipment (over \$1 million); packaging changes to discourage the flushing of wipes; and the need to educate the public on the matter.

Chair Tepper asked if there was any discussion or questions from the Board. Hearing none, she requested a roll call vote in which the members were recorded as follows:

Yes No Abstain
Tepper
Flanagan
Peña
Swett
Taverna
Vitale
Wolowicz

WATER POLICY AND OVERSIGHT

Approvals

(ref. V B.1)

Metropolitan Water Tunnel Program: Payment to Eversource Electric Company, Electric Service to Tunnel Boring Machine Launch Shaft Sites

A motion was duly made and seconded to authorize the Executive Director, on behalf

of the Authority, to remit payment to Eversource Electric Company in the amount of \$7,875,977 for an invoice pertaining to Work Orders detailed in the May 21, 2025 Staff Summary presented and filed with the records of this meeting, to provide electric service to two Tunnel Boring Machine launch shaft sites in the Town of Needham, associated with the South Tunnel of the Metropolitan Water Tunnel Program.

Further, a motion was duly made and seconded to authorize the Executive Director, on behalf of the Authority, to remit payment to Eversource Electric Company for additional invoices for new or amended Work Orders, in an amount not-to-exceed the aggregate of \$1,000,000, in the Executive Director's discretion, for change orders or other additional costs that the Executive Director determines is appropriate and should be paid by the Authority for the electric service work.

Paul Savard, MWRA Tunnel Program Design and Construction Director, presented the locations of the planned South Tunnel launch shaft sites for the Metropolitan Water Tunnel Program ("MWTP"), and described the high-voltage power needs for MWTP construction (e.g. tunnel boring machines, lighting, ventilation and conveyors). He reviewed the process to develop with Eversource a plan to bring power to the two MWTP South Tunnel TBM launch shaft sites and summarized Eversource's plan to use existing infrastructure as available; construct 1.7 miles of new duct bank and manholes; and install of 3.9 miles of 13.8kV cable. He presented these work locations, noting Eversource received grant of location approval from the Town of Needham and is finalizing Department of Transportation ("DOT") permits.

Mr. Savard then discussed the planned schedule for Eversource construction (June 2025 through January 2028), which aligns with the planned start of MWTP South Tunnel construction in 2028; mitigates the risk of delay; and fulfills Needham's request for Eversource to complete duct bank and manhole installation when school is not in session. He summarized the expected sequence for Eversource construction, including duct bank and manhole installation by an Eversource-approved contractor, and cable installation by Eversource.

Next, Mr. Savard explained that Eversource requires a \$7,875,977 payment for the cost of construction, including police details and community outreach; and a carrying charge, minus system development and revenue credits, before work can begin. He noted that Eversource is following its Standard Distribution Service tariff terms and conditions.

Mr. Savard requested Board approval of an additional \$1,000,000 in Delegated Authority for change orders or additional costs (e.g. differing site conditions). Finally, Mr. Savard advised that staff would return to the Board to request authorization of payment to Eversource for its MWTP North Tunnel work, which is currently in design by Eversource.

(Ms. Wolowicz left and returned to the meeting during the presentation.)

There was discussion about the structure of the MWTP South Tunnel payment to Eversource, including a \$44,000 allowance for police details.

Mr. Taverna asked why the Eversource work is subject to tariffs. Michael Altieri, MWRA Associate General Counsel, explained that Eversource is treating MWRA as any other commercial or industrial user, and that this project triggers Eversource's Line Extension Policy, which was approved by the Department of Public Utilities. Mr. Taverna asked if the tariffs would apply to similar projects in municipalities. Mr. Altieri responded in the affirmative. There was discussion about the Eversource terms and conditions, and how they lack carve outs for public entities like MWRA, and the project's construction schedule.

Mr. Peña asked if the infrastructure to be installed by Eversource would be used by the utility after the completion of this project, and if so, was this factored into the cost. Mr. Savard explained that the infrastructure to be installed by Eversource is expected to be permanent, and discussed the system development credits that MWRA will receive.

Hearing no further discussion or questions from the Board, Secretary Tepper requested a roll call vote in which the members were recorded as follows:

Yes No Abstain
Tepper
Flanagan
Peña
Swett
Taverna
Vitale
Wolowicz
(ref. VI A.1)

Contract Amendments/Change Orders

Intermediate High Pipeline Improvements, CP2, Rehabilitation of Sections 24 and 25 Water Mains: Albanese D&S, Inc. Contract 6956, Change Order 11

A motion was duly made and seconded to authorize the Executive Director, on behalf of the Authority, to approve Change Order 11 to Contract 6956, Intermediate High Pipeline Improvements, CP2, Rehabilitation of Sections 24 and 25 Water Mains, with Albanese D&S, Inc. for a not-to-exceed amount of \$750,000, increasing the contract amount from \$21,196,845.02 to \$21,946,845.02, with no increase in contract term.

Further, a motion was duly made and seconded to authorize the Executive Director to approve additional change orders as may be needed to Contract 6956 in an amount not-to-exceed the aggregate of \$500,000 in accordance with the Management Policies and Procedures of the Board of Directors.

Mr. McGowan presented progress photos of new pipeline and drain installations on narrow residential streets in Watertown for MWRA's Intermediate High Pipeline Improvements CP-2 Project (contract 6596, with Albanese D&S, Inc.), and requested Board approval for Change Order 11 to repair extensive roadway wear and tear from heavy equipment and subsurface utility work. Finally, he presented photos of similar road repair work in Winchester and summarized the work to be performed.

In response to a question from Mr. Taverna, MWRA Construction Coordinator Alireza Kowsari explained that Albanese D&S is planning to self-perform the grading, with an M/WBE performing the paving work.

Hearing no further questions or discussion from the Board, Chair Tepper requested a roll call vote in which the members were recorded as follows:

Yes No Abstain
Tepper
Flanagan
Peña
Swett
Taverna
Vitale
Wolowicz
(ref. VI B.1)

PERSONNEL AND COMPENSATION

Information

Organizational Changes in the Operations Division

Mr. Laskey discussed staff's recommended organizational changes in the Operations Division in advance of Chief Operating Officer David Coppes' upcoming retirement, which include the appointment of Kathleen M. Murtagh for the position of Chief Operating Officer and the creation of a second Deputy Chief Operating Officer position that would be advertised internally and externally, pending Board approval.

Mr. Laskey then described Ms. Murtagh's work experience and qualifications for the Chief Operating Officer position. He noted her work in the private sector; leadership during MWRA's 2010 Shaft 5 break and 2024 Dorchester Tunnel drilling incident; and respect among MWRA's senior and union staff. Ms. Gillen added that this recommendation is in line with MWRA's succession planning strategy for filling major vacancies, which have historically proven to be effective.

There was discussion about the grade of the Chief Engineer position as it relates to those of the Deputy Chief Operating Officers; the Operation Division's current and proposed reporting structure; and the Chief Engineer's responsibilities.

Mr. Taverna expressed support for the proposed reorganization and requested more information about the planned organizational structure of the MWTP. Mr. Laskey explained that Ms. Murtagh would continue to play an important role in the MWTP with support from the Deputy Chief Operating Officers, the Program team, and other key staff, and noted MWRA's successful track record for filling vacancies; mentorship; and career ladders. There was discussion about Ms. Murtagh's oversight of the MWTP, and the Program's significance.

Hearing no further discussion or questions from the Board, Chair Tepper moved to the Approval of the Chief Operating Officer. (ref. VII A.1)

Approvals

Appointment of Chief Operating Officer

A motion was duly made and seconded to approve the appointment of Ms. Kathleen M. Murtagh to the position of Chief Operating Officer (Non-Union Grade 18) at annual salary of \$248,000 and to authorize the Executive Director, on behalf of the Authority, to enter into an employment contract with Kathleen M. Murtagh to provide her services to the Authority for a three-year period, commencing on a date to be determined by the Executive Director.

Hearing no further discussion or questions from the Board, Chair Tepper requested a roll call vote in which the members were recorded as follows:

<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Abstain</u>
Tepper		
Flanagan		
Peña		
Swett		
Taverna		
Vitale		
Wolowicz		

Mr. Laskey thanked Mr. Taverna for his participation in the MWTP Working Group. (ref. VII B.1)

Appointment of Deputy Director, Deer Island Maintenance Operations Division

A motion was duly made and seconded to approve the appointment of Mr. Timothy J. Jonah to the position of Deputy Director, Maintenance (Non-Union, Grade 15) at Deer Island at the recommended annual salary of \$173,251 commencing on a date to be determined by the Executive Director.

Wendy Chu, MWRA Human Resources Director, noted that the Deputy Director of Maintenance position became vacant due to retirement; discussed the work history and qualifications of the proposed candidate for this position; and described the selection

process.

Chair Tepper asked if there was any discussion or questions from the Board. Hearing none, she requested a roll call vote in which the members were recorded as follows:

Yes No Abstain
Tepper
Flanagan
Peña
Swett
Taverna
Vitale
Wolowicz
(ref. VII B.2)

Appointment of Manager, Workplace Investigations

A motion was duly made and seconded to approve the appointment of Ms. Shari Ariail to the position of Manager, Workplace Investigations (Non-Union, Grade 14) in the Administration Division, at an annual salary of \$146,250, commencing on a date to be determined by the Executive Director.

Ms. Chu described the vacancy history of the Manager, Workforce Investigations position; described how this position's job description was updated to better reflect its responsibilities for leading all MWRA workforce investigations, particularly for policies related to discrimination and harassment prevention, code of conduct and employee conduct; and described the recommended candidate's work experience and qualifications.

Chair Tepper asked if this position was posted internally and externally. Ms. Chu responded in the affirmative and described the selection process. There was brief, general discussion about the large number of applicants for this position.

Hearing no further discussion or questions from the Board, Chair Tepper requested a roll call vote in which the members were recorded as follows:

Yes No Abstain
Tepper
Flanagan
Peña
Swett
Taverna
Vitale
Wolowicz
(ref. VII B.3)

May 2025 PCR Amendments

A motion was duly made and seconded to approve amendments to the Position Control Register (PCR) as presented in the May 21, 2025 Staff Summary and with the records of this meeting.

Ms. Chu noted that proposed PCR amendments include the creation of a Deputy Chief Operating Officer as previously discussed in agenda item VII A.1, and a new position in the Operations Division, Environmental and Regulatory Affairs Department of Project Manager, Environmental Compliance.

Hearing no questions or discussion from the Board, Chair Tepper requested a roll call vote in which the members were recorded as follows:

Yes No Abstain
Tepper
Flanagan
Peña
Swett
Taverna
Vitale
Wolowicz
(ref. VII B.4)

Recommendations for Non-Union Pay Equity Adjustments

A motion was duly made and seconded to accept the recommendations of the Pay Equity Working Group and to approve the salary adjustments as summarized in Attachment A of the May 21, 2025 Staff Summary presented and filed with the records of this meeting, to commence on a date determined by the Executive Director.

Ms. Gillen explained that if approved, the Pay Equity Working Group's recommended salary adjustments would both satisfy MWRA's obligations under the Massachusetts Equal Pay Act and underscore MWRA's commitment to fairness and equity.

There was discussion about the engagement of the Collins Center to comprehensively review this pay equity analysis, which was performed in-house. Mr. Vitale asked if MWRA had received Freedom of Information Act ("FOIA") requests for prior pay equity reports, and if the reports are protected from such requests. Ms. Francisco Murphy explained that no such FOIA requests have been received to the best of her knowledge, and that staff will confirm if there are any exclusions or exceptions.

Mr. Taverna requested an update on the Pay Equity study for all non-union managers. Ms. Gillen reported that the Collins Center is currently working on the study, which was led by Personnel and Compensation Committee Chair Wolowicz with input from MWRA Advisory Board Executive Director Matt Romero and administrative support by MWRA staff; the

Collins Center has narrowed down a list of peer comparator entities; and, staff have internally reviewed and updated all non-union manager job descriptions and provided these to the Collins Center. Ms. Gillen also described the next steps for the study, including a survey of peer comparator entities. There was brief discussion about the timeline for the study, which is expected to be completed within several months.

Hearing no further discussion or questions from the Board, Chair Tepper requested a roll call vote in which the members were recorded as follows:

Yes No Abstain
Tepper
Flanagan
Peña
Swett
Taverna
Vitale
Wolowicz
(ref. VII B.5)

CORRESPONDENCE TO THE BOARD

Chair Tepper announced that the Board of Directors received correspondence from April 25, 2025 from Senator Jo Comerford and Representative Aaron Saunders regarding Equity for the Quabbin Region. She noted that the correspondence is included in the materials for the meeting and invited discussion.

Ms. Wolowicz reported that she recently met with Senator Comerford and Representative Saunders, and made some recommendations, including that they be invited to an upcoming Board meeting to discuss their proposed legislation; the formation of a Subcommittee dedicated to hearing and addressing the legislators' concerns and those of their constituents; and the dedication of time to collaboratively develop a unified position that reflects the shared goals and priorities of all stakeholders. She advised that in her view, discussing these matters, rather than communicating through correspondence, would better facilitate the identification of these goals. Mr. Taverna agreed and suggested that the Board set aside ample time for review and consideration in preparation for the meeting.

Chair Tepper expressed support for Ms. Wolowicz' recommendations and offered her assistance to arrange a meeting with Sen. Comerford and Rep. Saunders. There was preliminary discussion about the potential Board Subcommittee makeup and meeting format. Chair Tepper recommended that Board members and staff give these matters some thought in advance of scheduling the meeting. She also suggested that Sen. Comerford and Rep. Saunders be invited to participate at the beginning of such a meeting, after which discussion would be tabled then resumed during a separate Subcommittee

meeting. Mr. Laskey advised that staff would support the Board's recommendations. (ref. VIII)

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was duly made and seconded to adjourn the meeting.

Hearing no discussion or questions from the Board, Chair Tepper requested a roll call vote in which the members were recorded as follows:

Yes No Abstain

Tepper

Flanagan

Peña

Swett

Taverna

Vitale

Wolowicz

The meeting adjourned at 3:38pm.

Approved: June 18, 2025

Attest:

Kršk'n MacDorgall

Brian Peña, Secretary

LIST OF DOCUMENTS AND EXHIBITS USED

- Draft Minutes of the April 16, 2025 MWRA Board of Directors' Meeting (ref. I)
- May 21, 2025 Staff Summary and presentation Delegated Authority Report April 2025 (ref. IV A.1)
- May 21, 2025 Staff Summary and presentation FY2025 Third Quarter Orange Notebook (ref. IV A.2)
- May 21, 2025 Staff Summary and presentation Change Orders and Amendments Update Design and Construction Accomplishments (ref. IV A.3)
- May 21, 2025 Staff Summary FY25 Financial Update and Summary through April 2025 (ref. IV A.4)
- May 21, 2025 Staff Summary Bond Defeasance of Future Debt Service (ref. IV B.1)
- May 21, 2025 Staff Summary MWRA FY26 Insurance Program Renewal (ref. IV B.2)
- May 21, 2025 Staff Summary Purchase Order Contract for Infor/Lawson Enterprise Resource Planning Consultant McInnis Consulting Services, Inc. Bid WRA-5470Q, State Contract ITS77 Cat2b, Amendment 1 (ref. IV C.1)

- May 21, 2025 Staff Summary Purchase Order for Data Reporting Analyst (Report Writer) Consultant Mindlance, Inc. Bid WRA-5281Q, State Contract ITS77 Category 1A and 1B, Amendment 2 (ref. IV C.2)
- May 21, 2025 Staff Summary and presentation Charlestown Pump Station Seawall Repair (ref. V A.1)
- May 21, 2025 Staff Summary Grit and Screenings Hauling and Disposal: W. L. French Excavating Corporation Contract S629 (ref. V B.1)
- May 21, 2025 Staff Summary and presentation Metropolitan Water Tunnel Program
 Payment to Eversource Electric Company Electric Service to Tunnel Boring Machine
 Launch Shaft Sites (rev. VI A.1)
- May 21, 2025 Staff Summary and presentation Intermediate High Pipeline Improvements, CP2, Rehabilitation of Sections 24 and 25 Water Mains Albanese D&S, Inc. Contract 6956, Change Order 11 (ref. VI B.1)
- May 21, 2025 Staff Summary Organizational Changes in the Operations Division (ref. VII A.1)
- May 21, 2025 Staff Summary Appointment of Chief Operating Officer (ref. VII B.1)
- May 21, 2025 Staff Summary Appointment of Deputy Director, Deer Island Maintenance Operations Division (ref. VII B.2)
- May 21, 2025 Staff Summary Appointment of Manager, Workplace Investigations (ref. VII B.3)
- May 21, 2025 Staff Summary May 2025 PCR Amendments (ref. VII B.4)
- May 21, 2025 Staff Summary Recommendations for Non-Union Pay Equity Adjustments (ref. VII B.5)
- April 25, 2025 correspondence from Senator Jo Comerford and Representative Aaron Saunders regarding Equity for the Quabbin Region