

**MASSACHUSETTS WATER RESOURCES AUTHORITY**

Meeting of the Board of Directors

February 4, 2026

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A meeting of the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA) Board of Directors was held on February 4, 2026 at MWRA's Administration Facility in Chelsea and via remote participation.

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

MWRA Executive Director Frederick Laskey attended at the Chelsea Administration Facility. General Counsel Carolyn Francisco Murphy; Deputy Chief Operating Officers Stephen Cullen and Rebecca Weidman; Director of Finance Thomas Durkin; Director of Administration Michele Gillen; Chief Engineer Brian Kubaska; Director of Environmental and Regulatory Affairs Colleen Rizzi; Director of Environmental Quality David Wu; Deputy Finance Director/Treasurer Matthew Horan; Chief of Staff Katherine Ronan; Associate General Counsel Angela Atchue; Technical Support Manager Michael Curtis; and Assistant Secretary Kristin MacDougall were among the staff who also attended at the Chelsea Administration Facility, and Chief Operating Officer Kathy Murtagh attended remotely.

Vandana Rao, EEA, Matt Romero, MWRA Advisory Board, and Richard Raiche, City of Somerville and MWRA Advisory Board attended at the Chelsea Administration Facility.

Chair Tepper called the meeting to order at 9:40am.

**INTRODUCTION**

Chair Tepper welcomed the meeting participants and outlined the agenda. She noted that representatives of four entities would each have the opportunity to speak with a five-minute limit to allow enough time for Board discussion. The Chair reminded staff that their presentation should focus on new, rather than repeated information and noted the Board has reviewed the materials provided; and Board members' questions were a priority. She also advised that the latter part of the meeting would be set aside to discuss the Executive Director search process.

**ROLL CALL**

MWRA General Counsel Francisco Murphy took roll call of Board members in attendance and announced that Board Members Flanagan and Wolowicz 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 was being recorded, and that the agenda and meeting materials were available on MWRA's website.

#### SPEAKERS' COMMENTS REGARDING THE DRAFT UPDATED CSO CONTROL PLAN

##### Richard Raiche, City of Somerville Director of Infrastructure and Asset Management and MWRA Advisory Board Executive Committee Chair

Mr. Raiche discussed the regional challenge of Combined Sewer Overflow ("CSO") control and the detailed hydraulic and water quality models the project team used to develop alternatives, noting that the Draft Updated CSO Control Plan is the first in the nation that looks forward at the impacts of climate change. Mr. Raiche outlined ways the CSO control recommendations to be presented at this meeting addresses climate change impacts, including predicted CSO frequencies and volumes. He also highlighted the regional problem of stormwater pollution and the need for individual communities to invest in sewer and drainage system improvements to meet water quality standards. Finally, Mr. Raiche noted that the submittal of the Draft Updated CSO Control Plan would serve as the start of a regional conversation about water quality and infrastructure needs.

##### Patrick Herron, Executive Director, Mystic River Watershed Association

Mr. Herron thanked the CSO Control Plan project partners for their progress and updates on the Plan recommendations since last presented. He emphasized the need for clean water bodies free of pollution from CSO discharges. He also asserted that the current Plan does not sufficiently protect public health and called for more detailed estimates of CSO discharge volumes; noted that zero CSOs in a 2050 typical year is not equivalent to zero CSOs; questioned the Plan's assumptions for spending; advocated for more investment to eliminate CSOs, which impact flood waters, recreation neighboring property values; and recommended sewer separation as the default position for CSO control for the Alewife Brook and the Charles and Mystic Rivers.

##### Kristin Anderson, Founding Member, Save the Alewife Brook

Ms. Anderson expressed thanks for the opportunity to speak and shared her personal experiences of flooding by water contaminated with sewage at her home near Alewife Brook, and the negative effects to her health. She discussed her observations of Alewife Brook area residents walking and recreating in contaminated floodwaters and highlighted the health impacts of untreated CSOs on residents, including Environmental Justice populations. Ms. Anderson also advocated for more sewer separation; and stated that the typical year is a fantasy and does not represent reality and that the allowable amount of CSO discharge in the plan is being increased 20% from 7.29 to 9.85 million gallons at Alewife Brook. She further expressed that many of the people live in Environmental Justice neighborhoods, that in 2021, 51 million gallons of untreated CSO sewage pollution was discharged into Elvis Brook and that in 2023, it was 29 million gallons; and that in 2023 the Alewife Brook flooded over its bank five

times, sending untreated sewage flood water into the Alewife Brook Greenway path. Finally, she urged the MWRA Board of Directors to vote no on the Draft Updated CSO Control Plan Alternatives recommendation, vote yes on a plan that includes more sewer separation, and demand an end to CSO pollution.

Emily Norton, Executive Director, Charles River Watershed Association

Ms. Norton thanked MWRA Executive Director Fred Laskey for his years of public service and expressed that the Draft Updated CSO Control Plan is marginally better than the previous recommendation, the Updated Plan would still allow millions of gallons of sewage to enter the Charles River, and the difference between the recommended level of control and level of control that they and members of the public would like to see is minimal. She acknowledged that the region's stormwater is a problem and questioned the CSO Project Team's focus on stormwater over CSO pollution from sewage. Ms. Norton suggested that other US wastewater agencies handle stormwater, CSOs and associated flooding more comprehensively. She called for a new regional authority with its own bonding authority as a potential tool to help MWRA better address the existential threats of flooding and climate change.

(Ms. Wolowicz left the meeting)

WASTEWATER POLICY AND OVERSIGHT

A. Information

1. Draft Updated CSO Control Plan Alternatives Recommendation

Overview

Colleen Rizzi, MWRA Director of Environmental and Regulatory Affairs, thanked speakers for their comments; summarized MWRA's investments and progress for CSO control to date; and explained that responsible and justifiable infrastructure investments are central to MWRA's strategies for balancing environmental and public health and rate stability. She noted that construction impacts are also important considerations for the Draft Updated CSO Control Plan for Alewife Brook and the Charles and Upper Mystic Rivers (the "Alewife, Charles and Mystic" or "Variance Waters"). Next, Ms. Rizzi outlined key differences between the Draft CSO Control Plan Recommended Alternatives presented to the MWRA Board of Directors on October 29, 2025 and the Draft Updated CSO Control Plan Recommended Alternatives to be covered at this meeting ("Updated Recommended Alternatives"), noting the Draft Updated CSO Control Plan's increased cost. She also reviewed the topics of discussion and invited Board Members to ask questions during the presentation. (ref. I.A.1)

Climate Change Impacts

Brian Kubaska, MWRA Chief Engineer, discussed the Updated Alternatives' improvements for the Variance Waters, including treated CSOs; the scope of study for Variance Water CSOs; strategies for addressing predicted, significant increases of rainfall amounts and storm intensity due to climate change; the hydrologic model used to predict storms and their impacts; and expected future conditions due to climate change without new CSO control projects, all as

detailed in the Staff Summary and PowerPoint presentation slides (slides) for this meeting.

In response to Chair Tepper's request for clarification, Mr. Kubaska affirmed that Presentation Slide 10 shows modeled predictions for CSO activations and frequencies in a 2050 Typical Year (TY) if no new CSO control projects were implemented.

Mr. Kubaska then presented expected CSO frequencies and volumes due to increasing precipitation from climate change; 2050 TY improvements projected to result from the Updated Alternatives; the four levels of control considered for the 2050 TY; and the elimination of an option for limited CSOs in a 2050 TY for the Draft Updated CSO Control Plan in response to stakeholder feedback.

Chair Tepper requested more information about the methodology used to determine a TY with respect to the Draft Updated CSO Control Plan's alternatives. Mr. Kubaska described the development of the TY framework including analysis of historic storm event and climate change impacts.

#### Alternatives Development and Evaluation Process

Ms. Rizzi outlined the general components (tools) of a CSO alternative and the iterative steps of the alternatives development and evaluation process as detailed in the Staff Summary and presentation. Referring to the scoring rubric included as Attachment C to the Staff Summary, Ms. Rizzi noted that the evaluation of each alternative included consideration of construction impacts on vulnerable communities (such as potential to limit public land use) and expected receiving water benefits.

#### General Construction Considerations

Mr. Kubaska reviewed the advantages and challenges of the various construction methods evaluated, as detailed in the Staff Summary and meeting slides.

In response to a question from Chair Tepper, Mr. Kubaska explained that sewer separation projects could entail the installation of single or multiple pipelines, depending on conditions.

Mr. Kubaska explained that regional tunnels were considered for the Draft Updated CSO Control Plan, but are not recommended, partly because they would require multi-acre construction staging areas, 24-7 operations over a multi-year period, and potentially hundreds of daily truck trips to transport large volumes of earth offsite.

Chair Tepper asked if the regional tunnel option would require continuous construction every day for approximately one or two years. Mr. Kubaska responded in the affirmative, explaining that a tunnel boring machine cannot stop once it begins advancing. In response to the Chair's follow-up question about regional tunnel operation and maintenance requirements, Mr. Kubaska advised that this would be covered later in the meeting.

### Charles River Alternatives

Ms. Rizzi summarized the CSO control alternatives that were considered for the Charles River as presented in the Staff Summary and slides for this meeting. She noted that modeling indicates Green Storm Water Infrastructure would not serve as a standalone CSO solution; however, it would provide community benefits if applied in combination with other alternatives.

### Updated Recommended Charles River Alternative: CR Hybrid 3

Ms. Rizzi presented the Updated Recommended Alternative for the Charles River , CR Hybrid 3 [two tanks, totaling 12.6 million gallons (MG), 446 acres of sewer separation and two storage conduits], as detailed in the Staff Summary and slides. She described how CR Hybrid 3 differs from the Charles River alternative that staff recommended at the October 29, 2025 meeting. She also presented CR Hybrid 3's components, cost, duration and the benefit timeline; and reviewed the Charles River alternatives that were not recommended and some key differentiators.

Next, Mr. Kubaska highlighted some of the operational, maintenance and construction-related considerations that factored into the recommendation of CR Hybrid 3, including potential construction impacts at the Back Bay and Charles River Esplanade, and Magazine Beach.

There was brief discussion about the complexity, challenges and benefits of sewer separation in a congested, urban area, and the coordination required for such projects.

Mr. Swett requested more information about the above-grade, permanent facilities proposed to be constructed on 2.3 acres at Magazine Beach, as presented in the Staff Summary and meeting slides. Mr. Kubaska explained that most of the infrastructure would be located below grade, with some above-grade components for purposes such as ventilation, security, and worker access.

Noting the potential for 2050 climate change impacts to exceed current modeling estimates, Mr. Swett requested more information about the updated alternatives' adaptability. Mr. Kubaska explained that expandability was a key criterion of the alternatives evaluation process.

Chair Tepper requested more information about the expandability of CR Hybrid 3, which includes two storage tanks. Mr. Kubaska provided examples of ways that combined sewer systems with tanks could be expanded, such as by adding upstream sewer separation. He provided a brief overview of expandability for the recommended Alewife, Charles and Mystic alternatives and relayed that staff would provide more details after the meeting.

Mr. Swett stressed the importance of adaptability for worsening climate conditions and requested that staff provide additional information about the expected nearer-term benefits of the updated alternatives for the Alewife, Charles and Mystic. Ms. Rizzi discussed the nearer-term benefits of storage tanks and noted that complex construction sequencing in multiple communities could affect current timeline estimates. Mr. Swett noted some major non-MWRA

projects that are planned for the Charles River Esplanade and advised staff to coordinate with the project owners for efficiency and to reduce public impacts, including for access.

#### Mystic River Alternatives

Ms. Rizzi discussed existing conditions at the Mystic River, which has a single outfall; noted that staff now recommend a combination of sewer separation and storage for zero CSOs in a 2050 TY level of control for the Mystic River, versus the limited CSOs alternative that was presented at the October 29 Board of Directors' meeting; and reviewed the Mystic River alternatives that were considered.

#### Updated Recommended Mystic River Alternative: MR Hybrid 1

Mr. Kubaska presented the Updated Recommended Alternative for the Mystic River, MR Hybrid 1 (a 7.4 MG tank and 95 acres of sewer separation). He explained that the tank size as designed reflects anticipated tidal conditions and discussed the proposed work location; easement requirements; new facilities to be constructed under MR Hybrid 1; and some expected operations and maintenance issues, all as detailed in the Staff Summary and slides.

#### Alewife Brook Alternatives

Ms. Rizzi explained that the recommended alternative for Alewife Brook had not changed since last presented at the October 29 Board of Directors' meeting.

#### Recommended Alewife Brook Alternative: AB Hybrid 2

Ms. Rizzi reviewed the recommended CSO alternative for the Alewife Brook, AB Hybrid 2 [two, 1.5 MG tanks, 8 acres of sewer separation, a 0.75-mile-long conveyance pipe] and a mile-long micro tunnel] as detailed in the Staff Summary and presentation. She noted that one proposed tank would be located near the Alewife MBTA station.

Mr. Kubaska discussed potential impacts to public access at the Dilboy Field parking lot; reviewed CSO projects considered for the Alewife Brook; and the benefits of micro tunneling versus constructing a regional tunnel for Alewife Brook CSO control, including a shorter work duration and smaller work area. Mr. Kubaska explained that the larger tunnels would be underutilized in even the largest storm in the 2050 Typical Year. He also presented an overview of new facilities proposed under AB Hybrid 2.

Chair Tepper requested that staff discuss the rationale for not recommending full, regional sewer separation for the Alewife Brook, then move to the presentation on water quality in the interest of time. Mr. Kubaska acknowledged stakeholder feedback on the matter of sewer separation and explained some key reasons why it is not recommended, including significant challenges for moving and treating large volumes of stormwater, nutrient load limitations; and concerns about the hydraulic capacity of the Alewife Brook, which would be prone to frequent overtopping. He added that cost and the length of time needed to realize CSO reduction benefits were also considered.

Next, Mr. Kubaska presented a summary of the Draft Recommended CSO Alternatives for the Alewife, Charles and Mystic, including level of control, cost and duration, and briefly discussed the potential project cost distribution among MWRA and the cities of Cambridge and Somerville (Project Partners), noting that this would be discussed in more detail later in the meeting.

#### Performance of the Draft Recommended Alternatives

Mr. Kubaska explained the expected performance of the draft recommended CSO alternatives presented at this meeting – zero CSO discharges in a 2050 TY - and expected benefits to non-variance waters in the Outer Harbor and downstream areas of the Mystic River. He noted that regional tunnel alternatives, which are not recommended, would not provide these benefits.

Mr. Kubaska then discussed the modeled impacts of the recommended draft alternatives in larger storms, and the hydraulic model's predictions for how the alternatives would have performed if they were in place during recent, past storms, as detailed in the meeting slides. He noted that the model shows that the recommended alternatives presented at this meeting would have resulted in significant CSO discharge reductions.

Chair Tepper requested an example of a known storm event for storm size comparison. Mr. Kubaska explained that Hurricane Ida, a 5.2-inch, 72-hour storm, could be compared to a five-year, 2050 storm event.

#### Water Quality

David Wu, MWRA ENQUAL Director, presented a summary of pollution sources in the Alewife Brook and the Upper Mystic and Charles Rivers, including dry weather sources, stormwater, untreated CSOs and upstream inputs. He explained that data shows that eliminating CSOs in the MWRA service area alone would not result in swimmable, fishable water bodies.

Mr. Wu presented the relative annual proportions of E.coli pollution in the water bodies by source; advised that MWRA staff have monitored water quality in the Alewife, Charles and Mystic since 1989; and noted this data is shared with watershed groups and other interested parties and posted on MWRA's website.

Mr. Wu also discussed the methodology for grading the Alewife, Charles and Mystic; and these water bodies' respective grades and advised that public health officials recommend avoiding all waters for at least 48 hours after a rain event. Finally, he reviewed the pollution sources that occur concurrently with CSOs and water quality modeling predictions regarding return of investment for higher levels of CSO control, all as presented in the Staff Summary and slides for this meeting.

#### Financial Impacts

Matthew Horan, MWRA Deputy Finance Director and Treasurer, presented the financial impacts of the Updated CSO Control Plan as detailed in the Staff Summary and slides for this meeting. He noted that his presentation would be focused on MWRA's share of the spending

only (approximately 60% of total spending) , and the spending discussed is over and above the \$6 billion currently included in the assessment projections.

He discussed CSO Control Plan's potential MWRA spending by category; projected debt service; MWRA's revenue bond coverage requirement; sewer assessment impacts in a 2050 TY, a 2050 5-year storm, and a 2050 25-year storm.

Next, Mr. Horan presented the Draft Updated CSO Control Plan's projected rate impacts over time for households in the MWRA sewer system by level of control, noting that they are projected to more than double by 2050. He reviewed historic sewer system household charges and MWRA's long-term rates management and control strategy, noting that rates management is key to ensuring that ratepayers can afford MWRA's overall capital program and operating costs.

Mr. Horan then discussed the difference between increases associated with the CSO program versus the baseline projections in a 2050 TY; a 2050 5-year storm; and 2050 25-year storm. He noted that 35 of the 40 communities in the MWRA sewer system are also in the water system, therefore, MWRA's capital program must be looked at holistically. Mr. Horan also advised that moving forward with any Updated CSO Control Plan would require consideration of other capital projects and operating costs if MWRA is to maintain the safety and reliability of both drinking water and wastewater services. Finally, Mr. Horan presented the top and bottom five sewer assessment communities by dollar value by level of CSO control.

Chair Tepper noted that the information provided to the Board regarding household impacts was helpful.

#### BRIEF RECESS

The Chair announced that the meeting would take a short recess. The meeting recessed at 11:25am.

#### MEETING RESUMES

The meeting resumed at 11:35am.

Mr. Laskey thanked staff from AECOM, and Chair Tepper thanked MWRA staff for their work on the Draft Updated CSO Control Plan to date.

#### NEXT STEPS

Ms. Rizzi presented the next steps in the Draft Updated CSO Control Plan process, as detailed in the Staff Summary and meeting slides. She noted that the submittal of the Draft Plan to EPA and DEP, which is due by April 30, 2026, will open a robust public review and comment period.

Chair Tepper advised that the DEP will manage the cadence of the public review and outreach period, including comments and hearings, once the Draft Updated CSO Control Plan is submitted.

## DISCUSSION

The Chair invited Board members' questions on the Draft Updated CSO Control Plan presentation.

Mr. Swett asked if non-ratepayer funding sources such as state or federal grants or financing were available for the CSO Program. Mr. Horan explained that it is difficult for MWRA to access many federal programs because the Authority is not a city, town or county, and the SRF Loan Program is currently facing some constraints, which are expected to reduce MWRA's borrowing ability. He added that MWRA's assessment projects reflect some subsidized SRF borrowing.

Mr. Jack Walsh asked if coliform counts were measured when Alewife Brook flooding occurred, and if so, would the levels be dangerous. Mr. Wu explained that they were not measured to his knowledge, noting that Alewife Brook gauge data is not 100% reliable, making it difficult to tell when it is flooding. Mr. Walsh expressed concern about potential downstream impacts and asked if the Updated CSO Control Plan could negatively impact MWRA facilities such as the Deer Island Wastewater Treatment Plant (DITP). Mr. Kubaska relayed that staff evaluations show that a series of large storms could potentially affect dewatering operations and storage capacity that would require flow management.

Mr. Walsh then asked if sewer separation would substantially lower coliform counts. Mr. Wu explained stormwater bacterial counts are highly variable; and the key concern is the relatively high volume of stormwater. Mr. Kubaska added that sewers that would be separated under the Updated CSO Control Plan would have small connections to the MWRA sewer system, therefore, the first slug of stormwater would not be discharged into the water bodies during every storm event. Mr. Walsh asked if the first flush during a large storm after a dry period would contain a high bacterial input. Mr. Wu and Mr. Kubaska explained that this is a possibility, according to sampling data.

Mr. Walsh also asked if there would be CSO discharges to the Charles River under the Draft Updated CSO Control Plan. Mr. Kubaska advised that no Charles River CSO discharges would be anticipated for a 2050 TY if the recommended Plan was implemented.

With respect to the recommended Mystic River alternative Mr. Peña asked why staff recommend MR Hybrid 1 (one, 7.4 MG tank and 95 acres of sewer separation), rather than the MR Storage alternative (one, 16.7 MG tank), and which entity would own and operate the infrastructure. Ms. Rizzi explained that staff are not recommending the construction of a single, larger tank due to constructability challenges such as poor soils adjacent to the River, and the required excavation for that large a tank. She added that statistically, the larger tank would be expected to be filled only once every 25 years. Mr. Kubaska noted that MR Hybrid 1 includes a tank because sewer separation is not feasible in some areas of Somerville. Regarding the ownership of Mystic River CSO infrastructure, Mr. Kubaska explained that most of the infrastructure would be owned and operated by the City of Somerville; however, ownership of

the tank has not been determined yet. In response to a follow-up question from Mr. Peña, Ms. Rizzi explained that the tank depths for MR Hybrid 1 and the MR Storage alternative would be similar.

Chair Tepper requested a status update on the Financial Capability Analysis (“FCA”) for the Draft Updated CSO Control Plan. Ms. Rizzi relayed that the FCA analysis is in process and will be included in the Draft Report submittal to DEP. She noted that MWRA and the project partner communities were also performing analyses on expected rate impacts in parallel to the FCA. Mr. Horan briefly described some differences between the FCA and the rate impact analysis. . The Chair discussed the timing of completing the FCA and difficulty of the Board voting without an opportunity to review FCA information.

Chair Tepper requested more information about ways to approach assessing the scope of 2050 TY discharge volumes over longer time frames. Mr. Kubaska explained that the Typical Year is a concept used by DEP and EPA to guide CSO control plans, and it would be a challenge to model future discharge impact projections that span multiple years. Referring to presentation slide 8, he suggested analyzing historical data in tandem with gauging how the Plan would alleviate CSOs and noted that CSO discharges would be treated under the Draft Updated Plan. There was brief discussion about information presented on slide 8. Mr. Kubaska briefly provided an example of a 2024 storm presented on slide 80 that resulted in a CSO discharge from a MWRA outfall and relayed that staff would potentially incorporate information about such storms in the Draft Updated CSO Control Plan.

In response to a question from Mr. Pappastergion, Mr. Kubaska explained that Table 1 in the Staff Summary (Predicted CSO Activation and Volumes without Draft Updated CSO Control Plan Projects Implemented), depicts the modeled predictions for CSO activations and discharge volumes if no new projects were implemented. Mr. Pappastergion requested that staff prepare a similar table that shows the predicted impacts of the Draft Updated CSO Control Plan across multiple levels of control, and Chair Tepper agreed, noting that a similar, but now outdated slide, was presented at a recent Board of Directors’ meeting. Mr. Kubaska relayed that this data is available, and staff would prepare a table for Board review.

Regarding this meeting’s discussion about baseline water and sewer rate assessments, Mr. Pappastergion advised that ratepayers who receive both services typically view their bills on a combined, rather than separate basis. Mr. Pappastergion noted the clarity of the presentation of costs depicted on slide 90, which shows that the rate revenue requirement in 2050 under the highest level of control would be \$225 million over baseline. Mr. Horan described how the model compounds average rates over time; referred to Attachment D to the Staff Summary (Share of Total Sewer Assessment Increase Related to CSO Spending by Control Level 2029 – 2050) for information about what MWRA member communities would be expected to pay over their normal assessments. Mr. Pappastergion noted that information on slide 90 reflects MWRA assessments only and does not include community retail charges.

Noting the Draft Updated CSO Control Plan recommended alternatives presented at this meeting of zero CSO discharges in a 2050 TY, Chair Tepper asked staff to discuss lessons learned from community outreach, and whether public feedback was incorporated in the Draft Updated CSO Plan. Colleen Rizzi relayed that the recommendation for zero 2050 TY discharges was the most significant change in response to community feedback, including during public meetings. She described concerns about affordability and construction impacts that were raised at the most recent public meeting and noted that staff are working to balance the varied and often contradictory viewpoints of the diverse stakeholder community. Chair Tepper acknowledged the need to balance constituent viewpoints.

There was brief discussion about Board procedure for asking staff follow-up questions after the meeting.

Mr. Peña asked how the recommended CSO alternative for the Charles River would affect its water body classification. General Counsel Francisco Murphy noted that it is her understanding that the recommended Plan does not change the classification, and in response to Mr. Pappastergion's follow-up question, Ms. Francisco Murphy added that variances would be needed going forward during construction.

Mr. Jack Walsh asked if MWRA would be able to maintain its practice of raising rates by 4% or less annually with the addition of Updated CSO Control Plan costs. Mr. Horan advised that maintaining a "4 no more" policy would not be possible without making other reductions. Noting the environmental benefits of CSO control, Mr. Walsh expressed concern about the CSO Plan's impacts on future rate increases and requested a summary of projected household rate increases for each level of control over time. Mr. Horan relayed that he would prepare this information, however, rate percentages become less informative over time because as debt service increases at the start of larger projects, the year-over-year percent change decreases, while the dollars increase. Mr. Walsh noted that in his view, large rate jumps are harder to accept than more incremental increases. Mr. Horan agreed, and discussed future rate increases predicted to exceed 4%, noting that the predictions do not include community retail rates. Mr. Pappastergion noted the potential impact on rating agency assessments.

Mr. Swett encouraged staff to consider and present the baseline and predicted rate impacts from a ratepayer perspective, with real dollar amounts and percentages, and relative to other costs, such as for energy. He noted that BWSC performed a similar analysis, which showed that the rate impact for 2050 is relatively de minimus (approximately \$60 more); and acknowledged MWRA's rate predictability and public perceptions of rate increases.

Expanding on her earlier response to Mr. Peña's question, Ms. Francisco Murphy noted that the Draft Updated CSO Control Plan submitted to the DEP will include data required under the variances for their use attainability analysis.

(Mr. Taverna briefly left and returned to the meeting during the presentation.)

CORRESPONDENCE TO THE BOARDA. Correspondence Regarding the Draft Updated CSO Control Plan

Correspondence to the Board regarding the Draft Updated CSO Control Plan was received, included with the meeting materials and posted publicly on MWRA's website, however, it was not discussed during this meeting in the interest of time. (ref. II.A)

OTHER BUSINESSA. Search for New Executive Director: Process and Preliminary Screening (Search) Committee – vote

Chair Tepper noted that she had spoken with Board Members about the process for searching for a new MWRA Executive Director and it was suggested to form a Preliminary Screening (Search) Committee ("Screening Committee"). She outlined various potential Committee makeups and asked members to consider if the Board should engage an outside firm to assist in the search process.

Chair Tepper noted that the Chair of the Massport Board of Directors, Governor Healey's Office, and other quasi-public agencies had successfully engaged the national executive search firm Isaacson, Miller, and that she had spoken with firm representatives to get a sense of their processes. She invited Board discussion on the next steps, and Ms. Francisco Murphy suggested to the Board that they also determine a Screening Committee Chair.

Mr. Pappastergion proposed that Secretary Tepper Chair the Committee, to include three Board members – a Gubernatorial, MWRA Advisory Board, and City of Boston appointee. There was discussion about procedures for the Committee and an eventual full Board vote to approve the appointment of a new Executive Director; Massport's positive experience with Isaacson, Miller, and price for the firm's services (approximately 1/3 of the Executive Director's salary, plus some administrative costs).

Mr. Swett noted that he could also recommend Isaacson, Miller, and suggested that the Board request a bid from the firm and begin negotiations in the interest of time and out of respect for Mr. Laskey's retirement plans.

Douglas Rice, MWRA Procurement Director, noted MWRA's policies/procedures for procuring professional services and advised that the Board could vote to suspend the procedures for the Executive Director search firm given the time and uniqueness of this need.

Ms. Francisco Murphy suggested some guidelines for motions if the Board decided to establish a Screening Committee and suspend procurement procedures for the purpose of engaging an Executive Search firm. There was discussion with questions and answers about how to establish the Screening Committee and appoint its members.

Chair Tepper recommended that Board representatives of the City of Boston, the Governor, and the MWRA Advisory Board each submit a member to the Chair for appointment by vote at

an upcoming Board of Directors' meeting.

In response to a question from Mr. Taverna, Ms. Francisco Murphy relayed that MWRA staff could assist the Committee with information about the search firm's cost; and discussed potential future motions for engaging the selected search firm. Chair Tepper added that to her knowledge, Isaacson, Miller charges an hourly rate.

Mr. Pappastergion noted that for this purpose the MWRA Advisory Board would represent the City of Quincy and the Town of Winthrop, and Ms. Francisco Murphy advised that the number of Committee members must be less than a quorum of the Board; therefore, the Screening Committee may have no more than five members.

In response to questions from Mr. Peña, Ms. Francisco Murphy explained that the Screening Committee would be governed by the same Open Meeting Law rules that govern the Board of Directors. There was general discussion with questions and answers about Committee procedures regarding quorum, voting and making recommendations to the full Board for approval. Chair Tepper noted that the Screening Committee could potentially invite candidates to speak with the full Board if needed. Ms. Francisco Murphy noted that the Committee would focus on narrowing down the candidates to finalists for consideration by the Board, and the Chair added that the full Board would make the final selection.

Mr. Swett asked if the Screening Committee's discourse would be subject to Open Meeting Law. Ms. Francisco Murphy responded in the affirmative. She explained that she would provide guidance to the Committee, and the Attorney General's office is another source of information, such as checklists.

Chair Tepper advised that the screening process should protect the candidates' privacy. Ms. Francisco Murphy agreed, explained that interviews by the Committee to narrow the finalists can be conducted in closed session, however, the Attorney General's office has advised that discussion regarding the process, such as questions developed, should take place in Open Session, and noted that the priority for this meeting is to establish the Screening Committee. In response to a question from Mr. Swett, Ms. Francisco Murphy explained that she would provide guidance about Open Meeting Law recommendations concerning candidates' privacy at a future meeting.

Chair Tepper noted that based on her discussion with Isaacson, Miller staff, she is confident in their abilities and process. There was brief discussion with questions and answers about the Committee timeline; developing a job description; and the general scope of the Executive Search firm.

(Mr. Flanagan briefly left and returned to the meeting during the discussion.)

**A motion was duly made and seconded to establish a Preliminary Screening (Search) Committee for the Executive Director position.**

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

<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Abstain</u>
Tepper		
Flanagan		
Pappastergion		
Peña		
Swett		
Taverna		
Vitale		
Jack Walsh		
P. Walsh		

(ref. III.A)

**A motion was duly made and seconded to suspend the rules of procurement for the hiring of an executive search firm for the Executive Director position.**

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

<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Abstain</u>
Tepper		
Flanagan		
Pappastergion		
Peña		
Swett		
Taverna		
Vitale		
Jack Walsh		
P. Walsh		

(ref. III.A)

#### 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:

<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Abstain</u>
Tepper		
Flanagan		
Pappastergion		

<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Abstain</u>
Peña		
Swett		
Taverna		
Vitale		
Jack Walsh		
P. Walsh		

(ref. III)

The meeting adjourned at 12:25pm.

Approved: February 25, 2026

Attest:

 for

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Brian Peña, Secretary

LIST OF DOCUMENTS AND EXHIBITS USED

- February 4, 2026 Staff Summary and Presentation – Draft Updated CSO Control Plan Recommendation (ref. 1.A)
- Correspondence to the Board Regarding the Draft Updated CSO Control Plan, and Additional Correspondence (ref. II.A)