

MASSACHUSETTS WATER RESOURCES AUTHORITY

Meeting of the Board of Directors

July 10, 2026

A meeting of the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA) Board of Directors was held on July 10, 2026 at the Quabbin Visitor Center in Belchertown, and via remote participation.

Chair Tepper presided from the Quabbin Visitor Center. Board Members Peña, Taverna, Patrick Walsh and Wolowicz also participated at the Quabbin Visitor Center.

Board Members Flanagan, Foti, Swett, Pappastergion and Vitale participated remotely. Board Member Jack Walsh was absent.

MWRA Executive Director Stephen Estes-Smargiassi attended at the Quabbin Visitor Center. General Counsel Carolyn Francisco Murphy; Chief Operating Officer Kathy Murtagh; Deputy Chief Operating Officers Stephen Cullen and Rebecca Weidman; Director of Finance Thomas Durkin; Director of Administration Michele Gillen; Deputy Finance Director/Treasurer Matthew Horan; Public Affairs Director Sean Navin; Procurement Director Douglas Rice; Environmental and Regulatory Affairs Director Colleen Rizzi; Senior Program Manager Kathleen Cullen; Energy Manager Kristen Patneau; Senior Program Manager Michael O'Keefe; IT Asset and Configuration Manager Michael Curtis; Chief of Staff Katie Ronan; Assistant to the Executive Director Linda Grasso and, Assistant Secretary Kristin MacDougall were among the staff in attendance at the Quabbin Visitor Center.

Vandana Rao, Johannes Buchanan and Danielle Burney, EEA; and Dan Clark, DCR also attended at the Quabbin Visitor Center.

State Representative Aaron L. Saunders; State Representative Todd M. Smola; State Senator Peter J. Durant; State Senator Joanne M. Comerford; Athol Select Board Chair William B. Chiasson; Barre Selectboard Member Richard Stevens; Belchertown Communications Committee Chair Ed Comeau and Selectboard Member Leesa Lessard Pearson; Hardwick Town Administrator Justine Caggiano, Conservation Commission Chair William Zinni, Jr.; Select Board Vice Chair William F. Tinker and Select Board Chair Jeffrey S. Schaaf; New Salem Select Board Member Susan Cloutier; Town Coordinator Emily Hill and Select Board Chair Richard Taupier; Orange Town Administrator Matthew F. Fortier; Pelham Select Board Vice-Chair Tara Loomis; Petersham Select Board Member Deborah Poodry; Shutesbury Former Selectboard Member Elaine Puelo; Select Board Member Jim Walton and Town Administrator Hayley Bolton; and, Ware Town Manager Stuart B. Beckley also participated at the Quabbin Visitor Center.

Chair Tepper called the meeting to order at 10:05am.

ROLL CALL

Assistant Secretary Kristin MacDougall took roll call of Board Members in attendance and announced that Board Members Flanagan, Foti, Pappastergion and Vitale were participating remotely. The Chair announced that the meeting was being held at the Quabbin Visitor Center and virtually via a link posted on MWRA's website. She added that the meeting was being recorded, and the agenda and meeting materials were available on MWRA's website.

REPORT OF THE CHAIR

Secretary Tepper welcomed those in attendance at this meeting, noted the large number of participants and thanked everyone for joining. She discussed a visit to the Quabbin area earlier in her tenure at EEA, during which she met with State Senator Joanne M. Comerford, other officials and area residents. The Chair acknowledged significant sacrifices such as the loss of homes, farms, businesses and whole communities that local residents had made for the creation of the Quabbin Reservoir, which supplies water for millions of people. She expressed deep gratitude for the 12 Quabbin Reservoir watershed communities ("Quabbin watershed communities") that have since served as dedicated stewards.

The Chair also acknowledged some challenges faced by Quabbin area residents, such as infrastructure constraints, limitations on water supply and development, and climate change adaptation, and relayed that she and the other Board members were looking forward to hearing from the community during this meeting.

Chair Tepper then discussed the MWRA System Expansion Evaluation ("Quabbin Expansion Study"), noting that there is some stakeholder disagreement, however the report is a start; and Governor Healey's Mass Ready Act, which includes expansion and additional payments for watershed communities in fiscal years 2026 and 2027.

Chair Tepper also discussed the Governor's Executive Order on Payment in Lieu of Taxes ("PILOT"), which created a PILOT Commission to perform statewide PILOT payment policy review. Chair Tepper outlined the Commission's planned tasks, including the development of recommendations expected to impact the Quabbin watershed region and relayed that the Commission was holding a series of listening sessions in July. A meeting participant added that a session would be held in Greenfield at the Franklin Regional Council on July 16, and Chair Tepper encouraged stakeholder participation. Chair Tepper described the dogged support, steadfastness and commitment of the Quabbin region's senators, representatives and local leaders, and thanked them and all participants for attending this meeting.

Next, Chair Tepper discussed the ongoing drought. She noted the importance of keeping the MWRA Board apprised of drought conditions and that she provides periodic updates at meetings. Chair Tepper reported that the Northeast region of Massachusetts remains at a Level 3 Critical Drought; the Western region has moved to a Level 2 Significant Drought from Level 1 Mild Drought; and the rest of the state is also at a Level 2 Significant Drought; and, the MWRA service area falls into multiple drought regions. The Chair also reported observed impacts to streams and other water bodies, decreasing groundwater levels and impacts to fish migration and other natural habitats and advised that drought can lead to a higher fire risk. Chair Tepper stressed the importance of continuing preparation and taking necessary actions to protect communities. Finally, the Chair noted that the recent rainfall temporarily increases stream flows and refills water bodies, however, lots of rain over a significant period of time would be needed to end the significant drought. (ref. I)

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

MWRA Executive Director Stephen Estes-Smargiassi introduced MWRA staff in attendance and remarked that he enjoyed spending time at the Quabbin Reservoir. He reported that the Quabbin level was currently at approximately 82% and explained that this was not unusual but warrants attention. Next, he noted that MWRA's Annual Water Quality Reports for 2025 were mailed to approximately 900,000 households in June; staff have sent new indoor/outdoor water conservation brochures to water

service municipalities for distribution to water customers, and the brochures are available to additional communities on request. Mr. Estes-Smargiassi advised that the current reservoir levels have not triggered water restrictions, however, staff are paying close attention and encouraging water conservation in the MWRA service area. He also highlighted MWRA's Finance staff for receiving the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) Certificate for Excellence in Financial Reporting for its 2025 annual financial report. Finally, Mr. Estes-Smargiassi relayed that the public comment period for the Draft Updated Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) Control Plan is open; encouraged stakeholders to submit comments; and noted that staff would be happy to visit communities to discuss the Draft Plan. (ref. II)

CORRESPONDENCE TO THE BOARD

Chair Tepper announced that the MWRA Board of Directors had received a lot of correspondence from local officials representing towns in the Quabbin region including letters, resolutions, proclamations and other correspondence that was included in the meeting materials and posted on MWRA's website. The Chair noted that she has read the materials, expressed thanks for the outreach, and invited the Legislative Delegation to speak.

State Representative Aaron L. Saunders

Representative Saunders welcomed meeting participants and thanked the MWRA Board of Directors for holding this meeting. Rep. Saunder's discussed the historical and current impacts of MWRA's "extraction" of water from the Quabbin Reservoir on local towns such as water restrictions and economic development challenges. He relayed that there was currently a water ban in Belchertown; described negative effects on the community; asked whether the MWRA service area is under a water ban; and called for Quabbin watershed communities to have a share in the reservoir's resources. Rep. Saunders also discussed MWRA's Quabbin Expansion Study and the value of watershed land. He stressed the need for fair financial compensation, including from increased PILOT payments for watershed land, and representation for Quabbin watershed communities on the MWRA Board of Directors.

State Representative Todd M. Smola

Senator Smola echoed Representative Saunders' remarks; thanked the MWRA Board of Directors for attending this meeting; recommended holding the Board meetings in the Quabbin area more regularly; and emphasized the importance of the watershed and access (reducing "restrictions") to the Quabbin Reservoir and other area water bodies for recreational activities such as fishing and providing the Legislative Delegation with support, action and communication to move forward in a positive direction.

State Senator Peter J. Durant

Senator Durant agreed with Rep. Saunders and Smola; reiterated concerns about local communities' lack of access to the Quabbin Reservoir for water supply and recreational uses such as hunting, hiking, and fishing; and, noted economic and environmental challenges faced by watershed communities (no water, brown water, heavily chlorinated water with no access to the Quabbin water supply; and their stewardship not being appreciated). He also expressed opposition to the development of battery storage in the Quabbin region (potential of water pollution) and requested additional MWRA input on the matter.

State Senator Joanne M. Comerford

Senator Comerford noted she had distributed copies of select constituents' testimonies to the Board (and she had received thousands of communications from constituents around the Quabbin representing an entire region requesting the Board heed their concerns) and then discussed An Act Relative to the Quabbin Watershed and Regional Equity ("Quabbin Equity legislation"). She represents several Quabbin communities and expressed concerns such as: economic and environmental challenges experienced by watershed communities due to no access to the Quabbin water supply and unfair compensation; the need for increased and equitable PILOT payments for the Quabbin region; re-evaluating MWRA's feasibility studies (regarding Quabbin communities); financial loss from waiving joining fees and offering no-interest or low-interest loans to non-Quabbin communities in exchange for MWRA membership; and the Quabbin watershed communities' bearing disproportionate burdens despite their continued stewardship, protection and sacrifices for the reservoir (multiple examples provided noting inequities between "receiving communities" and "sending communities"). Senator Comerford called for MWRA to issue a statement in support of the Environmental Bond Bill and issue a formal statement of support for the addition of a Quabbin seat on the MWRA Board; the establishment of a Quabbin Host Community Fund; and for the Board to act with urgency and in a shared partnership toward a fair solution.

Chair Tepper next invited community representatives to speak in alphabetical order.

William B. Chiasson, Athol Select Board Chair

Mr. Chiasson noted that Athol is recognized as the hub of the north Quabbin region of the Commonwealth. He spoke about the flooding of the towns of Dana, Enfield, Prescott and Greenwich and stated that it resulted in the closure of the Athol-Enfield Railroad in 1935 and that such negatively impacted Athol's economy and is a continued struggle today. Mr. Chiasson stressed the need for fair financial recompense. He asked how many data centers are located in MWRA water service communities and gallons of water that they consume.

Mr. Estes-Smargiassi noted that there are relatively few data centers in the MWRA water service area; much smaller in scale than "mega centers"; Chair Tepper commented that she understood Mr. Chiasson's point. Mr. Chiasson then thanked the Board for holding the meeting at the Quabbin and welcomed further meetings in the area.

Richard Stevens, Barre Select Board Member

Mr. Stevens echoed prior testimonies concerning local residents' restricted watershed land access and discussed the Town of Barre's ongoing well-water crisis; the need for access to Quabbin water for economic development and housing initiatives; and the high cost to construct new wells and a water treatment plant in Barre for drinking water and fire protection. He relayed that having access to Quabbin drinking water would lift a huge financial burden on the Town and other area municipalities and asked MWRA to consider the Quabbin watershed communities' financial and potable water needs going forward.

Ed Comeau, Belchertown Communications Committee Vice Chair

Mr. Comeau offered to host future MWRA Board meetings at Belchertown Town Hall; he is a long-time resident of Belchertown, serves on local boards, and is an avid nature photographer who spends time in the Quabbin watershed and noted the impact of the ongoing drought on the Quabbin Reservoir;

expressed concern about MWRA's water system capacity; emphasized the importance of demand management and conservation for the Authority's water service communities; asked whether we are having "our Lake Powell moment" and whether we can use this as a "teachable moment" to make proactive changes in how people use water; asked that MWRA act proactively to implement water restrictions/conservation methods to enable modest reductions by those receiving Quabbin water; and make water conservation a shared statewide effort to avoid a crisis and strengthen MWRA's water conservation strategy.

Leesa Lessard Pearson, Belchertown Select Board Member

Ms. Lessard Pearson asked that the Commonwealth uphold its commitment to Quabbin watershed residents, who serve as the reservoir's stewards; noted stewardship carries cost; discussed how watershed land use restrictions negatively impact the regional economy affecting all, including limited housing development and economic growth without tools to adapt. Further, she described the Quabbin as a "statewide asset" and opined that all communities relying on its water share in its benefits, but watershed communities should not bear a disproportionate share of its costs. She called for MWRA to recognize the Quabbin's surrounding towns as essential partners; strong communities reinforce a strong watershed; and, sustaining the Quabbin requires sustaining the communities that protect it. Lastly, she urged for the provision of equitable funding that reflects the lost tax basis; targeted economic development to offset growth limitation and policy tools that allow for housing and local investment while maintaining environmental protections.

Justine Caggiano, Hardwick Town Administrator

Ms. Caggiano noted area support of the Quabbin Equity legislation and its importance; how it is becoming increasingly more difficult to balance the Town of Hardwick's budget; and that residents are not looking to get rich but are seeking sustainability.

William Zinni, Jr., Hardwick Conservation Commission Chair

Mr. Zinni described the Quabbin host towns as teammates to DCR's Division of Water Supply Protection and the Quabbin watershed communities' have a shared custodial responsibility for helping to ensure the water quality of this critical water supply; the water that fills the reservoir runs off of adjacent town lands; and its quality depends upon land use activities within the watershed towns. He described thousands of acres of Quabbin watershed lands in Hardwick (including submerged lands) and opined the Town receives "minimal compensation" pointing to the inadequacy of PILOT payments. Further, he expressed concerns for undeveloped farm and forest lands experiencing increasing pressure to subdivide and develop thereby putting at risk Quabbin Reservoir water quality; and, challenges for volunteer Town board members and part-time Town positions to keep up with project review to administer Zoning and Wetlands Protection Act regulations and building codes. He requested consideration of additional financial support for continued stewardship and partnership.

William F. Tinker, Hardwick Select Board Vice Chair

Mr. Tinker noted that individual property owners were compensated for the lands taken through eminent domain to build the Quabbin Reservoir, but a lasting compensation partnership with the watershed communities that protect the reservoir was never created. He described Quabbin watershed communities' financial burdens; and the cost of protecting the Quabbin water supply and the watershed communities can't carry the cost burden alone; he noted the community received an offer of \$2 million

annually to site a regional landfill and that offer was refused by the Town to protect the watershed; and posed the question of what might happen in the future if a higher offer is made. He described the Quabbin Equity legislation as “not about charity” and called for partnership with the Commonwealth and MWRA.

Jeffrey S. Schaaf, Hardwick Select Board Chair

Mr. Schaaf agreed with Mr. Tinker’s remarks; emphasized the need for fairness; echoed Rep. Saunders’ characterization of “extraction” from Quabbin watershed communities; and requested compensation.

Susan Cloutier, New Salem Select Board Member

Ms. Cloutier stressed that the Quabbin watershed communities need to have a voice; requested equity for the towns that protect the watershed; noted the Town of New Salem’s aging population and limited tax base, a proposed tax override question that did not pass and impacted school, fire, police and library budgets; outdated local infrastructure; and a past Town vote to install fiber Internet. She relayed that residents do not want a municipal water supply, but would like a public drinking water well to supplement private wells, if needed, and they don’t have to buy water at the store, or in an emergency, and requested assistance.

Emily Hill, New Salem Town Coordinator

Ms. Hill described local residents’ stewardship of the Quabbin watershed; the Town of New Salem’s aging infrastructure, and the need for better access to water resources. She also spoke in support of Quabbin Equity legislation; discussed disproportionately low PILOT payments, the Town’s economic challenges, and the high cost to repair an aging culvert due in part to its location on the watershed. Ms. Hill noted the frequency of the Town’s taxpayer-funded emergency response for events at the Quabbin, including a recent small aircraft crash, and the need for local first responders to break locks (referring to being “denied keys”) in order to respond to such emergencies. She relayed that New Salem Town Hall’s hand-dug, shallow well does not adequately meet the New Salem’s needs as it routinely runs dry and noted a recent, failed tax override question. Finally, Ms. Hill called for strengthened partnership, the need for updating and providing equitable PILOT payments (describing such as \$20 per acre annually), greater communication, more financial support and improved local emergency response access.

(Mr. Swett joined the meeting, and Mr. Pappastergion left the meeting due to Webex connection issues.)

Richard Taupier, New Salem Select Board Chair

Mr. Taupier continued discussion of the failed culvert in the Town of New Salem, noting that it the structure under the DCR’s control, located downstream of Mass. Audubon Society land, and caused a partial road collapse that impacted residents. He reported that the repair used all of the Town’s Chapter 90 funds and described a lack of resources and equitable participation. He also noted that New Salem has not had a functioning Town Hall in ten years and described associated costs and challenges. Finally, Mr. Tapier discussed inequities toward the Quabbin watershed towns and requested assistance.

Matthew F. Fortier, Orange Town Administrator

Mr. Fortier noted the Town is moving toward a Town Manager form of government under a charter enacted on July 1, 2026 and reported at a recent Town meeting the residents voted in favor of the Quabbin Equity legislation. He provided background on the Town of Orange’s history and population

size (7,600 residents); noted his positive personal experience as a consumer of Wachusett Reservoir water as a former Worcester resident (born and raised); characterized the City of Boston as the economic engine for Massachusetts; noted the state's relative wealth; called for the MWRA Board's acknowledgment and support of regional equity issues; and relayed that Orange is one of the poorest communities in the Commonwealth. He described regional economic development challenges attributed to restrictions on boating, recreation, and development and called for regional equity, representation on the MWRA Board, PILOT reform and the creation of a capital fund.

Tara Loomis, Pelham Select Board Vice-Chair

Ms. Loomis noted that the residents voted at a recent Town meeting in favor of the Quabbin Equity legislation and one-third of the Town of Pelham's land is restricted from development and untaxed. She described the Town's history of stewardship and current challenges to fund and operate the one local school, part-time fire chief with a department comprised of volunteer firefighters and the shrinking of the Town's public infrastructure. She discussed the MWRA Advisory Board's opposition to the Quabbin Equity legislation, noted some common goals, and relayed that the Quabbin watershed communities' acts of stewardship are mostly carried out by volunteers. She also discussed the economic value of Quabbin area's stewardship and noted local water use restrictions. Finally, Ms. Loomis endorsed partnership and called for representation of Quabbin watershed communities in MWRA governance, more investment in watershed infrastructure and water quality protection, technical and engineering assistance for local municipalities, and equitable drought management across the Quabbin system.

Deborah Poodry, Petersham Select Board Member

Ms. Poodry relayed that Quabbin watershed residents sought MWRA's recognition for the inherent and financial value of the green infrastructure provided by the watershed and the Town of Petersham's ongoing stewardship. She called for financial support, noting the potential negative impacts to MWRA's mission if local stewardship were to fail. She described economic challenges related to increasing costs for essential public services attributed to increased regulation and general inflation. She also relayed that additional development would worsen the Town's dilemma including with respect to the local water supply. Ms. Poodry asked for immediate supplement for the Town's fire department, increased representation for the Quabbin watershed towns in the governance at all levels and DCR management of watershed lands, as well as more investment in watershed infrastructure, water quality and waste management. She also requested technical and engineering assistance including analysis of aquifers, equitable drought management policies and financial assistance because local taxpayers alone cannot support the Town's needs and the needs of the watershed.

Elaine Puelo, Shutesbury Former Select Board Member

Ms. Puelo noted that the MWRA infrastructure provides drinking water to approximately 43% of Massachusetts residents; its source waters are safeguarded by local rural communities in Western and Central Massachusetts; and one-third of the Town of Shutesbury's total land mass is state-owned forest, permanently preserved to protect the Quabbin watershed and noted residents are not even allowed to walk their dogs on that land. Finally, she relayed despite the townspeople's pride in local stewardship such does not pave the roads, fund the schools and balance the municipal budget.

Jim Walton, Shutesbury Select Board Member

Mr. Walton noted that 30% of the Town of Shutesbury land is locked-up related to watersheds, which

freezes commercial development, limits new housing and shifts a disproportionate financial burden for residential taxpayers. He relayed that Shutesbury generates an average of \$510 per acre of tax revenue from developed land and \$60 per acre for land under the Quabbin PILOT program; the state average is \$130 per acre; Haverhill receives significantly higher PILOT payments per acre; and, the Town receives 11.8% of the potential tax value (\$2.2 million) for watershed lands under the PILOT program annually. He described Shutesbury's economic and operational strains and requested financial assistance.

Hayley Bolton, Shutesbury Town Administrator

Ms. Bolton expressed solidarity with the Quabbin watershed communities and called for MWRA to step into a modern, equitable partnership, citing PILOT program modernization, the establishment of a Quabbin host community development trust fund to sustain municipal operations, the addition of representation for the Quabbin region on the MWRA Board, and regional water equity including the provision of opportunities for clean water in Western Massachusetts before expanding service in other areas.

Ms. Puelo provided concluding remarks and reiterated the Town's request for equity, called for reform, and thanked the MWRA Board members for listening.

Stuart B. Beckley, Ware Town Manager

Mr. Beckley echoed Town of Shutesbury speakers' remarks; thanked meeting participants; reported that Ware residents unanimously voted in support of a Resolution related to Quabbin equity at its recent Town Meeting; and asked the MWRA Board to consider prior speakers' calls for fairness. He reiterated the Town of New Salem's stated concerns regarding emergency services, noting that the Ware Fire Department and others provide on-call, on-site assistance during controlled burns on the Quabbin watershed at local cost. He also described the poor quality of the Town's water, which runs brown fairly regularly. He acknowledged that Ware declined the opportunity for municipal water 85 years ago when local water quality was pristine, adding that the Town still has wooden water pipes in some streets. He asked for partnership and resource sharing and described the high cost to join the MWRA system including local infrastructure. Mr. Beckley also requested water in emergencies, engineering assistance, and Ware River flow data sharing. He relayed that limits on land negatively affect local economic development and expressed concern about potential impacts to MWRA water system demand if the Quabbin watershed region loses residents to Eastern Massachusetts. Finally, Mr. Beckley noted how blessed they are to have Ms. Wolowicz on the Board of Directors and requested MWRA Board representation for Quabbin host communities.

Chair Tepper thanked participants and speakers for attending this meeting; relayed that it is always best to hear from the people who live in the area and know the numbers; and, expressed appreciation for the speakers' time, and succinct and clear presentations. Chair Tepper then advised that the MWRA Board of Directors would now move to the regular business portion of the meeting. (ref. III)

(Mr. Foti temporarily left the meeting.)

WATER POLICY AND OVERSIGHTContract Amendments/Change OrdersQuabbin Maintenance Building Design and Engineering Services During Construction: The Robinson Green Beretta Corporation, Contract 7677, Amendment 4

A motion was duly made and seconded to authorize the Executive Director, on behalf of the Authority, to approve Amendment 4 to Contract 7677, Quabbin Maintenance Building Design and Engineering Services During Construction, with The Robinson Green Beretta Corporation, increasing the contract amount by \$246,000, from \$1,643,443.41 to \$1,889,443.41, and extending the contract term by 33 months from September 17, 2026 to June 17, 2029.

Further, a motion was duly made and seconded to authorize the Executive Director to approve additional amendments as may be needed to Contract 7677 in an amount not-to-exceed the aggregate of \$325,000 and 12 months in accordance with the Management Policies and Procedures of the Board of Directors.

Kathleen Cullen, MWRA Senior Program Manager, outlined the functions, facilities and location of the proposed Quabbin Maintenance Building, which is being designed and built by MWRA for DCR; noted the design is complete; reviewed the construction contract's planned advertisement, bid and construction schedule; discussed proposed Amendment 4 to the associated design and engineering services during construction (ESDC) contract 7677; and briefly noted some design challenges, all as detailed in the Staff Summary and PowerPoint presentation ("meeting slides"). Finally, Ms. Cullen reviewed the amendment history of design/ESDC contract 7677 with The Robinson Green Beretta Corporation and requested Board approval for Amendment 4, which includes a time extension to cover remaining bidding services, construction and warranty periods, and a cost increase for escalation, project administration, and required bid document updates due to Massachusetts Building Code changes.

In response to a question from Mr. Taverna, Ms. Cullen relayed that project construction is estimated at \$6.2 million.

Chair Tepper asked if there was any further discussion or questions from the Board. Hearing none, she 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		
P. Walsh		
Wolowicz		

(ref. IV A.1)

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

There was brief procedural discussion about the meeting notice and remaining agenda.

ADMINISTRATION, FINANCE AND AUDITInformationClimate Mitigation Trust Projects Update

Kristen Patneade, MWRA Energy Manager, updated the Board on MWRA's progress with decarbonization projects supported by the MassDEP Climate Mitigation Trust as further discussed in the Staff Summary and meeting slides. She summarized the terms of the \$20 million Climate Mitigation Trust award to MWRA for projects and programs to reduce greenhouse emissions and mitigate the impacts of climate change and explained that MWRA's climate mitigation projects fall under two main categories: renewable energy and building electrification.

Next, Ms. Patneade presented some of MWRA's renewable energy projects including the Deer Island Wind Turbine Replacement; a Deer Island Treatment Plant ("DITP") Solar Canopy, and a planned solar installation for the DITP Residuals Odor Control Building roof. She showed some examples of similar solar projects in Medfield, Bridgewater, Cape Cod and Framingham and discussed the status of a potential solar array at the Norumbega Covered Water Storage Facility, which is currently under analysis.

Ms. Patneade then reviewed MWRA building electrification projects including at Norumbega Headquarters and the Spring Street Pump Station and relayed that staff continue to work with National Grid and Eversource to identify locations for installing heat pumps to reduce heating oil use and greenhouse gas emissions, noting the greening of the electrical grid.

Next, Ms. Patneade presented a list of building electrification projects in progress and explained that facilities with oil and/or aging equipment that needs replacement are prioritized, however, those that use gas are also eligible. She also briefly described some differences between air-source and air and water- (and potentially wastewater-) source heat pumps. Finally, Ms. Patneade presented a summary of climate mitigation projects expected to be completed or reach significant milestones in FY27.

Mr. Taverna inquired as to MWRA's leased Chelsea Facility, and whether MWRA is responsible for its heating equipment costs. Ms. Patneade responded in the affirmative.

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

Mr. Peña requested more information about the potential wastewater-source heat pumps. Ms. Patneade relayed that a draft policy is in development; preliminary site audits have been performed; and MWRA would ideally partner with a public entity on a pilot project. She noted that an assessment of the Clinton Wastewater Treatment Plant is being funded through the Department of Energy's Onsite Technical Assistance Program and in partnership with National Grid, and MWRA could potentially apply to DEP Wastewater Energy Recovery Program for a feasibility study for a pump station in Weymouth.

Chair Tepper complimented staff on MWRA's progress.

Hearing no further discussion or questions from the Board, Committee Chair Flanagan moved to the next Information item.

Progress on Emissions Reduction and 2024 Greenhouse Gas Inventory

Michael O'Keefe, MWRA Senior Program Manager, presented highlights of MWRA's 2024 Greenhouse Gas ("GHG") Inventory and progress on emissions reduction as detailed in the Staff Summary and

meeting slides. He explained that the Authority's efforts are guided by the Commonwealth's Clean Energy and Climate Plan for 2050, which commits the state to net zero GHG emissions (85% reduction) by 2050, with intermediate targets of 33% and 50% reductions by 2025 and 2030.

Mr. O'Keefe then reported that MWRA has reduced emissions by nearly 40% since 2006, noting a 7% uptick in 2004 attributable to a rise in fuel oil use for DITP boilers due to factors beyond MWRA's control. Next, he reviewed MWRA's main GHG sources in 2024 and presented a graph of changes in emissions sources since 2006. He noted that over 80% of MWRA's overall emissions reductions are from electricity and heavily linked to the greening of the electrical grid. He also presented a graph of actual and projected electricity grid emissions factors.

Next, Mr. O'Keefe provided more information about the causes of MWRA's higher GHG emissions in 2024 including a 150% increase in DITP fuel use attributable to colder weather; a decrease in the wastewater's nutrient loads that resulted in digester gas with less thermal content that was possibly caused by historically low wastewater flows due to drought which increased detention times and solids degradation in the collection system. He added that staff are continuing to evaluate these trends.

In response to a question from Chair Tepper, Mr. O'Keefe affirmed that staff monitor organics levels in wastewater flows. In response to the Chair's follow-up question, Mr. O'Keefe noted that MWRA currently relies on fuel oil as a backup to digester gas for DITP space heating. Mr. Estes-Smargiassi added that staff are working on changes to the DITP heat and power plant for more efficient methane use and looking at ways for battery storage to potentially reduce reliance on fuel oil for emergency power in case of a grid outage.

Mr. O'Keefe concluded the presentation by reviewing MWRA's planned emissions reduction efforts such as Climate Mitigation Trust Projects, a new combined heat and power facility at DITP to more than double existing electricity generation, and a planned large-scale energy storage battery.

In response to a question from Mr. Peña, Mr. O'Keefe relayed that the numbers presented on Slide 15 were not normalized for flow. Mr. Estes-Smargiassi noted that MWRA's full GHG report includes a chart that normalizes by flow. Mr. Peña then requested an update on the evaluation of potential energy generation from food waste. MWRA Deputy Chief Operating Officer Rebecca Weidman explained there has been some discussion, however, no significant update at this time.

Chair Tepper asked if there was any further discussion or questions from the Board. Hearing none, she moved to Other Business. (ref. V A.2)

OTHER BUSINESS

Preliminary Screening Committee (Executive Director Position)

Preliminary Screening Committee Update

Chair Tepper reported that the Preliminary Screening Committee held its July meeting to review resumes of potential job candidates, however, no choices were made.

In response to a question from Mr. Taverna, the Chair explained that approximately 25 resumes were reviewed at the meeting, however, she does not know the total number of resumes submitted. She noted that the Committee plans to preliminarily interview approximately 8-10 individuals, then extend invitations for in-person interviews. (ref. VI)

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was duly made and seconded to adjourn 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:

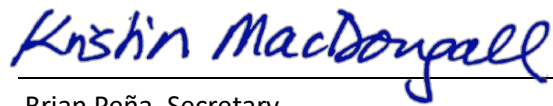
<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Abstain</u>
Tepper		
Flanagan		
Peña		
Swett		
Taverna		
Vitale		
P. Walsh		
Wolowicz		

The meeting adjourned at 12:29pm.

(Mr. Foti was unable to return to the meeting before adjournment.)

Approved: July 29, 2026

Attest:

 for
Brian Peña, Secretary

LIST OF DOCUMENTS AND EXHIBITS USED

- Correspondence to the MWRA Board of Directors (ref. III)
- 7/10/26 Staff Summary and Presentation: Quabbin Maintenance Building Design and Engineering Services During Construction: The Robinson Green Beretta Corporation, Contract 7677, Amendment 4
- 7/10/26 Staff Summary and Presentation: Climate Mitigation Trust Projects Update (ref. VA.1)
- 7/10/26 Staff Summary and Presentation: Progress on Emissions Reduction and 2024 Greenhouse Gas Inventory (ref. VA.2)