

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS' MEETING MINUTES
April 8, 2025
7:00 P.M.
CHERRY VALLEY & ROCHDALE WATER DISTRICT
Hybrid

I. CALL TO ORDER – Chairman McGinn called the meeting to order at 7:10 P.M.

The following were in attendance:

Joseph McGinn, Chairman	1 - online subscriber
Benjamin Morris, Superintendent	1- in person subscriber
Robert H. Lemieux, Sr., Commissioner	
Jennifer Wood, Treasurer	
Cheryl Balkus, Clerk	

II. District Member Forum – Chairman McGinn opened the District Member Forum. There were no questions or comments from the board, attending or listening audience. Commissioner Lemieux motioned to close the District Member Forum. Seconded by Chairman McGinn. All in Favor. Approved.

III. APPROVE MINUTES

March 11, 2025, Meeting Minutes – Commissioner Lemieux motioned to approve the March 11, 2025, minutes. Seconded by Chairman McGinn. All in favor. Approved.

IV. FINANCE

A. Approve 3/10/2025, 3/17/2025, 3/24/2025, 3/31/2025 & 4/7/2025 warrants.

Chairman McGinn motions to approve all the above warrants. Seconded by Commissioner Lemieux. All in favor. Approved.

B. March bank transfer – Commissioner Lemieux motions to approve the transfer from the water checking account to the sewer account in the amount of \$67,556.89. Seconded by Chairman McGinn. All in favor. Approved.

C. Treasurer report – Per Treasurer Wood as of the end of March beginning balance: \$1,313,530.70 Expenditures: \$1,041,344.17 Remaining balance: \$272,186.53 Balance after reimbursements: \$411,662.41.

March Revenue: \$102,909.26, SBA Rental: \$2,018.01
Reimbursements: \$7,213.39, Total \$112,140.82.

Expenses to date

Operating expenses	\$ 1,037,745.02	
Loan payment	3,599.15	
Total expenses	1,041,344.17	70.48% of budget spent
Total revenue brought in*	1,062,418.12	71.90% of needed revenue collected
Revenue expenses	21,073.95	

Operating Budget FY'25 \$1,313,530.70

Service agreement Sewer portion \$164,065.92

Total budget \$1,477,596.62

*Subtract L&C (Lead & Copper) reimbursement special project

*Subtract River Leak not operation budget item
Need to bring in if to spend the whole budget \$415,178.50
(reports available upon request)

- D.** Draft budget – Per the superintendent there have not been many adjustments from last meeting. Increases in line items are due to cost increases. For the City of Worcester line item, we do not know if they are going to raise their rates as they do not notify us till July or August.

Discussion regarding rates structure provided by Capital Strategic Solutions consulting. A schedule of proposed rates was provided to the board to reflect current rate and tier structure and Capital Strategic Solutions rate and tier structures for residential and nonresidential. There will need to be a rate increase to ensure all ends meet going forward. The board wants the transparency of what CSS put on the table and then show how these adjusted rates show in application. Commissioner McGinn suggests that it should be made clearer, and suggestions are to show examples with each tier to provide a better picture.

Commissioner Lemieux asked if we stay with the current rates that we have with the new budget will there be a deficit. Per the Treasurer and Superintendent confirmed that there would be. Commissioner Lemieux proposed to keep it simple to take whatever the percentage difference is to spread this across the rates to cover it all.

Chairman McGinn does not necessarily agree that this would be the best way to go based off from the Capital Strategic Solutions various tiers. The current rate structure does not have a non-residential rate, everyone is charged the same whether they are residential or non-residential.

Per Commissioner Lemieux needs to be included in writing in the description for the Annual Meeting so that it is clear to the subscribers and recommended that with it being a lot involved to perhaps do an increase with the current structure and then put the different structure in place the following year.

Per Commissioner Lemieux is going back and forth with the Capital Strategic options currently, right now it does not seem feasible for the next annual meeting.

Commissioner Lemieux motions that we table this for the next meeting. Seconded by Chairman McGinn. All in favor. Approved.

Subscriber Buteau had questions/clarification regarding some of the budget line items. He had difficulty hearing when he called in at the prior meeting. He asked with the shortfall why not utilize free cash. Per the Superintendent with the warrant articles, the district is looking to have approved and utilizing free cash would deplete the free cash to approximately \$128,000.00 and this amount would be low.

Buteau commented regarding the meter line item: Understands trying to gain on it by increasing from 100 to 150. With the way prices are increasing, the meters wanted to purchase now before the prices get even higher however maybe this should not be increased.

Payroll: He asked about the part time position and 3% increase. Per the Superintendent Christian holds his licenses, and the need to have this position is high between the months of March and December. Per Chairman McGinn as for the 3%

increase when looking at current salary rates for certified personnel in Massachusetts it's not the same as looking at just a 3% per year inflationary COLA (Cost of Living Adjustment). This is a very different marketplace today as opposed to the past. Across the state is experiencing the hourly wage and earnings that go along with demands of training and certifications. Doing it this way is a far superior way than just kicking the can down the road. It is not like we can go out and cost effectively hire a company that does personnel staffing, and their rates are much higher also. Per Mr. Buteau the personnel work here very hard and does not want his comment to be misunderstood.

E. Draft warrant articles – Articles 1-3 are standard articles

#12 fine tuning the enabling acts with the bylaws

#13 is about having water sewer board to obtain separate legal counsel reg consolidation. To put money aside to hire their own attorneys and to make it happen.

#14 to fund risk and resiliency assessments. It was done 5 years ago and needs to be done again.

#15 transmission line

#16 Kettle Brook crossing

The last page identifies that Free cash is as of 7-1-2024 \$1,508,008.00

Swamp Leak	\$300,000.00
Budget	\$20,000.00
Well Stabilization	\$30,000.00
Engineering of Transmission Line	\$200,000.00
Kettle Brook Crossing:	\$775,000.00
Risk and Resilience	\$25,000
Toal Remaining	\$128,008.00

We typically to not do not want the balance of the free cash to get as low (example the swamp leak & design was unforeseen, and focus would be on Kettle Brook. Since the swamp leak happened, we need to address it going forward.

Chairman McGinn asked about the current free cash as there are some line items that could be released back at about \$53,000.00. Per Treasurer Wood, we cannot touch it until it is recertified next year. Per the Superintendent there is the likelihood that the Kettle Brook project could cross between fiscal years and believe Mass DOT would be the hold up to cause this.

Per the Superintendent we will have one last meeting to approve the warrant articles and that with only two commissioners both need to be on board with the approval of the

articles. If there are any questions regarding the articles the Superintendent asked each board member to send to him immediately so that it is set up for final approval at the next meeting.

Subscriber Buteau asked who proposed articles 12 & 13 and asked to comment.

#12 was proposed by Chairman McGinn. Greg wanted to state he is agreement.

#13 merger of the CVRWD & CVSD districts was proposed between Chairman McGinn and Commissioner Cusolito. Per Chairman McGinn since the prior study, reviewed the staffing and relatively speaking from an administrative and cost perspective relating to insurance it would be just as straight forward as one entity. Keep in mind the original design was under the Water District. Per Mr. Buteau disagreed with this and will provide documentation that the water district was not initially in charge of the sewer prior to it being built. Does not feel that the sewer district fairly shares with the water district.

V. Administrative

- A.** Summer Hours - The superintendent asks that this be tabled still has work to do on this. Commissioner Lemieux motions to table. Seconded by Chairman McGinn. All in Favor. Approved.
- B.** Water Use Restrictions – Commissioner Lemieux motions to approve the Water Use Restrictions May 1, 2025, through September 30, 2025. Seconded by Chairman McGinn. All in favor. Approved.

VI. Operations - Superintendent Report

Working in completion of the budget of warrant articles.

Terminations to begin next week

190 Main St began construction and inspections being done.

Hydrant Flushing to begin week of April 21st.

Drought update in discussion – may need to modify if we are in a critical drought condition

Presented to approximately 150-person audience at the NEWWA held at the DCU center regarding the Swamp Leak. There was a lot of thoughts and input provided such as suggestions to line the old line and that many were impressed with the size of the staff that we have, how it was handled and with very little interruption to the customers.

- VII.** Date of Next Meeting: Commissioner Lemieux motions to hold the next meeting hybrid April 29, 2025, 7:00 pm. Seconded by Chairman McGinn. All in favor. Approved.

- VIII.** Adjournment: Commissioner Lemieux motioned to adjourn. Seconded by Chairman McGinn. All in favor. Approved. The meeting was adjourned at 9:17 p.m.