



2025 GAUD BOARD OF TRUSTEES GOALS

Board Review: November 18, 2024

Board Approval: December 16, 2024

● FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT GOALS:

- An overarching goal is the long term stabilization of rates to avoid large adjustments to rates from year to year. **Continue ongoing reviews of rates** needed to support water, wastewater and stormwater expenses. Execute anticipated rate increases for drinking water and wastewater in 2025.
- Continue smart and **proactive financial planning and management**, including debt management and alternative financial funding sources.
- Monitor and anticipate **future regulatory issues** that will require financial investment, especially in the area of PFAS, lead, and combined sewer overflows.
- Continue to **actively pursue grants** at all times, including Northern Border, EPA, ARPA and SRF to cover infrastructure investment. Participate in relevant class action lawsuits related to water contamination as appropriate (3M/DuPont).
 - Applying for a grant from FEMA to fund an emergency generator at the wastewater treatment plant.
 - \$2M Caddyshack Trunkline station grant
- Continue to work towards reducing and eliminating catch basin fees as well as developing a plan to equitably manage ERUs for residential and commercial customers.

● CIP GOALS:

- Continue to **plan, revise and execute capital improvement projects**, monitor budgets, be proactive and keep an eye to the future. Work smarter, prioritize projects, utilize efficiencies in financing and labor. Continue proactive planning for long range water sources, CSO requirements and water, stormwater and wastewater pipe replacement.
- Notable projects planned for 2025 include:
 - Installing a flood proof sewer pump station on Front Street (\$2M grant);
 - COA projects
 - Brooks Street
 - Davenport Street
 - Summer Street sewer replacement / realignment
 - Generator at the wastewater plant - FEMA grant (?)
 - Vacuum truck for lead and copper rule compliance
 - Locker room improvements
- Plan for design phase of the Manchester Route 202 water main project that covers extensive pipe replacement, as well as community relations and communications. Need to reapply for grant funding in spring, 2025.

● **COMMUNICATIONS AND RELATIONSHIPS GOALS:**

- **Continue ongoing relationships and regular communications** with all municipalities in the GAUD service area, as well as Maine DOT and other related agencies.
- **Maintain regular communication** with Maine Rural Water Association (MRWA) and Maine Water Utilities Association (MWUA) regarding relevant industry happenings, particularly PFAS. Andy is on the MWUA board and two MRWA employees are on the GAUD board, resulting in a direct line of communication with these associations.
- Maintain **proactive communication with customers** and the general public about construction projects via website homepage and specific project pages/sites.
- Update the **GAUD crisis communication plan** and create a master plan, if possible. Review methods for GAUD to instantly reach affected customers/ratepayers. Will include a request to ratepayers via January billing insert to update contact info on file. Research an emergency outreach system possibly in conjunction with Augusta public safety (e.g. Reverse 911 or similar).
- Maintain ongoing communications with the existing **Trunkline membership** to be sure there is proactive management of this aging critical infrastructure. Continue communications efforts relating to the Manchester waterline replacement and “Caddyshack” projects.
- Continue to **work with universities and Capital Area Technical Center (CATC)** to help reach infrastructure analysis and improvement goals, as well as potential employment prospects for recruitment.
- Continue current GAUD communications outreach with emphasis on relevant happenings, including but not limited to newsletters, **billing inserts, website, social media, CCR**, annual report and paid communications to effectively educate the public. Topics include anticipated rate increases, PFAS, GAUD services, investment in infrastructure, value of clean water, District efforts to provide clean drinking water and safely handle stormwater and wastewater treatment, as well as an overall effort to continue to humanize and personalize the District. Consider another recruitment campaign, if appropriate.
- Maintain and update the website including measuring web and social media performance via enhanced quarterly analytics and producing additional educational videos for these platforms as needed. Continue adding new photography and using EPA Water Sense illustrations as appropriate.

● HUMAN RESOURCES GOALS:

- Continue to **provide the Board direction/guidance/information** in an effort to be the best stewards of the communities we serve.
- **Update 5/10 year funded plans** for CIP & Maintenance of district assets.
- Continue to provide **professional development** opportunities for the entire GAUD staff.
- Conduct **360 performance reviews** with two key management staff members.
- Maintain **effective communication** to avoid unexpected/unplanned discussions during meetings.
- Continue to **improve communications** with all stakeholders as needed.
- Continue to **develop and maintain working relationships** with municipalities, regulators, contractors and community groups, such as State and Local Cybersecurity Grant Program (SLCGP) Planning Committee, Maine Board of Licensed Water System Operators, Maine Drinking Water Commission, KVYMCA Board, Augusta Board of Trade, NEIWPCC, Clean-Up and Response Fund Review Board, and RSU 38 School Board.

● HEADWIND ISSUES:

- Closely monitor ongoing discussions and **anticipated regulatory action** regarding **PFAS** in drinking water and wastewater. Maintain proactive PFAS consumer education efforts. Plan for any necessary mitigation as dictated by regulatory changes, including consideration of reactivating the Carleton Pond Facility.
- Continue to **evaluate viable options for sludge disposal** in response to regulatory changes.
- Continue to monitor **arsenic** levels, changes to the drinking water **lead regulations** and other regulatory changes.
- Monitor status of Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (**MS4**) **regulation** in Maine.
- Continue to evaluate **other possible headwinds** that may affect the District.