



## Greater Augusta Utility District Board Agenda

Monday, February 26, 2024, 6:00 PM

Sagadahoc Room, Augusta Civic Center, Augusta, Maine

1. Welcome - Knight
2. Introduce Board members
3. Introduce GAUD employees, consultants and guests
4. Agenda additions
5. Old Business
  - a. Approve meeting minutes - **Motion** - pages 8 - 9
  - b. Rate committee update - **Motion** - pages 3, 12 - 19
  - c. Project updates – pages 5 - 7
  - d. General Manager's report – page 7
  - e. PFAS “forever chemicals” - page 4
6. New business
  - a. Review financial statements - page 4
  - b. River Crossing Project - \$1,600,000 DWSRF Loan - **Motion** - pages 4, 10-11
  - c. Review liens
  - d. Policy review
  - e. Communications update - pages 20 - 28
  - f. HR update - page
  - g. Public comment
7. Adjourn - **Motion**

Monday, March 18, 2024	Regular meeting	City Center
Monday, April 15, 2024	Patriots' Day	Holiday
Monday, April 22, 2024	Regular meeting (4th Monday due to holiday)	City Center
Monday, May 20, 2024	Regular meeting	City Center
Monday, May 27, 2024	Memorial Day	Holiday
Wednesday, June 19, 2024	Juneteenth	Holiday
Monday, June 24, 2024	Regular meeting (4th Monday due to holiday)	City Center

**Attendees:**

<input type="checkbox"/>	Knight – Chair	<input type="checkbox"/>	Colwell	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sawyer	<input type="checkbox"/>	Begin
<input type="checkbox"/>	Paradis – Clerk	<input type="checkbox"/>	Hebert	<input type="checkbox"/>	Warren	<input type="checkbox"/>	Payne
<input type="checkbox"/>	Corey – Treasurer	<input type="checkbox"/>	Munson	<input type="checkbox"/>	Luke	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tarbuck

A quorum consists of 4 voting Trustees.

**Guests:**

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Executive sessions are described in [MRS Title 1 Section 405](#). Executive sessions may only be called by a public recorded vote of 3/5 of the members, present and voting.

1. Welcome
2. Introduce Board members
3. Introduce GAUD employees, consultants and guests
4. Agenda additions
5. Old business

a. Approve meeting minutes - **Motion**

<b>Motion:</b> I move to accept the Board meeting minutes for January 22, 2024.			
M	2nd	For	Against

b. Rate committee updates

The rate committee makes the following recommendations for rate increases for 2024:

<b>Motion:</b> I move to increase drinking water and fire protection rates in an amount not to exceed 30% with a desired effective date of June 1, 2024.			
M	2nd	For	Against

<b>Motion:</b> I move to increase sewer rates in an amount not to exceed 30% with a desired effective date of June 1, 2024.			
M	2nd	For	Against

The reason to move the rates ‘back’ toward the first of the year is to generate more revenue in the calendar year and more closely align with large customers that have a July to June fiscal year. I’ve enclosed a memo from the Public Utilities Commission that addresses the timing of when rates are advertised versus when they are actually put into practice. I don’t expect you to read the memo per se but I want you to know that we are complying with the rules cited in the PUC memo.

Billing for our monthly customers is all in arrears. Our customers don’t pay for services they haven’t received yet. This includes our sewer and stormwater bills which are not PUC regulated. The calendar below shows notable dates following the rate increases.

Rate change	June 1, 2024
Start of new rates	June 20, 2024
Customers receive bill for new rates	August 9, 2024
Payment due on new rates	September 4, 2024

Quarterly customers are billed slightly differently than monthly customers because they do not have GAUD water meters. There are 15 quarterly customers in Augusta and over 700 in Hallowell. These customers will have their sewer bills prorated to show the higher sewer rate taking effect on June 20 like other sewer customers.

This change will help GAUD realize the effect of the rates sooner and more closely aligns to our largest customers that have fiscal years starting on July 1.

c. Project updates

Andy will provide updates regarding the District’s capital improvement projects.

d. General Manager’s report

Brian will provide updates not otherwise covered in this report.

e. PFAS “forever chemicals” discussion

Brian will be on a Chamber of Commerce panel to talk about PFAS in drinking water on April 6.

6. New business

a. Review financial statements

Mike will review financial statements at the meeting. Handouts will be provided at the meeting.

b. Approve Allonge - River Crossing Project - \$1,600,000 DWSRF Loan - Mike Payne per bond counsel

**Motion:** I move to amend the \$1,600,000 Revenue Obligation Note dated March 22, 2023, and awarded to the Maine Municipal Bond Bank, Augusta, Maine, by changing the maturity date to March 21, 2025, and further to authorize the Treasurer and Chair of the Board of Trustees to execute all documents necessary to complete said amendment. All other terms and conditions as stated in said Revenue Obligation Note will remain the same.

M	2nd	For	Against
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The full allonge documents are included in your packet.

c. Review liens

d. Policy review

There are no policies to review this month. We will get back on that cycle in March.

e. Communications update

Brian will provide the communications update.

f. HR update

Alan Burton will provide an HR update.

g. Public comment

7. Adjourn – **Motion**

**Motion:** I move that this body stand adjourned.

M Sawyer	2nd	For	Against
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## Summary of Capital Improvement Projects

### **17001 - Eastside Sewer Siphon - \$4,621,820**

**Status:** In construction.

Contracts 1 through 3 - 99% complete, working on project closeout. Pulled fiber duct bank beneath the river in early January 2024, done.

Contract 4 Water Mains West Side - The sewer main in Jackson avenue is complete and about 600 feet of new 16-inch water main is installed. The water main work should be complete by next month and the contractor will begin working on the fiber/electrical duct banks. Still aiming for a June completion.

**Scope:** Replace the failed 8" cast iron siphon new 16" HDPE pipe & 16-inch water main.

**Purpose:** Replace failed infrastructure, then rehabilitate the existing 20" cast iron pipe.

**Budget:** \$5.1 Million (Update to **\$8.4 Million** additional \$3 Million in Grant Funding)

**Schedule:** Construction completion anticipated Q2 2024.

### **19047 - Redundant River Crossing, Hospital, Kelton & State Streets, Water Main - \$2,806,442**

**Status:** See above.

**Scope:** Install 6,500 feet of new 12" and 16" water main.

**Purpose:** Provide a hydraulic loop between the east and west sides of the river and provide a redundant supply to Hospital Street pump station via a redundant drinking water pipe beneath the Kennebec River.

### **22015 - Front Street Pump Station 3 Replacement - \$52,711**

**Status:** Pending City easements. Design review, prepping for bidding.

**Scope:** Replace an aging 1962 sewer pump station with a new flood proof submersible station.

**Purpose:** Station subject to flooding and failure and beyond its useful life.

**Budget:** \$2.1M (\$2M grant)

**Schedule:** Finish by Q4, 2024.

### **19012 - Highland Avenue Water, Sewer, Storm Upgrades and Road Reconstruction - \$1,362,743**

**Status:** Construction, 100% complete with utility work. The road has the base layer of pavement. The contractor will winterize and finish in the spring 2024.

**Scope:** Replace 1,600 feet of 8" sewer, storm and 2,200 feet of 12" water main.

**Purpose:** Replace aging infrastructure with City of Augusta road rebuild.

**Budget:** \$747,500 water, \$555,360 sewer

**Schedule:** Planned for Q2&Q3 2023, substantial completion on October 15th, 2023

### **22024 - Turtle Run Water Main Replacement - \$8,907**

**Status:** Design complete, currently bidding. Bids are due on March 7, 2024.

**Scope:** Replace 900 feet of 2" & 2.25" seasonal lines with new 8" water main. Half of this is already installed from 2022.

**Purpose:** Replace aging infrastructure and increase reliability.

Budget: \$561,000, water

Schedule: Planned for Q2 2024

**23015 - Riverside Drive PFAS/PFOA pilot study - \$73,339**

**Status:** A PFAS pilot unit has been running for approximately 13 weeks with no breakthrough, sampling at 30% bed depth. The pilot will run through the spring. We applied for a \$4M grant administered through the Drinking water program to mitigate emerging contaminants at our Riverside Drive Treatment building. We will be required to match this at 10%.

**Scope:** Run a pilot unit to reduce hardness and forever chemicals at our Riverside Drive well field.

**Purpose:** Apply the piloting results to develop a design for a full scale treatment system and cost projections.

**Budget:** \$200,000 (all forgiveness loan money through the drinking water program) study phase. Construction phase is projected to be > \$5M.

**Schedule:** Planned for Q3 2023 to Q2 2024

**23023 - Manchester Redundant Water Main - \$27,973**

**Status:** In design. Planning for a future project, pending funding.

**Scope:** 7,500 feet of 16-inch Ductile Iron water main to serve as redundancy of our 1903 vintage 24-inch cast iron transmission main.

**Purpose:** Increase reliability of existing infrastructure.

**Budget:** Pending Timeline

**Schedule:** Pending Timeline.

**21015 - Green & Drew Street Water Main Upgrade - \$5,997**

**Status:** Preliminary Design, on hold as this is not a priority 2024 CIP project.

**Scope:** 4,300 feet of 12-inch Ductile Iron water main to replace existing 6-inch cast iron. Sewer and storm is being evaluated for upgrades and CSO separation efforts.

**Purpose:** Replace leak prone mains, and on our water master plan for hydraulic improvement.

**Budget:** Pending Timeline

**Schedule:** Maybe 2025.

**CIP# N/A - Work Order #1559 - Lead Service Line Inventory (Water) - \$24,489**

**Status:** Initial lead service line inventory needs to be done by October 16, 2024, we are in good shape to meet our deadline. We are trying to confirm some unknowns prior to submitting results to DWP. We have accepted the low bid on a vac truck for \$420,000 (GAUD cash portion 55% = \$231,000). The truck will help explore/confirm water service pipe material with low impact excavations.

**Scope:** Inventory and replace lead and leadline water services within 10 years.

**Purpose:** Comply with lead service line replacement and sampling.

**Budget:** \$1,000,000 (45% reimbursement funding from the Drinking Water Program)

### **CIP# 24001 - Fairview Avenue Stormwater Upgrade - \$3,945**

**Status:** 80% Design. Aim to bid in early to mid March.

**Scope:** 1,200 feet of storm main and 4 structures.

**Purpose:** Resolve backyard flooding and surface water runoff to Stone Street and separate combined catch basins currently discharging to the sewer.

**Budget:** \$484,000

### **CIP# 24003 - Hummingbird Lane - \$0**

**Status:** Preliminary design.

**Scope:** Pipe burst 1,700 feet of aging 6" cast iron water main with new 4-inch HDPE.

**Purpose:** Replacement of leak prone water mains.

**Budget:** \$467,500

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### **General Manager's Report**

The NEWEA conference in Boston on January 23 and 24 was very informative and I made some new contacts. I left the conference convinced that GAUD is current with its practices and procedures and indeed well ahead of many of our peers.

We had a traffic control and confined space entry training at EJP on January 25. That was quite informative and frankly entertaining thanks to Bob Moody's unorthodox approach to learning. Our guys got a lot out of it and we made some improvements to our safety program as a result.

The Kenney Awards were fun as usual. It was good to have a night out.

I'm on the Maine Board of Licensure of Water System Operators. That Board met on February 2nd.

I attended Jim Crowley's retirement from MDEP party on February 2nd. That was a fun time but we'll really miss Jim as he was our long time inspector and was very helpful to us from a troubleshooting perspective. Often our regulators add a lot of value to our operations with their insights and Jim was an exceptional inspector.

I attended a meeting at CATC on February 5th. This is where my school board role and GAUD role neatly intersect. I learned a lot about their electrical program and was really impressed by their electrical instructor's enthusiasm and dedication to cause. We are retiring more electricians in Maine than we're licensing and it is just getting worse.

I'm on the Maine Drinking Water Commission which met on February 7th. The Commission has an oversight role regarding the Maine Drinking Water Program. This is not a big lift in terms of time but it's interesting to see the challenges the Program faces and what, if anything, the Commission can do to address those challenges.

Monday, January 24, 2024

## Greater Augusta Utility District Board Minutes

Location: City Center, Cony Street, Augusta, ME

Trustees present: Ken Knight, Bradley Sawyer, Pat Paradis, Kirsten Hebert, Cecil Munson, Bob Corey, Cary Colwell, Keith Luke

Absent: Charlotte Warren

Attendees: Andy Begin, Mike Payne

Remote: Brian Tarbuck, Alan Burton, Meredith Strang-Burgess

Guests: none

At 18:00 Knight called the regular board meeting to order. Knight noted that Charlotte, Cary, Brian and he all attended a Hallowell City Council meeting. GAUD made a short presentation to the Council to keep them aware of GAUD activities.

At 18:01

<b>Motion:</b> I move to accept the Board meeting minutes for December 18, 2023.			
M Corey	2nd Munson	For Unanimous	Against None

At 18:01 Knight asked if there were any questions or comments regarding the financial statements provided to the Board. There were no questions or comments.

At 18:03 Corey provided an update relating to proposed rates. The Board needs to fund the 2024 budget with higher rates that will go into effect on or about June 1, 2024. Customers will see the impacts of the rate increase in their July bills. This gives the District about one additional month of revenue under the proposed rates by sliding the start date from July to June.

Hebert asked whether we billed all of our accounts in arrears or if some bills were in advance. Payne explained that though the rate would start on June 1, 2024 the water customer would be billed for wouldn't start until about the 3rd week of June.

At 18:08, Begin presented project updates. The water main from State Street to the Rail Trail is being installed now. Jackson Avenue (the road to the WWTP) should be finished in May. The Front Street sewer pump station is still not out to bid. Turtle Run should be out to bid in a few weeks. The PFOA / PFAS pilot unit is still operational and collecting data.

The redundant water main for Manchester around Pelton Hill is still in design. The plan is to design it and stay outside the MDOT right of way.

There is a \$1M loan that is 55% loan, 45% forgiven to address lead service lines. \$420k will go to a new vacuum truck.

Stone Street is taking water from Fairview Avenue which is causing icing on the road. We are designing a stormwater project to reduce the amount of water reaching Stone Street. This is part of our efforts to reduce combined sewer overflows as the project will eliminate 5 catch basins from the combined sewer system.

Hummingbird Lane has a 1,700' project to replace leaky drinking water pipes. We will likely pipe-burst the existing pipe and replace the leaky pipe with a 4" HDPE line.

At 18:12, Knight read over Tarbuck's report as Tarbuck's remote connection via Amtrak had pooched. Knight noted that Tarbuck was heading to a two day conference with the New England Water Environment Association where he was participating in a plenary session panel. Tarbuck went to a CATC meeting to learn more about the programs kids were learning there with an eye on recruiting upcoming graduates if possible. Tarbuck was featured in an online



magazine called Undark which ran a story about the costs of PFAS treatment. Begin noted that we hired two new employees, Dwane Bernier and Jonah Waterman.

At 18:17 Begin reviewed a table from the documents provided to the Board that showed the relative impacts of new debt on the District's approximately 5,750 drinking water customers. A 20 year loan for \$1M at current SRF rates works out to \$61k per year. Divide that by 5,750 ratepayers and again by 12 months and the result is an increase of about \$0.88 per month per ratepayer for 20 years to pay off that debt.

Begin pointed out that we have applied for an emerging contaminants grant in the amount of \$4M. If we are awarded the grant, we need to fund a 10% match or \$400k.

At 18:18 Payne provided a financial update. Payne noted these numbers are draft, not final.

Budget Summary 2023		Revenue			Expenses			
Month	Division	Budget	Actual	Act / budg	Budget	Actual	Act / budg	Ending cash
12	Sewer	5.0	5.85	118%	5.0	4.85	96%	1.11
12	Stormwater	4.0	4.58	114%	3.1	2.77	89%	1.72
12	Water	5.0	6.18	125%	4.2	3.74	90%	2.01

At 18:20 Corey moved to approve the 2024 trustee goals as presented to this meeting. The motion was seconded by Paradis. The motion was approved unanimously.

At 18:21 Meredith Strang-Burgess provided a communications update. Burgess Advertising and Marketing worked hard to develop a campaign to advertise our need for new employees. GAUD's home page has been updated with videos about the utility and a revamped career page.

At 18:26 Alan Burton discussed HR recruitment efforts. We were able to hire two people. We are hoping that the recruiting campaign will help find some quality candidates.

At 18:28 Sawyer moved to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Colwell. The motion was approved unanimously.

## **AMENDMENT TO LOAN AGREEMENT**

**WHEREAS**, the Maine Municipal Bond Bank (the "Bank") and the **Greater Augusta Utility District** (the "Municipality") entered into a Loan Agreement dated as of March 22, 2023 (the "Agreement"); and

**WHEREAS**, under the terms of the Agreement the Bank agreed to lend to the Municipality One Million Six Hundred Thousand and 00/100 Dollars (\$1,600,000) which amount was evidenced by a (\$1,600,000) Revenue Obligation Note dated March 22, 2023 (the "Note"); and

**WHEREAS**, the amount borrowed by the Municipality under the Note was to be due and payable on or before the first business day after the day on which the Municipality executes permanent financing to repay the Note, or twelve months from the date of said Note, whichever occurs sooner; and

**WHEREAS**, the parties do now agree to extend the term of said borrowing until March 21, 2025, or until the first business day after the day on which the Municipality executes permanent financing to repay the Note, whichever occurs sooner.

**NOW, THEREFORE**, for good and valuable consideration, the parties do hereby agree to amend the Loan Agreement and the Note in this matter to provide that the Note shall be due and payable in full, together with interest accrued thereon, on or before the first business day after the day on which the Municipality executes permanent financing to repay the Note, or on March 21, 2025, whichever occurs sooner.

In all other respects the provisions of the March 22, 2023 Loan Agreement and Note shall remain in full force and effect.

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF**, the parties hereunto have each caused this Amendment to Loan Agreement to be duly executed as of the 22<sup>nd</sup> day of March 2024.

Witness:

\_\_\_\_\_

Maine Municipal Bond Bank

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Its Executive Director

Greater Augusta Utility District

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Its Treasurer

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Its Chair, Board of Trustees

**AMENDMENT TO NOTE**

**(ALLONGE)**

**NOW COME** the undersigned duly authorized representatives of the Greater Augusta Utility District and for good and valuable consideration do hereby amend the Revenue Obligation Note dated March 22, 2023 in the face amount of One Million Six Hundred Thousand and 00/100 Dollars (\$1,600,000) running from the Greater Augusta Utility District to the Maine Municipal Bond Bank to change the maturity date of said Note to read as follows:

"On or before the first business day after the day on which the Greater Augusta Utility District executes permanent financing to repay this Note, or 12 months from the date of this Note, whichever occurs sooner, for value received the Greater Augusta Utility District promises to pay to the Maine Municipal Bond Bank, or its assignee, the sum of:"

In all other respects, the provisions of the original Revenue Obligation Note dated March 22, 2023 shall remain in full force and effect.

Dated: March 22, 2024

Greater Augusta Utility District

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Its Treasurer

Countersigned:

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Its Chair, Board of Trustees

ATTEST:

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Its Clerk

<b>Date</b>	<b>Task</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Regulatory summary</b>
Monday, February 26, 2024	February Board meeting		<b>vote to determine rates for public consideration</b>
Friday, March 15, 2024	Bill inserts to customers	<i>optional</i>	<i>no regulatory requirement to do this</i>
Monday, March 18, 2024	March Board meeting		
Friday, March 22, 2024	Publish supporting materials / file with PUC and PA	hearing date - 30 days	<b>at least 30 days before</b> public hearing
Monday, April 1, 2024	Mail notice of public hearing	<i>hearing date - 21 days</i>	must be in mailboxes 14 days before public hearing (see below)
Monday, April 8, 2024	Publish notice of public hearing	hearing date - 14 days	at least 14 days before public hearing: newspaper notice; customer notice ( <i>mail about one week before this date to ensure 14 day deadline is met</i> ) send copy to MPUC and PA (email) <i>website / Facebook etc (optional)</i>
<b>Monday, April 22, 2024</b>	April Board meeting	<b>This drives all other dates</b>	<b>Public hearing</b>
Thursday, May 2, 2024	Soonest date to file rates w/ MPUC	hearing date + 10 days	<b>at least 10 days</b> after but no more than 30 days after public hearing
Monday, May 20, 2024	May Board meeting		<b>vote to approve final rates with MPUC</b>
Wednesday, May 22, 2024	30 day petition period ends / <b>rates must be filed with PUC no later than today</b>	hearing date + 30 days	at least 10 days after but <b>no more than 30 days</b> after public hearing
Saturday, June 1, 2024	Earliest effective date of rates	filing date + 30 days	at least one month after rates filed with PUC
Sunday, February 16, 2025	Latest effective date of rates	filing date + 270 days	not more than 9 mos after rates filed with PUC

## 2024 Proposed Operating Budget Highlights (REVISED 12/14/23)

The 2024 proposed operating budget (REVISED 12/14/23) is enclosed for approval by the Board of Trustees. The budget represents anticipated revenues and expenses between January 1, 2024 and December 31, 2024.

The table below summarizes the 2024 proposed budget and compares it to the 2023 projections for operations and maintenance.

	2023 Projections		2024 Proposed Budget		Change	
Division	Revenue	Expense	Revenue	Expense	Revenue	Expense
Water	\$ 5,714,915	\$ 3,666,121	\$ 5,208,836	\$ 4,362,787	-10%	16%
Sewer	\$ 5,352,302	\$ 4,803,855	\$ 5,804,967	\$ 5,489,295	8%	12%
Storm	\$ 4,372,158	\$ 2,739,905	\$ 4,128,015	\$ 3,076,017	-6%	11%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 15,439,375</b>	<b>\$ 11,209,880</b>	<b>\$ 15,141,818</b>	<b>\$ 12,928,098</b>	<b>-2%</b>	<b>13%</b>

Total budgeted revenue for 2024 decreased 1.9% over the 2023 projections. This consists of an 8.9% decrease in the water division, an 8.5% increase in the sewer division, and a 5.6% decrease in the storm division. Those decreases are mainly due to grants being received in 2023 that we're not carrying into 2024. There are water/sewer/storm service revenues in 2024 that have increased over the 2023 projections due to the effect of rate increases that were done in 2023 of which a portion carries over into 2024. The 2024 service revenues do not include any potential rate increases that may occur in July.

Total budgeted expenses for 2024 are \$12.9M. Labor accounts for 41.3%, depreciation 27.4%, other 15.9%, supplies 6.4%, power 5.5% and debt interest 3.5%.

The debt interest amount in the sewer division has been increased by \$39K due to the addition of the 2023 \$1M TD Bank loan. This amount was not included in the 2024 draft budget that was discussed at the November, 2023 Board of Trustees meeting.

Total budgeted expenses for 2024 increased 13.0% from the 2023 budget. The 13.0% consists of a 16.6% increase in the water division, a 11.8% increase in the sewer division and an 10.3% increase in the storm division.

The 2024 budget for salaries and fringe benefits as presented includes six (6) positions that are currently vacant: four (4) utility workers, one (1) GIS position, and one (1) pump station crew member. A portion of these expenses have been allocated amongst the divisions. Additionally, the large increase in salaries and benefits expense from the 2024 budget to the 2023 projections is partially due to previously budgeted positions that either weren't filled or were filled late in 2023.

The proposed budget reflects a wage increase of **10%** for all personnel effective on or about January 1, 2024. The current union contract is effective January 1, 2022 through December 31, 2024. The agreed upon wage increases built into that contract was 3% for 2024. The 2024 O&M budget discussed at the November, 2023 Board of Trustees meeting included a 5% wage increase. The additional 5% wage increase included herein adds approximately \$221K to the overall operating expenses.

Fuel oil is budgeted at an average of \$2.60 per gallon based on the renewal of our Maine Power Options agreement for 2023-24. This is a decrease of approximately \$1.00 from the 2023 agreement. Power is budgeted to increase by \$86K or 13.9%. Chemicals are budgeted to increase by \$23K or 6%. These increases are based upon trends we have seen during the current year.

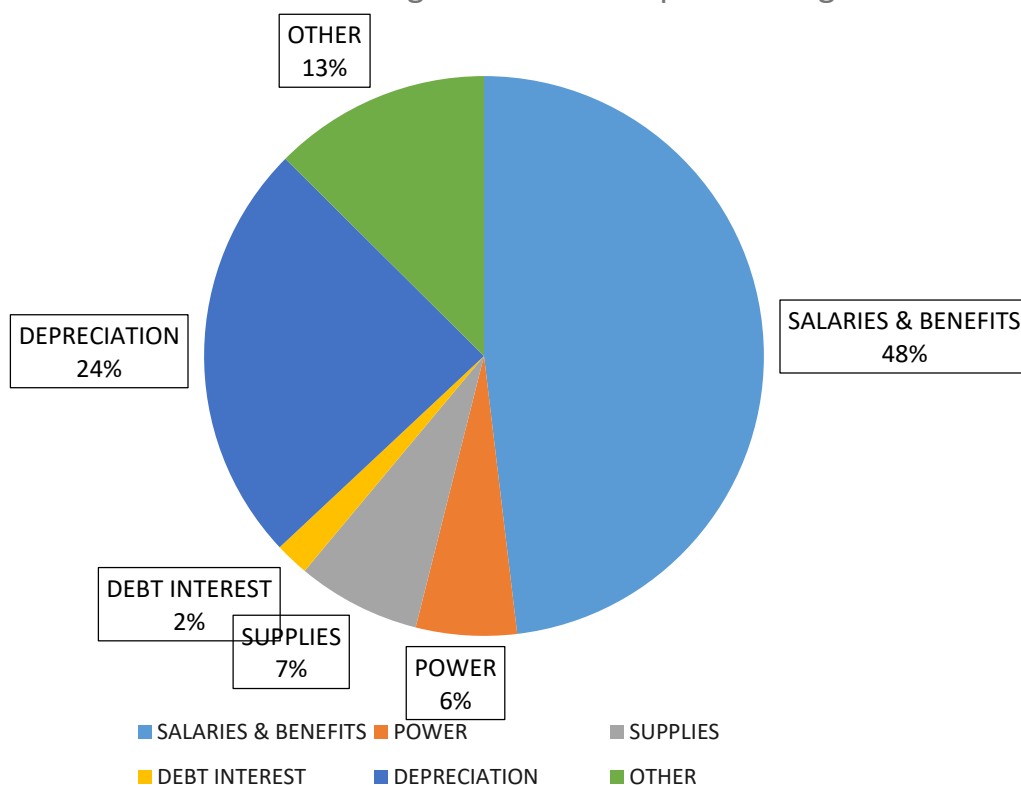
2024 Water, Sanitary & Storm Budgets  
As of 11/17/2023 (REVISED 12/14/2023)

Water	Account	2019 Actual	2020 Actual	2021 Actual	2022 Actual	2023 Projected	2024 Proposed	% Change
	METERED	\$ 2,303,791	\$ 2,322,600	\$ 2,533,826	\$ 2,752,787	\$ 2,936,676	\$ 3,120,917	6.3%
	FIRE PROTECTION	\$ 1,342,772	\$ 1,346,695	\$ 1,419,571	\$ 1,573,991	\$ 1,724,715	\$ 1,832,919	6.3%
	INVESTMENT INCOME	\$ 12,881	\$ 4,349	\$ 266	\$ 3,721	\$ 35,105	\$ 5,000	-85.8%
	OTHER	\$ 199,288	\$ 217,202	\$ 276,972	\$ 572,883	\$ 1,018,419	\$ 250,000	-75.5%
		\$ 3,858,733	\$ 3,890,846	\$ 4,230,635	\$ 4,903,381	\$ 5,714,915	\$ 5,208,836	-8.9%
	SALARIES & BENEFITS	\$ 1,332,985	\$ 1,445,311	\$ 1,363,636	\$ 1,583,356	\$ 1,567,331	\$ 2,098,687	33.9%
	POWER	\$ 175,992	\$ 163,284	\$ 172,224	\$ 192,902	\$ 220,000	\$ 254,100	15.5%
	SUPPLIES	\$ 484,576	\$ 487,389	\$ 380,342	\$ 346,998	\$ 300,931	\$ 311,440	3.5%
	DEBT INTEREST	\$ 139,126	\$ 135,568	\$ 122,729	\$ 110,319	\$ 96,266	\$ 85,470	-11.2%
	DEPRECIATION	\$ 882,614	\$ 921,540	\$ 947,849	\$ 927,787	\$ 994,173	\$ 1,065,208	7.1%
	OTHER	\$ 537,052	\$ 574,901	\$ 484,892	\$ 540,650	\$ 487,419	\$ 547,882	12.4%
		\$ 3,552,345	\$ 3,727,993	\$ 3,471,672	\$ 3,702,013	\$ 3,666,121	\$ 4,362,787	19.0%
	<b>TOTAL</b>	\$ 306,387	\$ 162,853	\$ 758,963	\$ 1,201,369	\$ 2,048,794	\$ 846,049	

Sanitary	Account	2019 Actual	2020 Actual	2021 Actual	2022 Actual	2023 Projected	2024 Proposed	% Change
	FLAT RATE	\$ 13,440	\$ 11,974	\$ 12,040	\$ 13,670	\$ 12,784	\$ 15,464	21.0%
	METERED	\$ 2,794,305	\$ 2,526,949	\$ 2,585,765	\$ 3,000,963	\$ 3,652,513	\$ 4,402,811	20.5%
	TRUNKLINE	\$ 797,973	\$ 837,027	\$ 799,761	\$ 894,675	\$ 976,182	\$ 976,000	0.0%
	INVESTMENT INCOME	\$ 12,206	\$ 4,640	\$ 266	\$ 3,721	\$ 35,070	\$ 5,000	-85.7%
	OTHER	\$ 1,240,094	\$ 673,473	\$ 410,515	\$ 883,579	\$ 675,754	\$ 405,692	-40.0%
		\$ 4,858,018	\$ 4,054,064	\$ 3,808,346	\$ 4,796,607	\$ 5,352,302	\$ 5,804,967	8.5%
	SALARIES & BENEFITS	\$ 1,092,333	\$ 1,107,399	\$ 1,128,599	\$ 1,366,585	\$ 1,489,755	\$ 1,964,142	31.8%
	POWER	\$ 247,542	\$ 227,122	\$ 245,604	\$ 241,769	\$ 285,023	\$ 318,995	11.9%
	SUPPLIES	\$ 283,935	\$ 228,272	\$ 269,096	\$ 306,767	\$ 303,271	\$ 316,735	4.4%
	DEBT INTEREST	\$ 204,341	\$ 255,722	\$ 242,661	\$ 257,704	\$ 250,781	\$ 274,068	9.3%
	DEPRECIATION	\$ 1,403,924	\$ 1,461,381	\$ 1,528,264	\$ 1,569,367	\$ 1,416,893	\$ 1,519,224	7.2%
	OTHER	\$ 739,018	\$ 731,988	\$ 659,960	\$ 888,662	\$ 1,058,133	\$ 1,096,131	3.6%
		\$ 3,971,094	\$ 4,011,884	\$ 4,074,183	\$ 4,630,854	\$ 4,803,855	\$ 5,489,295	14.3%
	<b>TOTAL</b>	\$ 886,924	\$ 42,180	\$ (265,837)	\$ 165,754	\$ 548,447	\$ 315,673	

Storm	Account	2019 Actual	2020 Actual	2021 Actual	2022 Actual	2023 Projected	2024 Proposed	% Change
	CATCH BASINS	\$ 2,052,170	\$ 1,831,257	\$ 1,872,871	\$ 1,834,649	\$ 1,874,494	\$ 1,896,587	1.2%
	ERU	\$ 1,824,153	\$ 2,165,056	\$ 2,195,712	\$ 2,153,718	\$ 2,200,493	\$ 2,226,428	1.2%
	INVESTMENT INCOME	\$ 9,744	\$ 5,008	\$ 266	\$ 3,721	\$ 35,104	\$ 5,000	-85.8%
	OTHER	\$ 834,836	\$ 16,022	\$ 10,421	\$ 304,535	\$ 262,067	\$ -	-100.0%
		\$ 4,720,903	\$ 4,017,342	\$ 4,079,270	\$ 4,296,623	\$ 4,372,158	\$ 4,128,015	-5.6%
	SALARIES & BENEFITS	\$ 836,966	\$ 887,885	\$ 909,728	\$ 1,042,880	\$ 1,048,084	\$ 1,284,263	22.5%
	POWER	\$ 107,848	\$ 99,382	\$ 113,234	\$ 117,106	\$ 116,016	\$ 133,998	15.5%
	SUPPLIES	\$ 182,306	\$ 154,775	\$ 159,154	\$ 197,376	\$ 191,751	\$ 202,390	5.5%
	DEBT INTEREST	\$ 112,536	\$ 107,586	\$ 84,181	\$ 65,054	\$ 91,973	\$ 89,161	-3.1%
	DEPRECIATION	\$ 889,768	\$ 938,251	\$ 1,019,364	\$ 983,872	\$ 889,008	\$ 953,995	7.3%
	OTHER	\$ 392,398	\$ 428,117	\$ 380,973	\$ 430,521	\$ 403,073	\$ 412,210	2.3%
		\$ 2,521,822	\$ 2,615,996	\$ 2,666,634	\$ 2,836,811	\$ 2,739,905	\$ 3,076,017	12.3%
	<b>TOTAL</b>	\$ 2,199,082	\$ 1,401,346	\$ 1,412,636	\$ 1,459,812	\$ 1,632,254	\$ 1,051,998	
	<b>TOTAL ALL DIVISIONS</b>	\$ 3,392,393	\$ 1,606,379	\$ 1,905,762	\$ 2,826,934	\$ 4,229,495	\$ 2,213,720	

## 2024 Drinking Water O&M Expense Budget



Revenues are projected at \$5.2M, which is a decrease from the prior year. This is primarily due to grants that were received in 2023 but not being budgeted in 2024. The increase of 6% in water revenues (metered and fire protection combined) is due to the effect of rate increases that were done in 2023 of which a portion carries over into 2024. These revenues do not include any potential rate increases for 2024.

Overall expenses for operations and maintenance will increase by approximately 19% to \$4.4M.

Labor and fringe benefits are forecasted at \$2.1M or 48% of the total budget.

- Wages make up approximately 61% of the labor and fringe benefits expense. Wages are budgeted with a 10% increase.
- Health Insurance accounts for 17% of the expense. There is a 4.25% increase in health insurance premiums for 2024. Employees pay 15% of health insurance costs and the district pays the remaining 85%. Dental insurance premiums will remain the same for 2023. The district covers the cost of the employee only.
- The remaining 22% consists of overtime, taxes, retirement OPEB commitments, workers' compensation, uniforms and pay to Trustees.
- Included in the 2024 budget are six (6) positions that are currently vacant: four (4) utility workers, one (1) GIS position, and one (1) pump station crew member. A portion of these expenses have been allocated amongst the divisions.

Debt interest is budgeted to decrease by 11% which is due to normal decreases in amortization over the life of a loan.

Power is budgeted to increase by 15% in 2024 due to potential T&D rate increases by CMP.

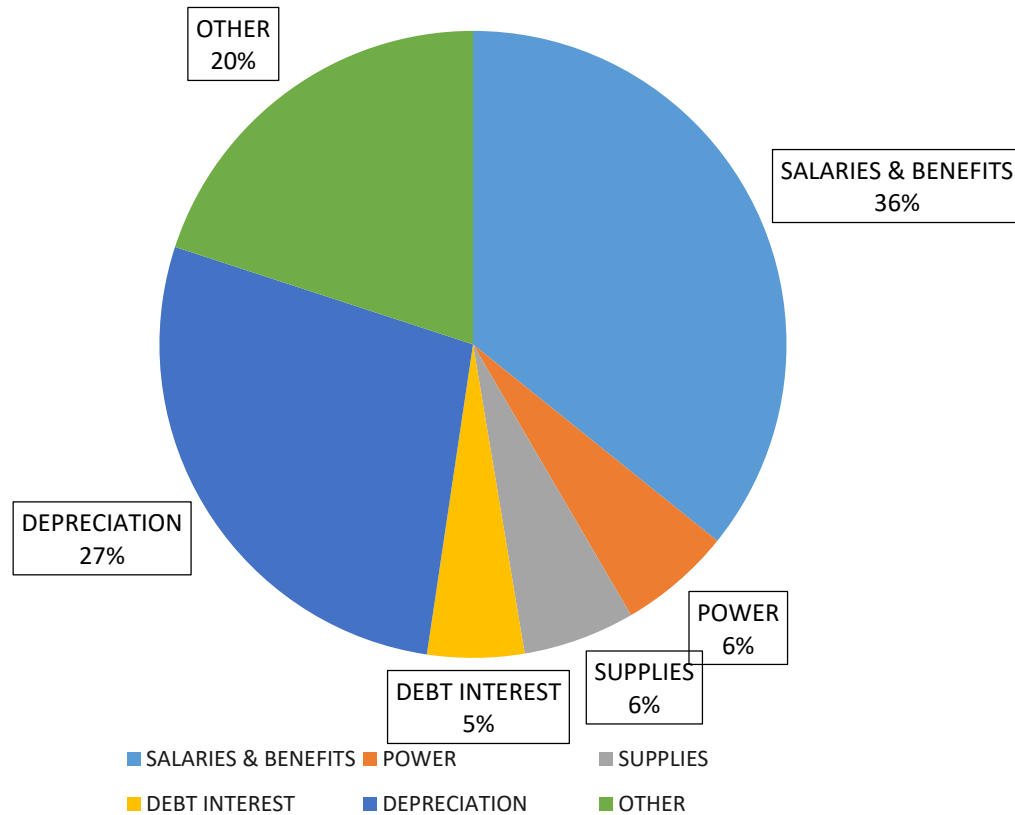
The "Other" category makes up 13% of the budget and includes a wide variety of expenses. Outside contractors, insurance, postage, chemicals, computer services and lawn mowing are all under the "other" umbrella. There is

an increase of 12% in this category. This is primarily due to an increase in chemicals as well as outside contractors.

The supplies budget which includes construction supplies, computer supplies, safety supplies, office supplies, small tools, heating fuel, diesel, gasoline and equipment maintenance is \$311K which is slightly higher than 2023.



## 2024 Sewer O&M Expense Budget



Revenues are projected at \$5.8M, which is higher than 2023. This is primarily due to the effect of rate increases that were done in 2023 of which a portion carries over into 2024. These revenues do not include any potential rate increases for 2024. There were grants received in 2023 that are not being budgeted in 2024.

Expenses for operations and maintenance will increase by approximately 14% to \$5.5M.

Depreciation accounts for 27% of the expense budget.

Labor and fringe benefits are forecasted at \$2.0M or 36% of the total budget.

- Wages make up approximately 61% of the labor and fringe benefits expense. Wages are budgeted with a 10% increase.
- Health Insurance accounts for 17% of the expense. There is a 4.25% increase in health insurance premiums for 2024. Employees pay 15% of health insurance costs and the district pays the remaining 85%. Dental insurance premiums will remain the same for 2023. The district covers the cost of the employee only.
- The remaining 22% consists of overtime, taxes, retirement OPEB commitments, workers' compensation, uniforms and pay to Trustees.
- Included in the 2024 budget are six (6) positions that are currently vacant: four (4) utility workers, one (1) GIS position, and one (1) pump station crew member. A portion of these expenses have been allocated amongst the divisions.

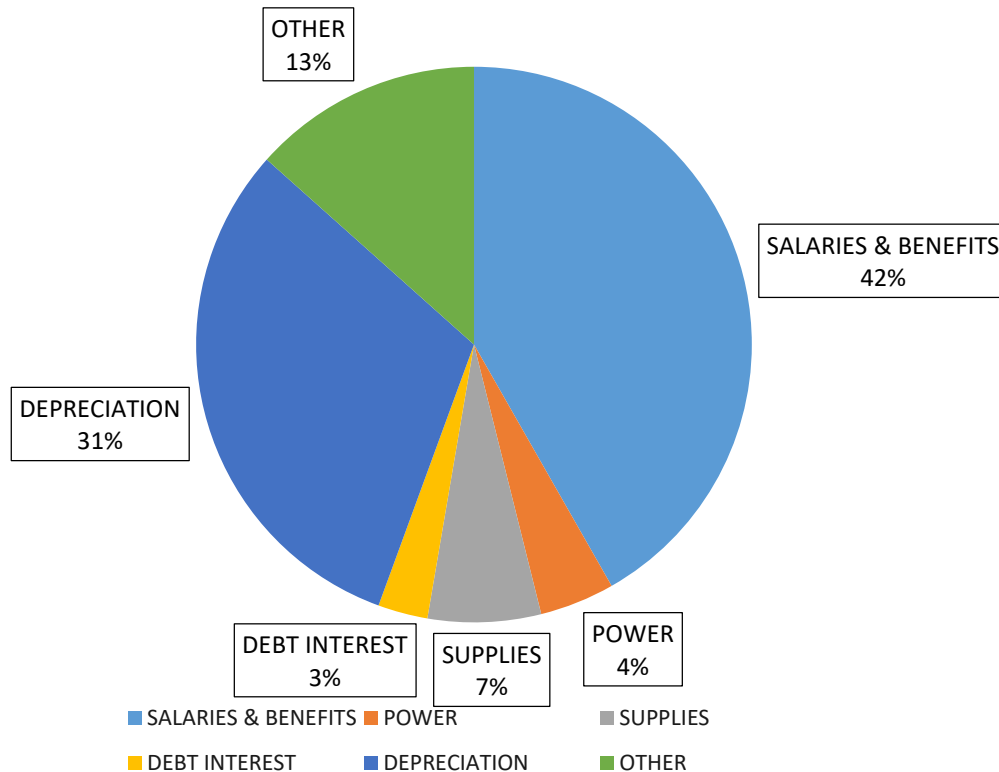
Debt interest is budgeted to increase by 9% which is primarily due to the addition of the 2023 \$1M TD Bank loan. The annual interest amount for this loan, approximately \$39K, was not included in the 2024 draft budget that was discussed at the November, 2023 Board of Trustees meeting.

Power is budgeted to increase by 12% in 2024 due to potential T&D rate increases by CMP.

The supplies budget which includes construction supplies, computer supplies, safety supplies, office supplies, small tools, heating fuel, diesel, gasoline and equipment maintenance is \$317K which is slightly higher than 2023.

The “Other” expenses category makes up 20% of the budget and includes a wide variety of expenses. Other expenses are budgeted to increase by 4% for 2024 primarily due to an increase in chemicals as well as outside contractors. The majority of other expenses are based on flow and are allocated 59% sewer and 41% storm water.

## 2024 Stormwater O&M Expense Budget



Stormwater revenue is projected to be \$4.1M, which is lower than 2023. This is primarily due to grants that were received in 2023 but not being budgeted in 2024. These revenues do not include any potential rate increases for 2024.

Overall expenses for operations and maintenance will increase by 12% to \$3.1M.

Labor and fringe benefits are forecasted at \$1.3M or 42% of the total budget.

- Wages make up approximately 61% of the labor and fringe benefits expense. Wages are budgeted with a 10% increase.
- Health Insurance accounts for 17% of the expense. There is a 4.25% increase in health insurance premiums for 2023. Employees pay 15% of health insurance costs and the district pays the remaining 85%. Dental insurance premiums will remain the same for 2023. The district covers the cost of the employee only.
- The remaining 22% consists of overtime, taxes, retirement OPEB commitments, workers' compensation, uniforms and pay to Trustees.
- Included in the 2024 budget are six (6) positions that are currently vacant: four (4) utility workers, one (1) GIS position, and one (1) pump station crew member. A portion of these expenses have been allocated amongst the divisions.

Depreciation accounts for 31% of the expense budget.

Debt interest will decrease by 3%. This is due to normal decreases in amortization over the life of a loan.

Power is budgeted to increase by 15% in 2023 due to potential T&D rate increases by CMP.

The "Other" category makes up 13% of the budget and includes a wide variety of expenses. The majority of other expenses are based on flow and are allocated to 59% sewer and 41% storm water.



## **Website Analytics Report:**

**Q4 2023: October/November/December**

Prepared in January, 2024



## Table of Contents

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  - g. Careers Page Engagement
  - h. Trustee Page & Meeting Engagement
- III. Social Media
  - a. Facebook
  - b. Twitter

### I. Q4 2023 Executive Summary

- While total website users, sessions and page views on the GAUD website decreased quarter-over-quarter, page views did see a nice increase year-over-year.
- The website saw a significant spike in traffic on Monday, December 4<sup>th</sup> with 147 users, followed by Tuesday, October 10<sup>th</sup> with 135 users.
- Not only was there a fair amount of page views on the “Careers” page, there was a significant amount of clicks on the job posting in Q4 2023.
- The “Trustees” page saw a fair amount of page views in Q4 as well as actions taken on the page, showing good clicks and engagement.
- Facebook saw continued increase in “Fans,” but impressions and engagements decreased quarter-over-quarter despite two additional posts.

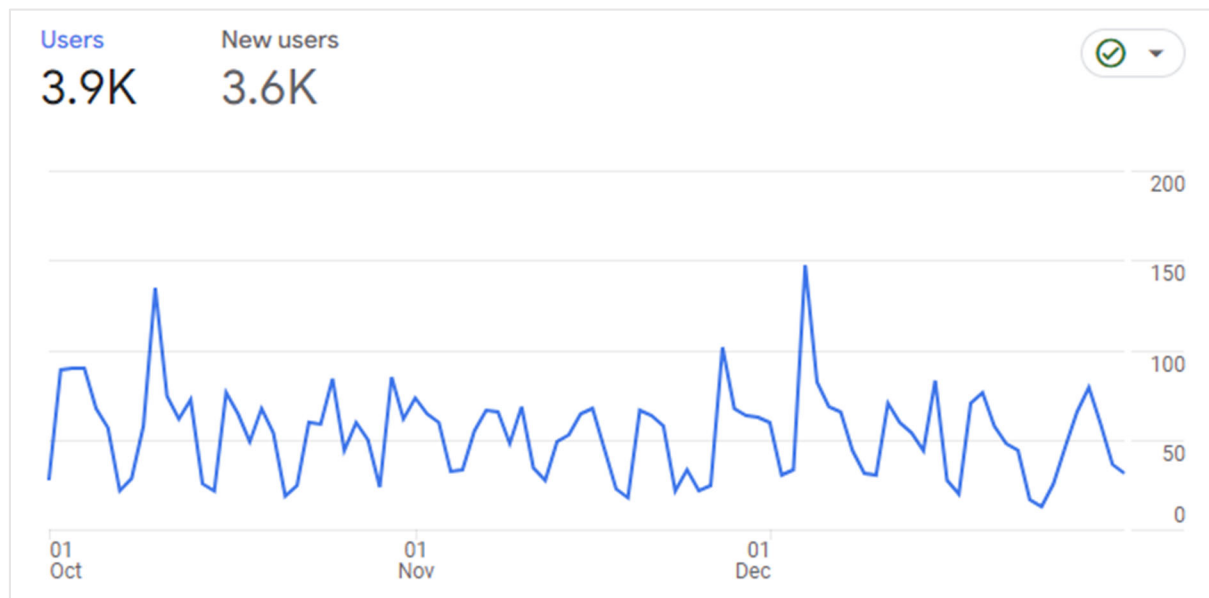
## II. Website Analytics

### A. Overview and Traffic

Total website users and sessions on the GAUD website decreased year-over-year (Q4 2023 vs. Q4 2022) as well as quarter-over-quarter (Q4 2023 vs. Q3 2023). While page views also declined from Q3 to Q4 2023, they still remained higher year-over-year (Q4 2022 vs. Q4 2023).

Q4 2023 Quarterly Website Traffic			
Metric	Q4 2023	Q3 2023	Q4 2022
Users	3,923	4,419	4,341
Sessions	5,493	5,641	5,895
Engaged Sessions	2,530	2,731	n/a
Avg. Engagement Time/Session	0m 43s	1m 04s	n/a
Engagement Rate	46.06%	48.41%	n/a
Pageviews	13,256	20,800	10,334

As is typical, website traffic ebbs and flows over time. The highest spike in traffic was seen on Monday, December 4<sup>th</sup> with 147 users, followed by Tuesday, October 10<sup>th</sup> with 135 users.

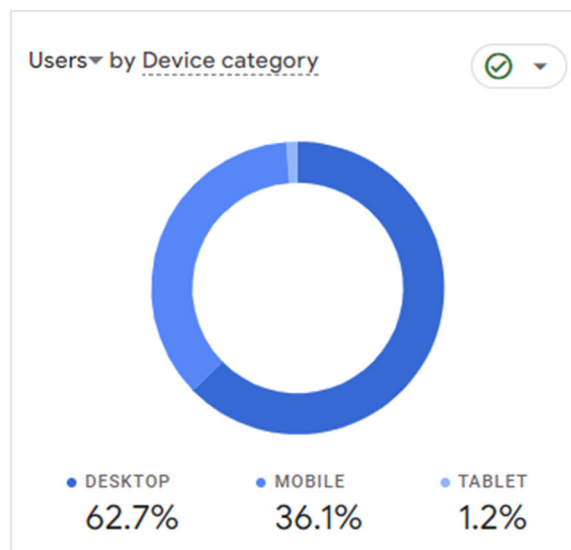


The chart below shows the individual performance by month in Q4 as well as a year-over-year comparison (Q4 2023 vs. Q4 2022). Users and page views are similar October and December, but both metrics took a dip in November.

Q4 2023 Monthly Website Traffic					
Metric	Q4 2022	October	November	December	Q4 2023
Users	4,341	1,535	1,334	1,418	3,923
Sessions	5,895	2,005	1,748	1,748	5,493
Engaged Sessions	n/a	963	778	784	2,530
Avg. Engagement Time/Session	n/a	0m 51s	0m 26s	0m 51s	0m 43s
Engagement Rate	n/a	48.03%	44.51%	44.85%	46.06%
Pageviews	10,334	5,701	2,595	4,960	13,256

## B. Devices

Continue to see desktop or laptop being the top device used to access the GAUD website.



## C. Top Pages

Below are the ten most viewed pages on the site in Q4 2023. “Careers” remained in the #6 spot. “Trustees” remains on the list, appearing in the #7 spot. The “Trustees” and “Drinking Water” continued to see the highest average engagement time.

Page path and screen class ▾ +		↓ Views .....	Users .....	Views per user .....	Average engagement time .....
		13,256 100% of total	3,923 100% of total	3.38 Avg 0%	1m 01s Avg 0%
1	/	8,049	2,071	3.89	58s
2	/request-for-proposals	703	466	1.51	6s
3	/how-to-pay-bill	590	397	1.49	28s
4	/start-stop-service	496	298	1.66	42s
5	/contact-us	411	297	1.38	43s
6	/careers	355	157	2.26	44s
7	/trustees	299	161	1.86	1m 05s
8	/search	211	97	2.18	28s
9	/about-us	204	149	1.37	38s
10	/drinking-water	201	144	1.40	49s

## D. Sources

Organic search (typing a relevant keyword into a search engine) and Direct (typing GAUD URL into browser) continue to be the most popular channels driving traffic to the GAUD website. Organic continues to hold the top spot in Q4 2023, over Direct, which was last in the top spot in Q4 2022.

Session primary...Channel Group ▾ +		↓ Users .....	Sessions .....	Engaged sessions .....	Average engagement time per session .....	Engaged sessions per user .....	Events per session .....	Engagement rate .....
		3,923 100% of total	5,493 100% of total	2,530 100% of total	43s Avg 0%	0.64 Avg 0%	6.26 Avg 0%	46.06% Avg 0%
1	Organic Search	2,128	3,095	1,781	38s	0.84	5.98	57.54%
2	Direct	1,530	2,189	613	13s	0.40	4.28	28%
3	Unassigned	174	19	0	1h 12m	0.00	271.00	0%
4	Referral	100	143	110	45s	1.10	8.10	76.92%
5	Organic Social	38	39	27	14s	0.71	5.03	69.23%



## D. Organic Search Keywords

This chart shows the various keyword searches in Google that resulted in traffic to the GAUD website; the top keyword being “Greater Augusta Utility District.” In fact, all top 10 keywords are some type of branded terms, i.e. a variation of GAUD’s name. I would assume this is highly typical for water & utilities companies, yet good to see for GAUD.

Organic Google Search query	↓ Organic Google Search clicks	Organic Google Search impressions	Organic Google Search click through rate	Organic Google Search average position
	770 100% of total	42,992 100% of total	1.79% Avg 0%	24.21 100% of total
1 greater augusta utility district	443	918	48.26%	1.36
2 augusta water district	117	538	21.75%	1.73
3 augusta utility district	54	161	33.54%	1.49
4 greater augusta utility	31	108	28.7%	1.78
5 augusta utilities	14	8,902	0.16%	10.77
6 augusta water	12	1,657	0.72%	6.42
7 augusta utility	7	380	1.84%	4.06
8 augusta ga water	4	117	3.42%	5.86
9 augusta utilities login	4	1,208	0.33%	6.25
10 augusta utilities start service	4	27	14.81%	3.33

## E. Website Searches

This chart shows the various keyword searches on the GAUD website, illustrating what information people are looking for within the website content. This list helps us identify potentially opportunities for delivering additional content based on people’s needs (i.e. search activity)

The number of searches continues to be quite low. We will watch for trends over time.

Q4 2023 Website Searches	
Keyword	# Searches
terms and conditions	13
map / maps	8
Backflow, backflow test	6
dump station, camper dump	5
leak abatement	3
augusta ga	2
Personnel	2

## F. Careers Page Engagement

Not only was there a fair amount of page views on the “Careers” page, there was a significant amount of clicks on the job posting in Q4 2023.

Q4 2023 Careers Page Engagement	
Action	# Clicks
/career page views	355
Clicks on job postings	264

## G. Trustee Page & Meeting Engagement

The “Trustees” page also saw a fair amount of page views in Q4 and the actions on the page saw a good amount of clicks – i.e. “Watch a Meeting Live,” “Attend on a Zoom,” or “Watch a Previously Recorded Meeting.”

Q4 2023 Trustees Page Engagement	
Action	# Clicks
/trustees page views	299
Clicks on “Watch Live”	35
Clicks on “Attend on Zoom”	23
Clicks on “Watch Previously Recorded Meetings”	60
Clicks on “2023” for Goals or Minutes	57

### III. Social Media

#### A. Facebook

##### Overview

While fan count increased in Q4, impressions and engagement decreased despite deploying a similar number of posts.


Q4 2023 GAUD Facebook				
Quarter	Fans	Posts	Impressions	Engagements
Q4 2023	989	34	11,371	336
Q3 2023	984	32	14,022	470
Q2 2023	966	43	8,113	270
Q1 2023	951	53	9,075	365
Q4 2022	950	42	15,458	570
Q3 2022	924	47	14,113	1,019
Q2 2022	901	26	9,235	414
Q1 2022	892	40	13,594	584
Q4 2021	882	33	16,348	786
Q3 2021	866	34	12,834	715
Q2 2021	864	38	56,696	3,603
Q1 2021	851	39	17,283	762
Q4 2020	857	36	27,439	978
Q3 2020	769	43	13,900	1,414
Q2 2020	766	46	14,807	1,268
Q1 2020	762	62	22,565	2,939

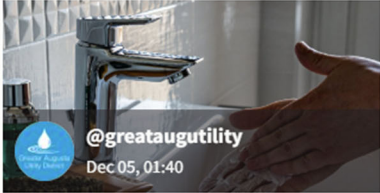
Below are the Top 3 posts for the Q4, based on “Engaged Users”:

**Top posts**

## B. Twitter

There were 30 tweets in Q4, with a total of 711 impressions and 45 engagements. Below are the Top 3, in terms of “Total Engagements.”

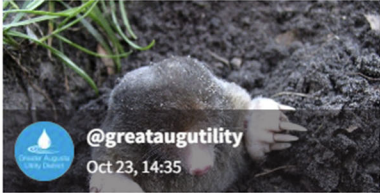
 **Top tweets**



**@greataugutility**  
Dec 05, 01:40

It's National Handwashing Awareness Week, and we're here to spread the word on the power of hand hygiene. Let's focus


**6** engagements



**@greataugutility**  
Oct 23, 14:35

Happy National Mole Day! No, not that guy. You know, a mole is  $6.02 \times 10^{23}$  molecules? Avogadro's number? A mole of

**5** engagements



**@greataugutility**  
Dec 13, 18:40

Dive into our end-of-the-year update on the Kennebec River Utility Crossing Project! We owe Assistant GM Andy Babin and his team

**3** engagements