

Greater Augusta Utility District

Date: Monday, January 26, 2026

Time: 1800 EST

Location: Augusta Utility District Office and Zoom (due to storm)

Chair: Ken Knight

Attendees:

- **Board Members Present (remote):** Robert Corey, Bradley Sawyer, Pat Paradis, Ken Knight, Cecil Munson, Keith Taylor, Kara Tudman Walker, Keith Luke.
- **Board members absent:** Tim Dennett
- **Staff Present (at office):** Andy Begin (Assistant General Manager), Brian Tarbuck (General Manager).
- **Other Attendees:** Mike Payne (Finance Director), Alan Burton (HR), Meredith Strang Burgess (Communications).

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chair Ken Knight. Attendance via Zoom for voting members was confirmed to require individual roll call votes.

2. Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Bob Corey and seconded by Brad Sawyer to approve the prior meeting minutes.

- **Motion:** Approved unanimously by roll call vote.

3. Committee and General Manager's Reports

Rate Committee Update (Robert Corey):

- No meeting since the last board meeting.
- The mailing for the public hearing is scheduled to go out soon, with the public hearing anticipated in a couple of months. The calendar for the public hearing dates is expected by the next meeting.

Project Updates (Andy Begin):

- **Kennebec River Crossing:** Fiber installation is complete; reporting on this project will cease.
- **Riverside Drive PFAS Treatment Plant:** Foundation is complete, and work is ongoing for drain piping and rerouting internal water piping for new pressure vessels.
 - The District currently has **\$9 million in forgiveness funding** and an additional \$5 million in an SRF loan, with up to 30% of the loan potentially becoming forgiveness money.
- **North Augusta Well Exploration:** A test well flowed at a safe yield estimated near **350 gallons a minute**. A second 8-inch well will be installed and pumped to stress the aquifer. The District is still seeking additional water to meet the full upgrade target.
- **Triangle Well Recovery:** The well's capacity, which had slowed during the summer drought, has been successfully recovered by the contractor (DLMR) to almost full capacity, pumping at close to **700 gallons a minute**.
- **Other Projects:** Brooks and St. Catherine spring project is on hold. Davenport project is scheduled to start mid-summer and be complete by October 30th.

- **Amherst Street Project:** The developer for the former Kmart property received full planning board approval. The District is adjusting its stormwater design and hopes to put the stormwater line project out to bid in February.
- **Memorial Drive Project:** Design for the storm water line through the rotary is 85% complete. This next-year construction project aims to eliminate approximately **60 combined catch basins** to increase wastewater capacity and reduce sewer overflows (CSOs). The District is pursuing CSO funding.
- **Eastern Avenue Water Main Project:** This \$4 million project involves over a mile of 12-inch water main and is targeted for potential construction next year due to the area being leak-prone.

General Manager's Report / HR Update:

- Employee and Trustee work anniversaries were recognized.
- **HR Update:** Four positions are open (two utility workers, a meter shop assistant/utility worker, and a distribution operator). Job descriptions are 97% complete, and the personnel policy manual is being updated.

4. Financial Matters and Motions

Draft December Financials (Mike Payne):

Budget Summary 2025		Revenue			Expenses			
Month	Division	Budget	Actual	Act / budg	Budget	Actual	Act / budg	Ending cash
12	Sewer	7.1	7.42	105%	5.4	5.1	94%	1.67
12	Stormwater	4.1	4.47	110%	3.3	2.9	88%	2.77
12	Water	6.8	7.58	112%	4.7	4.8	101%	5.01

Motion to Approve KBEC County Hazard Mitigation Plan Addendum:

- The addendum is being updated as part of an application for FEMA funding for a new wastewater treatment plant generator.

Motion: I move to approve the KCHMP Addendum as presented at this meeting.

M Corey	2nd Paradis	For Unanimous	Against
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Motion to Amend Lead Service Line Inventory Revenue Obligation Note:

Motion: (1) To further amend the \$1,000,000 Revenue Obligation Note dated March 1, 2024, and awarded to the Maine Municipal Bond Bank, Augusta, Maine, by changing the maturity date to February 26, 2027; and (2) 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 Sawyer	2nd Corey	For Unanimous	Against
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5. Communications Update (Meredith Strang Burgess)

- A web report showed excellent website usage in the fourth quarter, with the most popular content featuring District staff.

- A rate increase is anticipated, which will initiate a series of communication pieces in the spring.
- It was agreed to explore adding a permanent shortcut link on the website's front page to improve constituent access to meeting sessions.

6. Executive Session

Motion: I move to enter executive session to discuss acquisition of property pursuant to MRS §405 6 C.

M Sawyer	2nd Paradis	For Unanimous	Against
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7. Adjourned at 18:58

Motion: I move that this body stand adjourned.

M Sawyer	2nd Munson	For Unanimous	Against
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Greater Augusta Utility District Board Meeting Minutes

Date: February 23, 2026

Attendees (Trustees): Ken Knight, Bob Corey, Brad Sawyer, Cecil Munson, Pat Paradis, Kara Tudman Walker

Non-Voting Member: Keith Luke

Staff & Consultants: Brian Tarbuck (General Manager), Andy Begin (Assistant General Manager), Mike Payne (Finance Director), Alan Burton (HR Consultant), Meredith Strang Burgess (Communications Consultant), Randi Taylor (GAUD admin)

Absent: Tim Dennett, Keith Taylor

I. Approval of Minutes

- **Motion:** Bob Corey moved to accept the board meeting minutes from January 26.
- **Second:** Pat Paradis.
- **Vote:** Approved by roll call vote.

II. Committee and Project Updates

- **Rate Committee:** Bob Corey reported that the committee did not meet this month. March 27th was highlighted as an important date for setting the rate.
- **PFAS Removal and Filtration:** Pressure vessels for the PFAS removal system arrived last week. Construction is underway at the Riverside Drive building, with a goal to have the building weather-tight by the end of March for vessel installation. The team is deciding whether to use internal labor or bid out the piping work.
- **North Augusta Well Exploration:** Exploration continues, with one 8-inch test hole yielding a successful half-million gallons a day, and another test well scheduled for the current week. Re-engagement with the Dosties is underway for a potential pumping test near Mount Vernon Road.
- **Triangle Well:** Issues with water supply nervousness were resolved with leak repairs and the addition of a temporary pump, resulting in plenty of water in the system.
- **Street Projects:**
 - Brooks and St. Catherine projects are expected to start in April.
 - Davenport Street project is anticipated to start sooner than expected, in April/May, with an October 30th completion deadline.
 - Memorial Drive design is proving challenging due to placing a 30-inch pipe through a busy intersection.
 - Exploring alternatives for the Walgreens property due to difficulties working with the numerous LLC owners.
 - Eastern Avenue project (replacing 100-year-old infrastructure) is over 80% through planning and design, slated as a major project for next year.

III. General Manager Report and Staff Recognition

- **Staff Recognition:** Brian Tarbuck congratulated Mike Morey on receiving the Sid Anthony Award for contributions to the drinking water field. Mike is planning to retire at the end of the year after 37 years of service. John Cummons received the President's Award from Andy Begin for his work, following Andy's term as President of the Maine Water Utilities Association.
- **Pipe Tapping Team:** The team (Scott Hoyt, Ryan Bucknam, and Colton Miller) won the state of Maine championship with a time of about 2:32.
- **External Engagements:** Updates were provided on lead copper replacement efforts and a cybersecurity presentation. Brian Tarbuck met with Hallowell Water District on PFAS treatment and

addressed the Hallowell City Council on rising sewer costs and the Long-Term Control Plan for combined sewer overflows (CSOs), which has achieved a 93% reduction since the early 1990s.

IV. Financial and Legal Matters

- **Financial Statements (January):** Mike Payne presented January financials.
 - **Water Division:** Revenues were \$553,000 (on budget); cash started at \$5 million and ended at \$5.6 million. The reason for the cash balance has to do with unspent but committed projects and grant money.
 - **Sewer Division:** Revenues were \$563,000; cash started at \$1.7 million and ended at \$1.9 million.
 - **Stormwater Division:** Revenues were \$365,000; cash started at \$2.8 million and ended at \$2.9 million.
 - The delayed 2024 audit is challenging confirmed starting numbers for 2025.

Budget Summary 2026		Revenue			Expenses			
Month	Division	Budget	Actual	Act / budg	Budget	Actual	Act / budg	Ending cash
1	Sewer	7.3	0.56	8%	5.5	0.4	7%	1.93
1	Stormwater	4.2	0.37	9%	3.0	0.2	8%	2.89
1	Water	7.0	0.55	8%	5.1	0.4	8%	5.60

- **29 Boothby Street Property Lien:**
 - **Motion:** Bob Corey moved to accept a \$5,000 offer from the potential buyer to release the district's lien claims on the city-foreclosed property.
 - **Second:** Pat Paradis.
 - **Vote:** Unanimously approved by roll call vote.
- **102 Northern Avenue Property Lien:**
 - **Motion:** Bob Corey moved to allow Brian Tarbuck the latitude to offer a \$350 settlement to resolve four liens totaling \$638, with authority to waive the liens if the deal fails.
 - **Second:** Pat Paradis.
 - **Vote:** Approved by roll call vote. Sawyer voted no.

V. Personnel Policy Update

- **Paid No Work Language:** Brian Tarbuck presented a draft update to the personnel policy regarding "paid no work" days (e.g., for severe weather/power loss) for non-union employees, proposing to treat them like a holiday, including premium pay for those required to work.
- **Motion:** Bob Corey moved to modify the personnel policy manual to include the "paid no work language," provided the wording avoids the term "snow day."
- **Second:** Pat Paradis.
- **Vote:** Unanimously approved by roll call vote.

VI. PFAS Litigation

- Bradley Sawyer proposed that the board take a vote on the PFAS litigation in March. The vote was placed on the agenda for the next month's meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 18:51

Minutes of the Greater Augusta Utility District (GAUD) Board Meeting

Date: Monday, March 23, 2026, 6:00 PM

Board Members in Attendance:

Bob Corey, Cecil Munson, Patrick Paradis, Keith Taylor, Kara Tudman Walker, Brad Sawyer, Keith Luke, Ken Knight, Tim Dennett

Staff and Consultants:

Mike Payne, Andy Begin, Meredith Strang-Burgess (Communications Consultant), Kristina Iliaria (Account Executive at Burgess), Alan Burton (Human Resources Consultant), Mike Hodgins (Verrill and Dana).

Guests (for PFAS Litigation):

Jamie Belleau (Attorney, Maine), Paul Napoli (Napoli Shkolnik), Jay Simpson (Partner), Coral Odia (Partner).

Old Business

Approval of Meeting Minutes

Bob Corey moved to accept the meeting minutes for February 23rd with amendments, and was seconded by Keith Taylor. The motion passed.

Rate Committee Update and Rate Setting

Discussion Summary

- The Rate Committee, which met on March 11th, recommended a 3% rate increase.
- The rate-setting process is driven by specific Public Utilities Commission (PUC) deadlines. The public hearing is scheduled for April 27th.
- Staff noted that while the current year's budget can be covered without a rate increase, it is not financially sustainable long-term.
- Options presented for maintaining a minimum cash reserve over the next three years included 0%, 3%, and 7%.
 - **Drinking Water:** Tarbuck recommended 7% for long-term stabilization, citing significant expenses and a need for \$15 million in the 2027 Capital Improvement Program (CIP) compared to the current \$2 million annual pipe investment.
 - **Impact:** A 7% increase across the board would cost the City of Augusta an estimated additional \$70,000. The City Manager indicated a preference for a 5% increase.

Rate Setting Motion and Vote

- **Motion:** Bob Corey moved to increase utility rates as follows: 5% for the water rate, 5% for the sewer rate, and 5% for the stormwater rate.
- **Second:** Tim Dennett
- **Outcome:** The motion passed, setting a **5% rate increase across all three divisions** (Water, Sewer, and Stormwater).

PFAS Litigation Options

Discussion Points

- **Technical Opinion (Keith Taylor):** Expressed a technical opinion that pinpointing the source of PFAS contamination in the Kennebec River aquifer would be difficult. He noted that GAUD and other upstream wastewater treatment plants also discharge PFAS.
- **Legal Strategy (Paul Napoli):** Confirmed Napoli Shkolnik's successful experience in environmental and opioid litigation. The current strategy is to pursue "users of PFAS" (legacy paper mills) under the federal Superfund law (CERCLA).
 - **Risk Mitigation:** Paul stated the EPA issued a letter approximately two years ago indicating they will not pursue municipalities or wastewater treatment facilities under CERCLA. Filing a claim against the polluters also provides a legal defense for GAUD.
 - **Statute of Limitations:** Paul advised that to be conservative, they recommend filing a case before **May of 2026**.
 - **GAUD Effort:** Legal counsel assured the board that the utility's effort would be minimal, mainly involving one or two days of testimony from the Superintendent.
- **Motion Attempt:** Sawyer moved to authorize management to engage with Napoli Shkolnik to pursue PFAS litigation. The motion was not seconded.
- **Decision:** The board decided to table the vote and bring the PAS litigation options up again in **April** for further consideration.

Management Updates (Andy/Brian)

PFAS Mitigation/Riverside Drive Filtration Facility

- The exterior shell of the Riverside Drive Facility is nearing completion this week.
- The facility, which will hold six PFAS removal vessels, is expected to be online early this summer.
- GAUD has secured approximately \$15 million in funding, including two EPA grants of nearly \$5 million and \$4 million.
- An exploration for a new, uncontaminated water source in North Augusta found adequate supply, but low background levels of PFAS contamination were still detected, leading to a continued search.

Capital Improvement Projects (CIP)

- **Memorial Drive (CSO Mitigation):** The project to reduce combined sewer overflow (CSO) into the river is estimated to cost \$2 million to \$3 million to get through the west side rotary. GAUD plans to coordinate work with MDOT's eight, one-week shutdowns planned for 2027 to save substantial costs. Management may need to use the threat of eminent domain to secure necessary access from property owners at the former Walgreens.
- **Other Projects:** St. Catherine is wrapping up this spring; the Trunkline requires a deeper dive into environmental studies; and Davenport will start when the frost leaves the ground, with a target completion of June. The estimated cost for a mile of pipe replacement on Eastern Avenue is \$4.5 million which is about 2 years of the water division's capital improvement budget.

Other Business/Regulatory

- **Drinking Water Violation:** A violation was incurred due to the late submission of a regulatory form, not for operational failure.

- **SHAPE Program:** GAUD was removed from the Department of Labor (DOL) SHAPE program due to recurring safety hazards (e.g., equipment guards, missing electrical panel knockouts). Management plans to meet with the DOL to re-enter the program.
- **Personnel:** A young mechanical engineer left to pursue a higher-paying career in Massachusetts.
- **Sampling:** Routine quarterly PFAS sampling is starting for the Triangle wells.

Financial Update (Mike Payne)

Division	Revenue (End of Month)	Expenses (End of Month)	Cash Flow (End of Month)
Water	\$3.0M (2% below budget)	\$750k (2% below budget)	Started at \$5.6M, ended at \$5.7M
Sewer	\$1.1M (3% below budget)	\$760k (3% below budget)	Started at \$1.9M, ended at \$1.7M
Storm Water	\$649k (2% below budget)	\$445k (2% below budget)	Started just below \$3.0M, ended at \$3.0M

The 2024 audit financials are expected to be finished by the end of March.

Communications and HR Updates

Meredith Strang Burgess (Communications)

- Burgess is preparing communications efforts for the April 27th public rate hearing.
- A spring newsletter is planned to cover infrastructure, PFAS treatment, and the status of new wells.

Alan Burton (Human Resources)

- Three open positions: Meter Shop Assistant (applicant undergoing checks), Engineering Tech One (just posted), and Utility Worker (to be advertised in the spring).
- Work is underway on the personnel policy manual and internal/external communication loops.

Executive Session

A motion was made by Keith Taylor and seconded by Pat Paradis to enter Executive Session pursuant to MRS §405 6 C.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:05 PM

Minutes of the Greater Augusta Utility District (GAUD) Board Meeting

Date: Monday, April 27, 2026, 6:00 PM

Board Members in Attendance:

Bob Corey, Cecil Munson, Patrick Paradis, Keith Taylor, Kara Tudman Walker, Brad Sawyer, Keith Luke, Ken Knight, Tim Dennett

Staff and Consultants:

Mike Payne, Andy Begin, Meredith Strang-Burgess (Communications Consultant), Kristina Iliaria (Account Executive at Burgess), Alan Burton (Human Resources Consultant)

Guests (for PFAS Litigation):

Ken Sansone (SL Environmental)

Old Business

At 18:02 Bob Corey moved to accept the meeting minutes for March 23rd. The motion was seconded by Cecil Munson. The motion was approved unanimously.

Proposed Rate Increase Hearing

The Board proposed a 5 percent rate increase for the sewer, stormwater and drinking water divisions. The purpose of the rate proposal is to fund aging infrastructure and improve operational resiliency. Public feedback highlighted concerns regarding fixed-income households despite significant grant receipts which have reduced the need for ratepayer funding.

Infrastructure and PFAS Mitigation

Ongoing projects include Riverside Drive treatment upgrades and new well construction to address PFAS contamination. The board also authorized updating rate models to explore more equitable cost recovery structures.

Legal and Administrative Actions

The board approved a motion to waive foreclosure for specific liens to prevent automatic property loss. They also reaffirmed participation in the Kennebec County hazard mitigation plan for resiliency.

Next steps

- Eastern Avenue Bid: Complete design work for the Eastern Avenue pipe replacement; issue bid this summer for next year's construction.
- Review Specs: Update specifications and procedures for engineering; prepare materials for board review by the next meeting.
- Consult counsel: Talk with counsel regarding representation options for two different legal issues. Report back to the Board with an update on May 18th.
- Review audit: Catch up with Tim Gill from RKO regarding comments received on the 2024 audit draft. Finalize comments and report delivery.
- Review liens: Look further into the process for charging off property liens. Determine procedures for giving up on these non-recoverable debts.

- Develop legislation: Start discussions with Representative Bridgeo about a technical amendment to statute relating to how municipalities can recognize utility districts regarding lien recovery. Work with Brad Sawyer at Maine Rural Water on suitable quasi municipal utility legislation.
- Contract rate models: Enter into contract with Tighe and Bond to update the water, sewer, and stormwater rate models.
- Sign resolution: Circulate the adopted Kennebec County hazard mitigation plan resolution for necessary signatures.

Details

- **Proposed Rate Increases and Regulatory Context:** A 5% rate increase across the water, sewer, and stormwater divisions was reviewed.
- **Projected Customer Cost Increase:** For a typical residential customer using about 500 cubic feet (3,700 gallons) of water per month, the total monthly cost increase for water, wastewater, and storm water is projected to be \$5.23. This increase would raise the total monthly cost from \$14.54 to \$19.77.
- **Justification for Drinking Water and Fire Protection Rate Increase:** The reasons provided for the proposed increase in drinking water and fire protection rates include the need to replace aging infrastructure and improve computer systems. Other factors driving the increase are the effort to increase operational resiliency by adding critical personnel and addressing the rising costs of supplies and energy.
- **Justification for Wastewater Rate Increase:** The increase for wastewater rates is driven by increased costs for sludge disposal, and the replacement of old pump stations and aging wastewater plant equipment. The district also needs to address rising power and supply costs, replace failing pipes, and increase operational resiliency.
- **Justification for Stormwater Rate Increase:** The stormwater rate increase is required for pipe improvements and to help minimize sewage discharge into the Kennebec River during extreme weather.
- **Rate Implementation Roadmap and Timeline:** An AI-generated timeline outlined the 2026 rate implementation roadmap, with the earliest possible implementation date being June 6th. The board will review comments and feedback at their next meeting on May 18th, when they may vote to authorize the changes. If approved, the new rates would take effect around June 6th, 2026.
- **Infrastructure Challenges and Mandates:** The board stressed that many projects are mandated by federal and state requirements, rather than being elective, due to old and ancient infrastructure. The district aims for a gradual increase in rates to avoid sudden, large percentage hikes, which are becoming common elsewhere due to aging infrastructure and expensive bedrock work. The District's rate setting process involves year-long research and discussion by the rate committee, prioritizing the most critical projects.
- **Riverside Drive Treatment Upgrades:** The project update included the installation of PFAS treatment equipment inside the Riverside Drive building, which internal crews will be piping up in the following weeks. The media to be used is an ion exchange resin, and the goal is to have the system working online by June. This \$16 million effort, which includes new source projects, is leveraging \$12 million in forgiveness or grant funding to protect public health and reduce the cost impact on rate payers.
- **North Augusta New Well Project:** The new well project in North Augusta, which is part of a multi-pronged strategy to mitigate PFAS, has been pumping for almost five days, producing half a

million gallons a day with little impact on the aquifer. A second, shallower depth may also be evaluated for water quality.

- **Ongoing and Planned Infrastructure Projects:** The Brooks and St. Catherine streets project has restarted, involving water main and stormwater upgrades, with a portion of Brooks Street also receiving a sewer upgrade. The Davenport project started with pre-drilling the ledge for removal, which is a thousand-foot stretch of water and storm pipe designed to mitigate combined sewer overflows (CSOs). The Memorial Drive stormwater separation project design is roughly 90% complete, aiming to remove 60 combined catch basins out of the sewer system.
- **Eastern Avenue and Manchester Planning:** Design work for replacing over a mile of 100-year-old water main on Eastern Avenue is underway, aiming to bid this summer for construction next year. Planning is also progressing for a new water line to Manchester along the outer perimeter, which would address water age issues in the existing 1905, 24-inch pipe . This project may be coordinated with the Department of Transportation (DOT) to save on traffic control and paving costs.
- **Wastewater Grit Room Upgrades:** The wastewater operations building's grit room received an upgrade by internal crews, who installed new pumps and piping, and applied a fresh coat of paint.
- **Employee Updates and Recognition:** Acknowledgment was given to employees for their years of service..
- **Seasonal Line Activation and Hydrant Flushing:** Seasonal water lines for Manchester customers are now active after a two-week process of flushing, disinfection, and testing. Hydrant flushing will begin this week, occurring one day per week in the daytime instead of twice a year at night, to allow wells time to recover and for safety reasons.
- **PFAS Sampling and Data Security:** The first quarter PFAS samples from the Bond Brook Road Triangle wells were all negative, with the test results available on the website. The district is making progress on installing fiber optics across the river in conjunction with sewer and water pipes to establish high-speed, secure data connection between the infrastructure and the wastewater plant.
- **PFAS Wastewater Litigation Discussion:** The meeting included a discussion regarding PFAS remediation litigation, stemming from the increased cost of sludge disposal due to new state legislation. Ken Sansone, from SL Environmental Law Group, explained that their firm exclusively represents public agencies in contamination cases and aims to hold manufacturers like 3M and DuPont responsible for remediation costs.
- **Litigation Status and Contingency Fee Model:** SL Environmental is filing individual lawsuits for wastewater treatment plants, which are consolidated under a Multi-District Litigation (MDL) proceeding in South Carolina, as there is no current class action for wastewater claims. The firm works on a contingency fee basis, receiving 25% of any recovery, and currently represents 20 different agencies in Maine on PFAS claims.
- **Recovery Timeline and Scope:** It is difficult to predict the exact timing for the wastewater cases, but Sansone hopes to see progress within the next two or three years. Any settlement would likely use a model combining prorated distribution based on PFAS levels and additional funds for agencies that have already incurred remediation costs. The lawsuit would also attempt to capture any additional expenses the district incurs in the future, such as potential effluent treatment requirements.
- **Procedure for Retaining Legal Services:** If the board decides to move forward with the litigation, the first step is to sign the legal services agreement, followed by drafting and filing a complaint in the MDL

proceeding. The district would then provide records of any PFAS testing conducted. The board has been discussing two separate litigation avenues: the sludge-related case and a separate case concerning upstream polluters.

- **Discussion on Legal Representation for Two Issues:** The board discussed two separate legal issues: one concerning well contamination and the other regarding sludge disposal costs. Both issues involve individual claims, not class action. The suggestion was to consult counsel on the feasibility of separate representation for each matter or using one firm for both, with an update planned for the next meeting on the 18th. The deadline for the upstream claim is six years from when remedial actions, such as the treatment plant construction, occurred last year, contrary to a previously mentioned May 2026 deadline to execute an agreement to proceed..
- **Moving Forward with Fund Recovery Opportunities:** Sawyer expressed continued interest in recovering funds for expenses incurred due to problems caused by others, viewing this as serving the best interest of ratepayers. Sawyer is interested in moving forward and was willing to second a motion regarding the fund recovery. They suggested discussing the matter again at the next month's meeting to facilitate a decision.
- **Communications Update on Water Quality Report and Grants:** The water quality report is complete, posted on the website, and will be included in the May bills, fulfilling a regulatory requirement. Communication efforts are underway to highlight the grants received since 2020, totaling approximately \$19 million, primarily addressing per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) issues. Communication also focuses on infrastructure, the PFAS remediation at Riverside, and the historical nature of the facilities.
- **Workplace Safety Week and PSA Campaign:** A major highlight was participation in National Workplace Safety Week, following the tragic deaths of two Maine DOT workers in January. Greater Augusta Utility District, along with other companies, created 30-second public service announcements (PSAs) featuring workers to promote the theme, "See cones, think people," which are now running and have garnered significant views on social media. The board encouraged sharing constituent questions or ideas for future communications.
- **Financial Summary for Water, Sewer, and Storm Divisions:** For the end of March, the water division's revenue was \$1.7 million, slightly below budget but above the previous year, with expenses at \$1.1 million, below budget. The sewer division reported revenues of \$1.8 million and expenses of \$1.4 million, both slightly below budget. The storm division revenues were \$1.1 million, in line with the budget, and expenses were \$522,000, below budget.
- **Update on the 2024 Audit and PFAS Mitigation Efforts:** A draft of the 2024 audit was received on April 20th, and the general manager is following up with comments. The district continues to address PFAS issues, predominantly on the west side, through external funding to install treatment at Riverside and investigate new, safe drinking water sources. The ability to move towards the fish hatchery for safe drinking water, funded by external sources, is seen as a significant benefit for ratepayers.
- **Discussion and Motion on Review of Liens:** The discussion focused on three liens at 267 Northern Avenue, with the recommendation to waive the lien rights to prevent accidental automatic foreclosure on the property. It was noted that if the district were a municipal utility district, they could recover legal expenses before distributing sales proceeds, but current status as a quasi-municipal independent entity prevents this, necessitating a statutory change. The board passed a motion to waive automatic foreclosure for the three liens at 267 Northern Avenue.

- **Authorization of Rate Modeling Proposal Update:** The board considered and approved a proposal to hire Tighe and Bond to update the drinking water, sewer, and storm water rate models, which have not been addressed since 2011/2015/2016. The objective of the update is to explore new rate structures that could recover operating and capital costs while potentially being more favorable to ratepayers who are least able to afford it. The goal is to have a product by November, allowing the board to consider policy positions this summer and input policy and mathematics for the 2027 plan.
- **Human Resources Update on Open Positions:** There are currently three open positions: one utility worker position, which is not yet advertised, and two engineering tech one positions, which have five and one application, respectively. The meter shop assistant position is believed to be filled.
- **Public Comment and Board Structure:** A member of the public, a retiree, expressed initial alarm about costs but appreciated the insight gained from attending the meeting and understanding the ongoing activities. The nine member board of trustees consists of seven voting members, including one from Hallowell, and 2 non-voting trustees. All members are appointed by the mayor of Augusta (and Hallowell, where applicable) and confirmed by their respective City Councils, serving three-year terms.
- **Reaffirmation of Participation in County Hazard Mitigation Plan:** Due to changes in FEMA's process for the generator and resiliency project, the board reaffirmed its adoption and participation in the Kennebec County hazard mitigation plan. The board unanimously approved the motion to adopt and participate in the county hazard mitigation plan.

The board adjourned at 8:15 PM on a motion by Sawyer, seconded by Munson.