

Office of

AUBURN WATER DISTRICT

Office Telephone # 784-6469

A special meeting and workshop of the Trustees of the Auburn Water District will be held at the office of the Auburn Water District, 268 Court Street, on **Wednesday, June 5, 2019 at 4:00 P.M.**

AGENDA

1. Proposed LAWPC application and appointment process
2. Workshop - Trustee Priorities
3. Adjourn Meeting.

Upcoming: Water Trustee Meeting, June 19, 2019 4:00PM

Proposed LAWPC application, interview, and selection process

Step One:

Actively invite applications.

Make sure that application form can be easily located on AWD and LAWPC websites.

Step Two

Approve an Interview and selection process.

Create an Interview Committee to recommend the most qualified applicant to the AWD Trustee for their final approval.

Prepare interview questions to be asked of each applicant, in person, at an interview to determine most qualified applicants to fulfill the designated responsibilities of a Commissioner.

Step Three

Accept applications until the deadline.

Interview Committee conducts in-person or telephone interviews of all interested applicants.

Interview Committee identifies the most qualified candidate from among the applicants and makes a formal recommendation to the AWD Trustees that includes responses to interview questions and other demonstration of qualifications. Also provide a compilation of information about each applicant who was interviewed but selected for a recommendation to the full board.

Optional: The Interview Committee may recommend more than one applicant with a notation of ranked order based on assessment of qualifications to fulfill the responsibilities of a Commissioner.

Step Four

AWD Trustees receive recommendation of Interview Committee.

AWD Trustees consider the recommendation and approve/disapprove the recommendation.

DATES and DEADLINES

Friday June 21 st at 5 PM	Deadline for Applications
Monday June 24 th – July 12 th	Interview Committee conduct interviews and determine candidate to recommend
July 17 th	AWD Trustees consider recommendation and vote

Composition of Interview Committee

Voting members

- The current AWD-elected LAWPC Commissioner
- Another AWD trustee as elected by the Trustees
- The AWD Superintendent

Convener/Non-Voting Member except if needed to ensure 2 trustees are available: AWD President

Interview Questions:

1. What aspects of the LAWPC's mission and purpose are most important to you? Why?
2. How do you envision that you would fulfill the responsibilities of a Commissioner?
3. Do you have any questions or concerns about the legal responsibilities of a LAWPC Commissioner?
4. Based on your professional and volunteer background, what qualifications and skills could you offer if you were elected to serve in this position?
5. Do you serve as a board member or volunteer with any other organizations or boards at this time? In what capacity? Do you perceive any conflicts of interest between that role and the responsibilities of a LAWPC Commissioner?
6. Have you previously served as a board member or volunteered with any other organizations or boards? In what capacity? What experiences can you bring from those roles to the responsibilities of a LAWPC Commissioner?
7. Do you have any other questions about the role of a Commissioner of the LAWPC?

AWD Trustee Priorities 5-22-19

From Dan B

1. Establish water rates for our customers based on our use of Lake Auburn at 60/40. All costs from the watershed to our first distribution pipe is shared with Lewiston and should be considered at this split to insure fairness going forward.
2. Analyze use of AWD staff time for LAWPC business including forestry and other watershed management commitments. Maybe the AWD clerk for Lawpc could be a volunteer position to help our superintendents stay focus in water delivery commitments.
3. AWD Bylaws and rules review and update. Science and data need be applied.
4. Calculating all costs, including other municipal costs of delivering Auburn and Poland's water. Consider line item costs specific to the waiver. Compare these costs to filtered water supplies for like communities which will allow us to....
5. Determine filtration options and costs to be ready for action with recent declining water quality

From Bob C

1. Protection of Lake Auburn to ensure safe, clean drinking water,
2. Pursue how to get to annually replacing 1 3/4 miles to 2 miles of water pipe, and
3. Ensure that there is an AWD/ASD compensation package in effect that will retain current employees and attract future employees.

From Tizz C

1. Conduct a self-audit of the business side of our District.

There should be several tools for such a project, I'd check with the national association. It may not be called an audit; it may be a process or procedure for voluntary certification. This tool would identify all aspects of a water utility. Before we change aspects of our District, we should have a clear, documented records of our strengths, weakness, and exposures.

2. Human Resources administration is not clearly represented in our staffing.

While the superintendent, the finance director and the office manager may be responsible for some aspects of HR, we do not have the level of in-house focus needed for an employer with 25 employees. Our District has been very successful using a contracted service and we are also developing our own in-house finance person. In my opinion, the District needs the same level of skills and experiences all the time even if the actual work hours are less than full time. Our arrangement with Greg's employer is an excellent example. Our District gets high quality, very skilled finance director without it being a full-time position. In my opinion, we need HR resources in the same manner.

3. Physical inventory--A review, evaluation, or audit would definitely include our procedures for inventory- vehicles, equipment, and supplies.

When we ended an inventory agreement with EJP, we ended paying about \$95,000 because annual physical inventory count was not done for several years. It is my understanding this was only on supplies. We should be doing a physical inventory of vehicles and equipment. When was the last time a physical check was done on the list of equipment used by the City for tax assessment?

4. Communication.

We need to be sure we have positive, regular, and detailed communications with our customers, our staff, and our community. While we established a communication policy a couple of years ago, there has been no review or evaluation on how it is working. The Communication policy is not on our website.

What opportunities have been provided for staff and Trustees to communicate directly? We (also) have to be communicating with our customers and the community at large. How are we covering all communication methods, not just on-line? Are we looking at our own website each month?

From KC

1. Do everything we can to ensure that we providing safe drinkable water to all of our customers.
2. Move towards putting 2 miles or more of pipe in the ground. 1 mile, 1½ miles, is just not enough and we have to spend more on pipes recognizing that rates will have to go up to make it happen.
3. Make progress to designing and eventual construction of a new garage and storage building. We have to be able to house our equipment and inventory in a clean, safe and secure building.

From Jason P

1. Public engagement, access, encourage participation.

Answer questions that are repetitively asked & work with stakeholders to get the message out to determine if proactive and sweeping communication and organizational changes may be necessary, beyond simply explaining that we need to protect our water source.

2. Comprehensive water quality data, made available to the public and easily accessible/understandable, at least monthly updates along with historical results tracking of key data points.
3. Rates & expense analysis, comparison with other similarly sized water districts.
4. Technology, investments in the future/planning – filtration options, current technology investments, proposed or planned? Either in context of a master/comprehensive plan, or individually. How can we use technology to work with the public and seek to give back some of the land that is locked up in a 100 year old water protection process. How do other districts protect their sources in terms of land ownership and what technology are we missing out on?
5. Organizational structure:

Are we set up for the long term to be effective and ready for change? Does our current setup meet the needs of our ratepayers? Structural docs need updating and a discussion about whether or not our structure still makes sense needs to happen with the public and all stakeholders.

From Mary S

1. Water quality—ensure that all plans are developed and implemented for Lake Auburn using top-notch scientific and professional expertise so that AWD can be certain that pure drinking water is delivered as per charter obligations. Communicate to public, frequently.
 - a. Protecting the water source: Lake Auburn
 - a. Status of current and future plans to protect the lake
 - b. Who are the current scientific advisers? Are additional advisers needed to ensure best information?
 - b. Filtration analysis
 - a. Up-to-date hydro-engineering expertise on filtration options for Lake Auburn
 - b. Outcomes, benefits, limitations—based on the science and engineering needed for Lake Auburn’s unique situation
 - c. Capital costs and projected operating costs

2. Engagement of public, public awareness, public information—using full array of communications resources and community-based groups to fulfill greatly expanded expectations due to 21st century technologies
3. Examine cost sharing models for AWD and Lewiston, working in close partnership with Auburn City and its negotiations on other Auburn-Lewiston municipal agreements.
4. Increase pipe replacement to 2 miles+ per year.
5. Assessment of facilities—status of current facility, anticipated future repairs, L-T plan for future facilities based on strategic plan

From Andy T

1. Water quality and filtration. We need to start now researching and studying options to replace the current program. We also need to look at current policies directed by LAWPC. What policies are working, which are not and Why.
2. We need to work more closely with the City when buying / renting equipment, doing work and future growth plans. Including new buildings
3. Our accounting system is set up so that we spend down fund balance before we ask for a rate increase. This is why we have deficit spending in our annual budgets. We should adjust rates more often to match year over year costs. And maybe look at bonding as a way to replace pipe faster and stabilize budgets sooner.
4. Salaries and benefits. We have a committee that has done a great job looking at benefits. We have done a salary study that has helped us get in line with other districts. We need to look at all of this info and maybe make changes
5. The subject of pipe replacement needs to be looked at again. I would like to see an inventory of current pipe and work on a plan to replace faster. Maybe bonding? We always use this as a reason for rate increases. We need to fully understand options.

AWD Superintendent's Priorities 5-22-19

1. Define Trustee roles and responsibilities/provide training
2. Improve working relationship between boards
3. Keep employee salary and benefits in line with industry peers – we are doing great in this regard.. it must continue
4. Continue to support equipment and capital expenditures
5. Improve trustee cohesiveness and agree on our mission (no 4-3 votes)

TIZZ E. H. CROWLEY

35 University Street Auburn, Maine 04210

tizzcrowley@yahoo.com

TO: Mary Sylvester
President, Auburn Water District Board of Trustees

FROM: Tizz E. H. Crowley

DATE: May 21, 2019

RE: Homework assignment for May 22, 2019 Meeting- Crowley reply.

“Please bring to the meeting a list of the five most important topics that you think should be addressed by AWD before the end of the year. “

Although I will not be at tomorrow’s meeting, I have spent a great deal of time reflecting on the work of the Auburn Water District. I believe each Trustee brings a set of experiences and skills which would help make the District the best possible. I bring an administrative background, think “the business side” of the water utility services. It may be my decades of experiences or requirements found in health care, but in my opinion the business side of the District is weak and has not had the attention needed for a company our size.

The first priority of our business is to deliver safe, high quality drinking water to our customers. With recent algae and political discussions about filtration, we may be feeling more pressure and cannot let our first priority falter. On the other hand, if we do not run a successful business, if we do not continue to review and improve the business aspects of the District (company), we fail.

We cannot say, “he’s too busy”, “our priority is water quality” as excuses for not also maintaining the administrative aspects of the company.

I know my personal beliefs strongly influence what I identify as priority. For me, it is important to manage risk, to be compliant with all State and Federal laws that impact the business side of the District. We regularly discuss our projects that manage risk related to the delivery of water, but in my almost 8 years, we have never discussed any aspect of compliance related to human resource areas. We have not discussed training except as it relates to construction and maintenance of water quality and delivery. I believe it has been at least almost 2 decades since HR administration items have been reviewed. Many of our business side processes have been the same for this time. I think we have significant exposures related to our health insurance and retirement participation, as well as paying more money for workers’ compensation and employer taxes.

Every business has to balance the time, effort, investment of money and stuff focused on the primary purpose of the business, in our case- water, with the regular, routine and required tasks of running the business- the administrative side. This means we also must insure we are getting the best return on our investment in equipment, people, and time of all involved.

After doing what we are currently doing to maintain and improve water quality and delivery, my first priority would be a **self-audit of the business side** of our District. There should be several tools for such a project, I’d check with the national association. It may not be called an audit; it may be a process or procedure for voluntary certification. This tool would identify all aspects of a water utility. Before we change aspects of our District, we should have a clear, documented records of our strengths, weakness, and exposures.

Human Resources administration is not clearly represented in our staffing. While the superintendent, the finance director and the office manager may be responsible for some aspects of HR, we do not have the level of in-house focus needed for an employer with 25 employees. Our District has been very successful using a contracted service and we are also developing our own in-house finance person. In my opinion, the District needs the same level of skills and experiences all the time even if the actual work hours are less than full time. Our arrangement with

Greg's employer is an excellent example. Our District gets high quality, very skilled finance directors without it being a full-time position. In my opinion, we need HR resources in the same manner.

A review, evaluation, or audit would definitely include our procedures for inventory- vehicles, equipment, and supplies. When we ended an inventory agreement with EJP, we ended paying about \$95,000 because annual **physical inventory** count was not done for several years. It is my understanding this was only on supplies. We should be doing a physical inventory of vehicles and equipment. When was the last time a physical check was done on the list of equipment used by the City for tax assessment?

I will close with my last priority- **communication**. We need to be sure we have positive, regular, and detailed communications with our customers, our staff, and our community. While we established a communication policy a couple of years ago, there has been no review or evaluation on how it is working. The Communication policy is not on our website.

What opportunities have been provided for staff and Trustees to communicate directly? As the decision makers, why haven't we been involved in employee recognition activities? I think there is a great deal of misunderstanding between the Trustees and the staff.

We have to be communicating with our customers and the community at large. Most trustee meetings mention "oh that's a good article topic", but what's the work plan? How are we covering all communication methods, not just on-line? Are we looking at our own website each month?

Yes, this only shows 4 topics, but the HR arena is very big and has many components but I didn't think I needed to itemize all. Again, a self-audit would show us our strengths, weaknesses, and risks. As an example, at least twice I have asked for the summary plan description for our health insurance plan and our retirement plan. These are single sheets that should be provided to employees annually. If we cannot put our hands on a copy in less than 30 minutes, our administrative services for these plans would have a copy. I'm still waiting.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my thoughts and concerns. I look forward to combining the work of all Trustees to create a work plan to follow, then review and evaluate in a year.