

SOUTHWEST HARBOR WATER & SEWER DISTRICT

August 20, 2026

Meeting Minutes

Town Hall

4:00 PM

Trustees Present: Ralph Dunbar, Allan Willey, Ken Minnier, Lee Worcester, and Karen Reddersen

Staff Present: District Manager Bennett Liscomb and Assistant District Manager Aaron Zurek

Guests: Tom Benson, Marion B. Berry, Ashley Bernhard

Convene Meeting

Meeting called to order at 4:00 PM by Chair Lee Worcester.

Guests to Be Heard

Chair Worcester asked whether any guests wished to be heard on matters not listed on the agenda. There were none.

Meeting Minutes Approval

Ralph moved to approve the July 16, 2026, meeting minutes as presented. Allan seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Ralph then moved to take up Item 6, the Clark Point Property Line Agreement, as the next item of business. Lee seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Clark Point Property Line Agreement

The need to survey the boundary between the abutting property at 148 Clark Point Road and the District's pump station property at 152 Clark Point Road was explained. Existing boundary markers had been lost or damaged, making it necessary to establish and document the boundary using updated survey information. Lee reviewed the survey and explained the purpose of the proposed boundary line agreement.

Surveyor Tom Benson discussed his search for supporting documentation at the Town Office, his conversations with WWTP Operator Tom Farley, and the need to modify the existing property markers to reflect the surveyed boundary.

Ralph moved to accept the survey plan for the District's property at 152 Clark Point Road as presented and to authorize Lee Worcester, as Chair of the Board of Trustees, to execute the related property line agreement on behalf of the District. Ken seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Following the vote, the Trustees discussed the procedure for obtaining the signatures of all parties to the agreement.

Financial Reports

District Manager Bennett Liscomb reviewed the Monthly Financial Reports memorandum concerning the temporary delay in presenting the water and sewer Profit and Loss Statements. He explained that the UMS/CUSI billing export stopped functioning following replacement of the Office Manager's computer and the District's transition from QuickBooks Desktop to QuickBooks Online. Until the export is restored and the affected transactions are verified, the reports would be incomplete and inaccurate. Complete reports will be presented at the next regular meeting after accurate reporting becomes available.

Warrant 126

Lee moved to approve Warrant 126 as presented. Ken seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Warrant 126A

The Trustees discussed Warrant 126A and Pay Requisition No. 55 at length. Ralph asked about the proposed retainage payment and the amount that would remain afterward. Karen asked how much project contingency funding remained. Ralph emphasized the urgency of bringing the continuing treatment plant issues under control.

In response to a question about why sludge had been pumped from the plant, District Manager Bennett Liscomb explained that the need resulted from several factors while the upgraded treatment process was still being fine-tuned.

Karen discussed the continuing noise and odor complaints received by the District and the Town and emphasized the need for a completed Operations and Maintenance Manual. Several Trustees expressed concern that withholding payment was the District's only remaining leverage for obtaining clear answers and effective solutions. Ken asked whether there was an established solution to the noise or whether the measures being considered remained experimental. Lee stated that the District should not have to pay again for performance it had already purchased.

Karen asked whether the continuing problems were attributable to design, construction, operation, or a combination of factors. She suggested that an in-person explanation from Olver Associates would be helpful, particularly if the District was contractually obligated to make the payment despite the Board's reluctance in light of the continuing complaints. Lee stated that, once accepted as complete, the plant should not produce objectionable noise or odors.

Bennett asked the Trustees to clarify what information they wanted before reconsidering the warrant. The Trustees requested clarification of the amounts already spent and the District's remaining retainage obligation; the amount of contingency funding remaining; an explanation of the proposed noise and odor solutions; a timeline for completing the corrective work; delivery of the Operations and Maintenance Manual; an in-person appearance by representatives of Olver Associates; and a clear statement from Olver Associates describing how the continuing issues would be corrected.

Warrant 126A was tabled until the next meeting.

Payroll

Karen moved to approve the water portion of payroll as presented. Allan seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Karen then moved to approve the sewer portion of payroll as presented. Ken seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

67 Clark Point Road Abatement

District Manager Bennett Liscomb reviewed Natasha Johnson's request for an abatement of sewer charges associated with 511 cubic feet of outdoor water loss at 67 Clark Point Road. The water was discharged outdoors and did not enter the District's sanitary sewer system.

Lee moved to approve a sewer abatement of 511 cubic feet for the account at 67 Clark Point Road. Ken seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Sewer Deduct Meter Rules Amendment

District Manager Bennett Liscomb explained that the existing \$120 deduct-meter fee did not cover the District's cost of the meter. He also discussed the need to update the program and clearly define its terms, eligibility, limitations, ownership and maintenance responsibilities, billing requirements, and fees.

Ralph moved to adopt the proposed sewer deduct meter amendment to Article VI of the District's Sewer Rules and Regulations as presented. Allan seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

WWTP Update

District Manager Bennett Liscomb read the written WWTP update. The update included the August 6 installation of blower intake extensions, which appeared to reduce noise; receipt of preliminary specifications for activated charcoal filtration, with change order pricing still pending; recent conversations and correspondence with nearby residents concerning intermittent plant noise and odors; and sludge hauling and other ongoing plant optimization work.

The Trustees discussed possible methods of absorbing or reducing the remaining noise. Karen stated that reports of both noise and odor continued to be received.

Date of Next Meeting

Bennett requested that the next regular meeting be moved to September 24, 2026, to accommodate the Office Manager's scheduled vacation. Karen moved to schedule the next monthly meeting for Thursday, September 24, 2026. Allan seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Adjournment

Lee moved to adjourn the meeting at 4:38 PM. Allan seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.