

SOUTHWEST HARBOR WATER & SEWER DISTRICT

May, 2026

Meeting Minutes

Town Hall

3:56 PM.

Ralph Dunbar, Allan Willey, Ken Minnier, Lee Worcester, Karen Reddersen
District Manager Bennett Liscomb, Assistant District Manager Aaron Zurek

Convene Meeting;

Meeting called to Order: 4:00 PM by Lee Worcester

Guests to be Heard;

none

Amendment;

Motion made to the agenda by Lee Worcester to move the item 6-F, Sludge hauling bids to item 3. Allan 2nd, unanimous.

Sludge Hauling Bids

The district received one bid, which was from Terry's Tanks. Chair Lee Worcester Opened the bid packet, with Chad Terry in attendance. There was a question from Chad regarding the ability to extend the contract for a year without a bid, and a reply from Ralph Dunbar that the bid process was deemed necessary to become eligible for certain types of federal funding that could potentially reimburse the district for sludge hauling expenses. Chad commented that he felt with the completion of the new plant, there would be less sludge hauling this year. Ken Minnier remarked on the rising costs of diesel and its affect on sludge hauling, and the board thanked Chad for his bid.

Ken Minnier motioned to accept the bid as presented, Karen 2nd. Unanimous.

Meeting minutes Approval;

April 2026 minutes. Ralph made a motion to accept the minutes as presented. Allan 2nd the motion. Lee Worcester abstained from the vote, 4-0.

Financials;

Allam made the motion to accept the financial reports as presented. Lee 2nd the motion, unanimous.

Warrants 123 & 123A

Ralph commented on the large sum of the warrant, attributed to the pay requisition submitted to the district by Apex construction for the Waste Water Treatment Plant Upgrade.

Motion to approve the Warrant 120 & 120A, by Karen, Allan 2nd, unanimous.

Payroll

Motion to approve water and sewer payroll by Ralph, 2nd by Ken, unanimous

Updates;

WWTP project:

The plant is nearing completion. Personnel have moved back into the building, interior painting is complete, curbing is done, landscaping is nearing completion, manholes and storm drains have been raised to final grade with risers and covers permanently set. Paving is scheduled for the week of 5/26, and punch list items including SCADA are being worked on as demobilization from the site continues.

During discussion, the question was raised by Ralph about the water line that froze over the winter, and some discussion was had about a potential remedy other than heat tape, which was the engineer's recommendation. Allan and Ralph agreed that the heat tape could potentially raise energy costs and fail in the future. Karen asked if any of the contingency money could be used to possibly relocate the water line or otherwise remedy the situation. Lee Worcester asked the District Manager for a suitable solution to be found, and Ralph added that it would be preferred before final paving.

Wastewater Rates

Karen opened discussion with a reminder of the district's obligation from a Line of Credit that was taken with the bank. Bennett highlighted the Sewer Districts current projected shortfall of \$27,236.45 and the requirement of Maine Statute, Title 38 §1202, that district produce revenue at least sufficient to cover operational costs. There was some discussion about the expected amount of sludge hauling to be decreased due to more efficient nature of the new plant, however it was estimated that both fuel and energy costs would likely be up significantly with the addition of a UV disinfection system drawing an estimated 30-40% more power during peak flows. Combined with the outstanding debt to cover sludge hauling last year, an increase of 15% was recommended by the District Manager. There was some discussion on the next steps of the rate increase, with a public hearing set for June 18th.

Motion to increase current sewer rates by 15% as recommended by Lee Worcester, Allan Wiley 2nd, Unanimous.

Motion from Lee to hold a public hearing at the firehouse on June 18th at 5:00 PM, seconded by Allan, unanimous.

Wastewater Line of Credit

Ralph asked Karen if any of the town money held for the district could be used to pay down the L.O.C., and she did not believe it could be used for such purposes but would investigate. Ralph asked if we could be reimbursed from sludge hauling last year from some of the contingency

money to help pay back the credit line. Bennett said he would look into it with the engineering firm, after Aaron mentioned that it had been proposed last year as a possibility. Bennett explained the options for the LOC as outlined by the bank, term out or extend. Some discussion ensued regarding payment schedule.

Lee Worcester motioned to authorize Bennett to negotiate with the Bank to extend the LOC for another year, Ken Minnier 2nd, unanimous.

Linda Lea at Village Green Way

An explanation of the exchange of ownership of the property owned by Linda Lea on Village Green way was provided by Aaron. There was some discussion on the time of ownership and amounts owed for water and sewer, and the circumstances surrounding the billing.

Ralph motioned to accept the District Manager and Assistant District Manager's recommendation of forgiving the interest provided the customer install the required backflow devices and grease trap, Allan 2nd, unanimous.

Amendment for WWTP Salary

Ralph asked whether the O&M manual was in the contract, and what the additional expense was for if the project was completed on time. Lee stated that he wanted to be assured of the legitimacy of the charge. Karen stated that it was most likely an hourly rate that had exceeded what had been originally budgeted for. The board requested more information, adding that if the district owed the money, they would agree to pay it, but needed a better explanation. Bennett agreed to provide one, and the issue was tabled until next meeting.

Schedule of Water Rate Signatures

The new water rates, to be effective on July 1, were signed.

Date of next meeting;

Thursday June 18th, 2026

Meeting Adjourned

Motion made by Karen to adjourn the meeting at 5:13, Ralph 2nd the motion, unanimous