RIB MOUNTAIN METROPOLITAN SEWERAGE DISTRICT

Budget Workshop & Regular Meeting Minutes **September 8, 2026**

Call to Order

President **Robert Stavran** called the Budget Workshop of the Rib Mountain Metropolitan Sewerage District (RMMSD) to order at **9:07 a.m.**

Roll Call

Commissioners present: Robert Stavran, Kevin Breit, Darin Westover, Tom Kipp, Keith Biedermann.
Staff present: Eric Donaldson, Director, Andy Heiss, Superintendent and Sandra Balz, Clerk.

No online attendees noted at the start.

Budget Workshop

Overview of Workshop Schedule

President Stavran outlined the day's plan:

- Conduct budget workshop beginning immediately
- Break before regular meeting at **11:30 a.m.**
- Enter closed session for employee compensation and performance discussions
- Approve tentative FY2027 budget
- Schedule October budget hearings at the next regular meeting

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Presentation of the Proposed 2027 Budget

Director **Eric Donaldson** presented the complete draft 2027 operating, maintenance, administrative, and debt retirement budget. Major highlights include:

Personnel & Staffing

- Anticipated retirement of **Sandra** in 2027; budget includes up to **6 months of clerk overlap**.
- Future retirements anticipated for Andy (late 2027 or early 2028) and Eric (2–3 years later).
- Proposed **3% wage increase** for all employees included in final budget motion.

Health, Dental, & Vision Insurance

- Recommendation to enter the **State of Wisconsin Group Health Insurance Program (ETF)**, noting lower premiums and inclusion of dental and vision benefits.
- Commissioners would later adopt a resolution approving the change effective **January 1, 2027**.

Budget Methodology

- Flow, BOD, and solids predictions based on:
  – First 6 months of 2026 data
  – Five-year averages (2022–2026)
- Adjustments made using operational experience to avoid over- or under-estimation affecting rate stability.

Debt Retirement

• Debt retirement revenue continues to be collected based on an assumed **$24 million project loan**, pending final numbers when Phase 2 construction closes.
• Significant future rate decrease anticipated for 2028 once actual loan payments are established.

Operating Expenses

Key adjustments:
• **Natural gas** reduced due to upcoming digester improvements and reduced risk of supplemental fuel needs.
• **Electricity** reduced due to solar generation; budget lowered to **$150,000**.
• **Chemicals** maintained due to project-related increases and confirmation Hydrite remains most cost-effective.
• Continued funding for PFAS testing and sewer ordinance updates.

Maintenance

• Vehicle maintenance reduced following tire replacement.
• Ongoing mechanical/electrical needs remain despite project improvements.
• Funding added for **replacement of power tools** (battery-compatible tools preferred).

Administrative

• Inclusion of possible **moving expenses** for new hires; commissioners later discussed reducing or removing this line.
• Pension contributions rising to **7.25%** (both employer and employee).
• Consideration of long-term transition of the equipment replacement fund from itemized accounting to percentage-based methodology.

Community Impacts

• Communities will receive budget projections to inform 2027 sewer rates.
• Budgeted increases vary by community based on flow and solids trends.
• Commissioners discussed communicating with municipalities to explain how projections are formed and how actions such as I&I reduction can lower costs.

Closed Session

Commissioners voted to enter closed session for employee performance and compensation discussions. Roll call vote recorded at 10:35 a.m. Motioned by **Mr. Breit** and seconded by **Mr. Biedermann**.

After closed session commissioners reconvened and proceeded with final budget actions. Motioned by **Mr. Stavran** and seconded by **Mr. Breit**, with unanimous roll call vote to reconvene to open session at 11:20 a.m.

Approval of Tentative 2027 Budget

Motion made and seconded to approve the tentative FY2027 budget in the amount of **$4,516,680**, including a **3% raise** for employees. Motion passed unanimously by roll call vote.

Commissioners directed staff to transmit budget materials to member communities and prepare for the October public hearing.

Recess

A recess was declared until **11:30 a.m.** before beginning the regular meeting.

Regular Meeting

Call to Order The regular meeting of RMMSD was called to order with full commissioner attendance. Online participants included Ryan VanDeWalle, V. of Rothschild and Mike Miller.

Commissioner Reappointment

Commissioner **Darren Westover** was formally reappointed by the Marathon County Board for a new five-year term. The oath of office was administered, signed and notarized.

Approval of Minutes

Minutes from **August 11, 2026,** meeting approved unanimously. One clarification was discussed regarding Rothschild flows and infiltration/inflow descriptions.

A motion was made by **Mr. Kipp** and seconded by **Mr. Breit** to approve August 11, 2026, minutes from the previous regular meeting. **Motion carried unanimously.**

Check Register & Financial Items

Check register approved unanimously.
Notable discussion items:

- WPS charges for staff time and vehicle use during planned power outages.
- Coordination of power shutdowns during construction and generator usage.
- Cybersecurity assessment updates; no known attacks on RMMSD. Multi-factor authentication and firewall protections reviewed. A motion to approve the check register was made by **Mr. Beidermann** and seconded by **Mr. Kipp**. Motion carried unanimously.

Budget Comparison Report

- Income at 83% of annual budget due largely to IRS and FOE (Focus on Energy) reimbursements.
- Expenses at 43% year-to-date.
- Chemical usage returning to typical levels after experimentation with alternative products.

Asset Replacement Updates

• Sludge mixer delayed; expected by end of September.
• Chopper pump order delayed by vendor; newly submitted.
• Solar system performance strong despite lightning-related interruptions; repairs underway and insurance claim likely.

Phase 2 Project Update & Pay Requests

• Secondary digester cover installed.
• Most remaining work is electrical.
• Commissioners approved pay requests **24, 25, and 26**, in the amount of **$1,525,143.29**.

Insurance Resolution #113

Motion made by **Mr. Kipp** and seconded by **Mr. Breit**, passed unanimously to adopt the State ETF Health/Dental/Vision Plan effective **January 1, 2027.**

Scheduling of 2027 Budget Public Hearing

Public hearing scheduled for **October 13, 2026** (second Tuesday).
Communities will receive budget documentation and may attend the hearing.

Adjournment

Motion made by **Mr. Breit** and seconded by Mr. **Beidermann** to adjourn, passed unanimously.
Meeting adjourned at approximately **12:02 p.m.**

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Clerk Signature: Date: