



Advocacy & Accountability

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Thursday September 18, 2025
Remote Connection Via Zoom
10:00 AM

ADVISORY BOARD MEETING SUMMARY

A. Roll call attendance

A commencing roll call was voted as follows:

Name	Community	Vote
Michael Rademacher	Arlington	Here (remote)
Daniel Maurer	Ashland	Here (remote)
David Manugian	Bedford	Here (remote)
Mark Mancuso	Belmont	Here (remote)
John Sullivan	Boston (BWSC)	Here (remote)
Jay Hersey	Brookline	Here (remote)
Brian White	Burlington	Here (remote)
Lucica Hiller	Cambridge	Here (remote)
Michael Trotta	Canton	Here (remote)
Vyctoria Walsh	Lexington	Here (remote)
Timothy McGivern	Medford	Here (remote)
Elena Proakis Ellis	Melrose	Here (remote)
Mike Retzky	Needham	Here (remote)
Tom Fitzgerald	Newton	Here (remote)

Name	Community	Vote
Tom Fitzgerald	Newton	Here (remote)
Margaret LaForest	Quincy	Here (remote)
Chris Cole	Reading	Here (remote)
Richard Raiche	Somerville	Here (remote)
Sam Stivers	Southborough	Here (remote)
John DeAmicis	Stoneham	Here (remote)
Joseph Conway	Wakefield	Here (remote)
Patrick Fasanello	Walpole	Here (remote)
Ian McKenzie	Waltham	Here (remote)
David Cohen	Wellesley	Here (remote)
Joseph Lobao	Wilmington	Here (remote)
Maurice Handel	MAPC	Here (remote)
J.R. Greene	Quabbin-Ware	Here (remote)

Board of Directors members:

Andy Pappastergion

Advisory Board and MWRA staff:

Matthew Romero, Christine Bennett, Bernadette Russo, Nathan Coté, Michelle Gillen, Nicole Benoit, Devon Winkler, Troy Wall, Matt Horan, Mike Cole, Fred Laskey, Ethan Wenger, Steve Cullen, Steve Estes-Smargiassi, Tom Durkin, Colleen Rizzi, David Wu, Jim Coyne, Kathy Murtagh, Rebecca Weidman, Sean Navin, Carolyn Francisco-Murphy, Carmine DeMaria

Also in attendance:

Andreae Downs, Wayne Chouinard, Karen Lachmayr, Jonathan Smith, Martin Pilsbury, Ralph Abele, Dan Winograd, Kannan Vembu, Bill Fadden, Adriana Cillo, Alfredo Vargas, Craig Allen, Tabor Keally, Zhenyu Tian; Lydia Olson, Bill Copithorne, Moussa



2 Griffin Way, Suite A, Chelsea, MA 02150



(617) 788-2050



mwra.ab@mwraadvisoryboard.com

mwraadvisoryboard.com

Matthew A.
Matthew Romero



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Siri, Paul Lauenstein, Warren Kimball, Erin Bonney-Casey, Bill Kiley; Evan Pesut, Katherine Abbott; Juliet Simpson, Jen Pederson, David White, Chase Berkeley, John Terry

B. Action Item: Amending the Advisory Board Bylaws

Matthew Romero, Executive Director of the MWRA Advisory Board, explained that the amendment was largely a housekeeping measure. Historically, former Chair Joe Favaloro had expanded Executive Committee membership to allow anyone interested to participate as a voting member, resulting in a cap of 19 members at its peak. Over time, attrition has naturally reduced the size of the Committee. With recent departures, the total can now be reduced to 13 without displacing any current member wishing to continue serving. Mr. Romero emphasized that this change does not preclude the Board from revisiting the membership cap in the future should interest increase.

Richard Raiche, Chair of the Advisory Board, concurred that the amendment was intended to improve efficiency and quorum management while respecting members' commitments.

A motion was made to approve the bylaw amendments as provided in the meeting materials. It was moved by David Manugian, seconded by Michael Rademacher, and procedurally was added to the next item on Election of the Executive Committee for a roll call vote.

C. Action Item: Election of Executive Committee

Matthew Romero noted that under the bylaws, the September meeting serves as the annual meeting for the election of the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee, acting as the Nominating Committee, had met the prior week and proposed the slate of candidates included in the meeting materials. Mr. Romero reported that all current members expressed their intention to continue serving. He added that while a slate was recommended, the election remained open to additional nominations from the floor.

Richard Raiche invited nominations from the floor. Hearing and seeing none, he entertained a motion to elect the slate of candidates as presented. A motion was made by Bedford and seconded by Arlington.

A motion was made to elect the slate of candidates, proposed by the Nomination Committee, as presented in the meeting materials. It was moved by David Manugian, seconded by Michael Rademacher, and a roll call vote took place on both the bylaws change and the election of the Executive Committee.





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Name	Community	Vote
Michael Rademacher	Arlington	Yes (remote)
Daniel Maurer	Ashland	Yes (remote)
David Manugian	Bedford	Yes (remote)
Mark Mancuso	Belmont	No response
John Sullivan	Boston (BWSC)	Yes (remote)
Jay Hersey	Brookline	Yes (remote)
Brian White	Burlington	Yes (remote)
Lucica Hiller	Cambridge	Yes (remote)
Michael Trotta	Canton	Yes (remote)
Vyctoria Walsh	Lexington	Yes (remote)
Timothy McGivern	Medford	Yes (remote)
Elena Proakis Ellis	Melrose	Yes (remote)
Mike Retzky	Needham	Yes (remote)
Tom Fitzgerald	Newton	Yes (remote)

Name	Community	Vote
Tom Fitzgerald	Newton	Yes (remote)
Margaret LaForest	Quincy	Yes (remote)
Chris Cole	Reading	Yes (remote)
Richard Raiche	Somerville	Yes (remote)
Sam Stivers	Southborough	Yes (remote)
John DeAmicis	Stoneham	Yes (remote)
Joseph Conway	Wakefield	Yes (remote)
Patrick Fasanello	Walpole	Yes (remote)
Ian McKenzie	Waltham	Yes (remote)
David Cohen	Wellesley	Yes (remote)
Joseph Lobao	Wilmington	Yes (remote)
Maurice Handel	MAPC	Yes (remote)
J.R. Greene	Quabbin-Ware	Yes (remote)

D. CSO Update – Long-Term Control Plan Schedule Update

Mr. Romero clarified that this agenda item referred specifically to the schedule for developing the updated Long-Term Control Plan (LTCP) for Combined Sewer Overflows (CSOs), not the content of the plan itself. He reviewed the timeline, noting that MWRA staff had presented the joint scoring criteria developed by MWRA, Somerville, and Cambridge to the MWRA Board of Directors on September 17, and that he would circulate the rubric to Advisory Board members following the meeting. He added that Public Meeting #5 would be held on September 25, and encouraged Advisory Board member participation, offering to provide background materials to anyone interested.

Looking ahead, Mr. Romero explained that in October the Executive Committee would receive a briefing on any information that had entered the public domain, followed by a presentation to the MWRA Board of Directors on the recommended suite of projects. That same information would then be presented to the Advisory Board. In November, the MWRA Board of Directors is expected to consider and vote on the draft LTCP update, with the Advisory Board also receiving a briefing. The draft plan is due to be filed with regulators by December 31, 2025. Mr. Romero emphasized that the submission of the draft would mark the beginning of the process, as a five-month public comment period will follow to allow additional input.

Mr. Raiche underscored the importance of the timeline, noting the regulatory deadline and the significant work that remains to be completed. He referenced additional presentations that will occur at the municipal level, including one at the Somerville City Council in October, and observed that Cambridge may follow with its own process. He emphasized the need for alignment among MWRA, Cambridge, and Somerville as this work moves forward.

Mr. Romero concluded by noting that the registration link for the September 25 public meeting had been shared in the chat and confirmed that Advisory Board staff would circulate it again with the meeting follow-up materials.





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E. Presentations – FY26 Priorities

a. Fred Laskey, MWRA Executive Director

Fred Laskey, MWRA Executive Director, emphasized the centrality of the CSO Long-Term Control Plan decisions over the next six months, noting potential program costs ranging from hundreds of millions to several billions of dollars and stressing the need for Advisory Board engagement. He underscored constructability and siting challenges for large facilities and urged members to participate in upcoming public meetings. Mr. Laskey also reported continued progress on the Metropolitan Water Tunnel Redundancy project, with final design and geotechnical work underway, and reiterated MWRA's commitment that mega-projects (tunnel and CSO) will not reduce the long-term capital program benefiting cities and towns. He reviewed the recent Dorchester Tunnel incident involving third-party drilling and commended staff for resolving it quickly.

On drinking water, Mr. Laskey highlighted MWRA's ongoing support for lead service line removal—funding provided to date with additional resources planned—and cautioned that failure to meet federal timelines could force orthophosphate use with downstream wastewater implications. He flagged PFAS-related biosolids disposal constraints and the likelihood of rising costs as disposal options narrow. Financially, he reviewed the multi-year rate strategy and defeasance program that has helped moderate annual assessments near 3%. On energy and sustainability, he described current and planned initiatives (including battery storage and combined heat and power) and recapped the Quinapoxet Dam removal at Wachusett as a watershed stewardship project. During Q&A, members were directed to expect the fall round of lead sampling results by early November. Mr. Laskey closed by urging members to stay closely engaged with the CSO planning process.

b. Matthew Romero, Executive Director of the MWRA Advisory Board

Mr. Romero framed the Advisory Board's FY26 priorities at a high level to avoid duplicating MWRA content and to preserve time for WAC and WSCAC. He reiterated that CSOs are the top focus given the scope, cost, and December 31 draft filing, and he encouraged members to brief local leaders early about potential rate impacts and to use forthcoming Advisory Board resource materials. He outlined the emerging 8(m) permitting working group in response to infrastructure risks highlighted by the Dorchester Tunnel incident, aiming to surface community, MWRA, and state-level solutions. He noted that Lead and Copper Rule implementation remains front-of-mind, with the Advisory Board continuing to share tools and practices among communities.

Mr. Romero also referenced the broader regulatory backdrop (including the NPDES permit), ongoing watershed management support, and system expansion activity—recent admissions and rising regional drought pressures could drive more emergency requests and longer-term requests. Financially, he previewed a Long-Term Rates Management Working Group to examine how major projects layer onto the capital program and affect assessments. He updated members on pension funding dynamics as the system approaches full funding within the next five years, noting potential year-to-year budget pressure. Internally, he reported plans to restore the Advisory Board to full staffing, renewed community recruitment (with recent and forthcoming appointments), and continued work to document and harden standard operating procedures and institutional knowledge.





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c. Andreae Downs, WAC Executive Director

Ms. Downs reported that WAC's focus, while still tracking the NPDES permit, shifted significantly to biosolids in light of PFAS risk assessments and emerging state-level limits on land application. WAC is also monitoring "pipes and wipes" legislation and comparative community responses. She noted leadership transitions and new members, and outlined FY26 priorities: working with the Advisory Board on the CSO plan; tracking potential biosolids legislation; and convening on Deer Island capacity questions (October 3). WAC will participate in several joint meetings with the Advisory Board (including energy) and is giving attention to resilience during peak storm season. Looking ahead to spring, WAC expects to engage on MWRA's master planning efforts.

d. Moussa Siri, WSCAC Executive Director

Mr. Siri described FY25/26 activities and structure at WSCAC, including active Water Conservation and Forestry subcommittees. He highlighted a drought-bill support letter to MWRA, the Board of Directors, and the Legislature; a presentation opportunity at the Water Resources Commission; and member education sessions (e.g., forestry with UMass). He reported membership challenges—several departures and attendance shortfalls affecting quorum—and issued a call for recruitment, particularly from the water-supply sector to rebalance representation. WSCAC plans to review and clarify its membership list, increase in-person meetings (with a November session anticipated), and strengthen collaboration with DCR. Programmatically, WSCAC will continue educating members on key MWRA initiatives (PFAS, Lead and Copper Rule, metro tunnel redundancy, system expansion) to support more informed advice and engagement.

F. Committee Reports

a. Executive Committee – Richard Raiche

Mr. Raiche reported that the Executive Committee acted as the nominating body for the election slate earlier in the meeting. He also recapped the Advisory Board's annual field trip, which this year focused on CSO issues. Participants traveled by boat on the Charles River to better appreciate the resource, learn about the challenging outfalls the area and view the Cottage Farm CSO Treatment facility. A tour of the Prison Point CSO treatment facility downstream of the Charles River Dam followed. Mr. Raiche thanked MWRA operations and maintenance staff for facilitating the visit and for their ongoing work. He noted the next engagement opportunity will be the Advisory Board Holiday Open House on December 11 at the Scottish Rite Masonic Museum & Library in Lexington, which proved to be a convenient and effective venue last year, and encouraged broad attendance despite a busy season and concurrent CSO review work.

b. Finance Committee – Elena Proakis Ellis

Ms. Proakis Ellis announced the revival of the Long-Term Rates Management Subcommittee in response to financial risks identified last spring that could affect rates in coming years, including PFAS-related biosolids disposal constraints and the Metropolitan Water Tunnel Redundancy program. Advisory Board staff and MWRA staff will meet later this month to review available data and the





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readiness of cost estimates, with the first subcommittee meeting anticipated in early January. Participation is welcome for any interested members.

She also provided a dashboard update: links to FY25 year-end dashboards were included in the August News & Notes; FY26 (through Period 2) dashboards are now posted on the website; and work is underway to create an archive for prior dashboards. A dashboard section highlighting greatest-variance cost centers will be populated once sufficient longitudinal data are available.

c. Operations Committee – Michael Rademacher

Mr. Rademacher reported that Advisory Board staff are forming an informal working group on 8(m) permitting, following strong member interest. Mr. Romero noted that both this group and the Long-term Rates Management effort will operate in a flexible “working group” mode, remains open to additional volunteers, and aims to improve tools and consistency for communities, MWRA, and private contractors—work prompted in part by the recent Dorchester tunnel incident. Any recommendations would be brought to the Operations Committee, Executive Committee, and Advisory Board for a full discussion and vote if needed.

Mr. Rademacher also updated members on the Lynnfield Center Water District admission: the Advisory Board reaffirmed its May vote at a July 16 special meeting after the enabling legislation received an emergency preamble, necessitating clarifying language. The revised motion confirmed the Board’s original intent, allowed for non-substantive legislative edits without further action, and required any substantive changes to return to the Board. Mr. Romero added that future motions will incorporate this clarifying language to avoid the need for emergency meetings, noting the Advisory Board’s commitment to continuous improvement.

G. Legislative Update

Mr. Romero provided a briefing on recent and pending legislation. He noted that the rebranded *Mass Ready Act* (formerly the Environmental Bond Bill) had advanced, as well as CSO legislation referenced earlier in the meeting. Advisory Board testimony was submitted on both.

He reported that new legislation is emerging related to PFAS, particularly regarding biosolids management. While MWRA’s drinking water continues to show only trace PFAS levels, biosolids contain measurable amounts, reflecting consumer product use rather than source water contamination. Mr. Romero cautioned that although the intent of the PFAS legislation is sound, accelerated timetables or poorly tailored provisions could create serious challenges for wastewater utilities, including the MWRA. Advisory Board testimony is being developed to address these concerns.

Mr. Romero also reminded members of previous testimony on the “wipes” bill, the Quabbin bill, and other wastewater-related initiatives. He stressed the Advisory Board’s ongoing advocacy role, including mobilizing members to provide letters of support as needed. He highlighted the partnership with allies such as the Massachusetts Water Works Association and thanked Ms. Peterson for her leadership in helping to elevate water and wastewater infrastructure on the legislative agenda.





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During discussion, a member asked whether there were studies on PFAS uptake in food grown with fertilizer produced from MWRA pellets. Mr. Raiche suggested forwarding the inquiry to MWRA staff to determine if relevant research exists.

H. Action Item: Approval of Advisory Board meeting minutes from June 26, 2025; July 16, 2025; and August 28, 2025

A motion was made to approve the Advisory Board meeting minutes from June 26, 2025; July 16, 2025; and August 28, 2025. It was moved by David Manugian, seconded by Maurice Handel, and added to the omnibus roll call vote at the end of the meeting.

I. New Business
None.

J. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was put forward. It was moved by Maurice Handel, seconded by Elena Proakis Ellis, and added to the omnibus roll call vote at the end of the meeting.

K. Omnibus

The items being voted on in the omnibus roll call vote are:

- *Approval of the Advisory Board meeting minutes from:*
 - *June 26, 2025*
 - *July 16, 2025*
 - *August 28, 2025*
- *Adjournment of the meeting*





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The following roll call vote took place:

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Mark Mancuso	Belmont	Yes (remote)
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Vyctoria Walsh	Lexington	No response
Timothy McGivern	Medford	Yes (remote)
Elena Proakis Ellis	Melrose	Yes (remote)
Mike Retzky	Needham	Yes (remote)
Tom Fitzgerald	Newton	No response

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Joseph Conway	Wakefield	Yes (remote)
Patrick Fasanella	Walpole	No response
Ian McKenzie	Waltham	No response
David Cohen	Wellesley	Yes (remote)
Joseph Lobao	Wilmington	Yes (remote)
Maurice Handel	MAPC	Yes (remote)
J.R. Greene	Quabbin-Ware	Yes (remote)

Respectfully submitted,

David Manugian, Secretary

These minutes reflect the discussion of the meeting. The Advisory Board maintains audio recordings of Advisory Board meetings that are available upon request.



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mwra.ab@mwraadvisoryboard.com

mwraadvisoryboard.com

Matthew A.
Matthew Romero