



# Advocacy & Accountability

Representing over 3 million people in Massachusetts since 1985

Thursday November 20, 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)
David Manugian	Bedford	Here (remote)
John Sullivan	Boston (BWSC)	Here (remote)
Jay Hersey	Brookline	Here (remote)
Brian White	Burlington	Here (remote)
Lucica Hiller	Cambridge	Here (remote)
Cate Fox-Lent	Chelsea	Here (remote)
Elizabeth Botelho	Chicopee	Here (remote)
Stephen Leone	Framingham	Here (remote)
Yem Lip	Malden	Here (remote)
Amy McHugh	Marblehead	Here (remote)
Scott Brinch	Medford	Here (remote)
Elena Proakis Ellis	Melrose	Here (remote)
Mike Retzky	Needham	Here (remote)

Name	Community	Vote
Tom Fitzgerald	Newton	Here (remote)
Robert Donnelly	Norwood	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)
Jamie Dunbar	Wilbraham	Here (remote)
Joseph Lobao	Wilmington	Here (remote)
J.R. Greene	Quabbin-Ware	Here (remote)

### **Board of Directors members:**

*Andy Pappastergion, Joseph Foti, Lou Taverna*

### **Advisory Board and MWRA staff:**

*Matthew Romero, Christine Bennett, Bernadette Russo, Nathan Coté, Stephanie Ackley; Carolyn Francisco Murphy, Colleen Rizzi, David Wu, Fred Laskey, Hilary Monahan, Jim Coyne, Katie Ronan, Kristin MacDougall, Laurie Allen, Mike Cole, Rebecca Weidman, Stephen Cullen, Stephen Estes-Smargiassi, Tom Durkin, Tori MacMullin, Troy Wall*

### **Also in attendance:**

*Andreae Downs, Adriana Cillo, Alfredo Vargas, Catherine Coniaris, Chris Mancini, Craig Allen, Dan Winograd, David Stoff, David White, Emily Norton, Erin Bonney Casey, Felina Silver, George Atallah, Jonathan Smith, Kannan Vembu, Karen Lachmayr, Kristin Anderson, Martin Pillsbury, Michael Lonetto, Moussa Siri, Paul Lauenstein, Taber Keally*



2 Griffin Way, Suite A, Chelsea, MA 02150



(617) 788-2050



[mwra.ab@mwraadvisoryboard.com](mailto:mwra.ab@mwraadvisoryboard.com)

[mwraadvisoryboard.com](http://mwraadvisoryboard.com)

Matthew A.  
Matthew Romero



## B. Action Item: Approval of the MWRA Board of Directors' approval of an Emergency Water Supply Agreement for the Town of Wayland

The meeting was called to order at approximately 10:03 AM by Richard Raiche, Chair. Matthew Romero, Executive Director of the Advisory Board, read the opening announcement regarding voting procedures, including the use of an omnibus roll call vote at the conclusion of the meeting and the option for members to request individual roll call votes.

Mr. Romero requested that the Advisory Board take up the emergency water supply agreement for the Town of Wayland at the start of the meeting. He explained that the MWRA Board of Directors had approved the emergency connection at its meeting the previous day, contingent upon Advisory Board approval, in order to avoid delaying the authorization by a full month or requiring a special meeting in December.

MWRA staff provided an overview of the request. The Town of Wayland requested an emergency water withdrawal on November 5, 2025, after experiencing equipment issues at its Baldwin Pond treatment plant. At the time of the request, Wayland was concerned that it would not be able to meet potable water demand and fire protection needs with the plant offline. MWRA staff approved a short-term activation to ensure adequate supply and recommended that the MWRA Executive Director be authorized to enter into an emergency water supply agreement for up to six months, consistent with MWRA emergency withdrawal policy.

Staff noted that this was Wayland's third emergency activation but emphasized that the current request stemmed from a different facility and a new issue, not a continuation of the prior emergency. It was further noted that MWRA staff had proactively contacted Wayland in advance of the expiration of its prior emergency authorization and that Wayland had indicated no extension would be needed at that time. The subsequent equipment failure was unanticipated.

Mr. Romero added that Wayland is actively pursuing MWRA system membership and has initiated the admissions process, with its first filing currently under review. He emphasized that facilitating the emergency request was appropriate given the circumstances and Wayland's ongoing engagement with MWRA.

The Chair noted the importance of supporting communities facing emergency conditions and observed that the request underscored Wayland's continued system needs. No questions were raised by Advisory Board members.

*A motion was made to approve the MWRA Board of Directors' approval of an emergency water supply agreement for the Town of Wayland for a period of up to six months, as presented. It was moved by David Manugian (Bedford), seconded by Elena Proakis Ellis (Melrose), and a roll call vote also took place as follows:*





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Jay Hersey	Brookline	Yes (remote)
Brian White	Burlington	Yes (remote)
Lucica Hiller	Cambridge	Yes (remote)
Cate Fox-Lent	Chelsea	Yes (remote)
Elizabeth Botelho	Chicopee	Yes (remote)
Stephen Leone	Framingham	Yes (remote)
Yem Lip	Malden	<i>Not present</i>
Amy McHugh	Marblehead	Yes (remote)
Scott Brinch	Medford	Yes (remote)
Elena Proakis Ellis	Melrose	Yes (remote)
Mike Retzky	Needham	Yes (remote)
Tom Fitzgerald	Newton	Yes (remote)

Name	Community	Vote
Robert Donnelly	Norwood	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	<i>Not present</i>
Patrick Fasanello	Walpole	Yes (remote)
Ian McKenzie	Waltham	Yes (remote)
David Cohen	Wellesley	Yes (remote)
Jamie Dunbar	Wilbraham	Yes (remote)
Joseph Lobao	Wilmington	Yes (remote)
J.R. Greene	Quabbin-Ware	Yes (remote)

## C. Executive Director's Report

Mr. Romero encouraged members to complete the supplemental “Beyond the Numbers” questionnaire associated with the 2025 water and sewer retail rate survey. He explained that while staff were finalizing rate data, the qualitative responses would help the Advisory Board better understand local utility challenges and inform advocacy on behalf of member communities. He noted that the project remains on track for a January release and that members should expect a presentation at the January 15 Advisory Board meeting.

## D. Presentation – Updated CSO Long-Term Control Plan Update [CANCELLED]

The planned presentation on the updated Combined Sewer Overflow Long-Term Control Plan was cancelled.

Mr. Romero explained that MWRA staff had postponed their presentation to the MWRA Board of Directors after receiving a number of follow-up questions from Board members and members of the public. As a result, the Advisory Board presentation was also withdrawn. He noted that while the December 31 deadline for submission of a draft plan currently remains in place, it is unclear whether MWRA will act at a December meeting or pursue an extension.

Mr. Romero observed that if an extension were requested, a 30-day period may not be sufficient to meaningfully revise the draft, given the scale and complexity of the plan. He emphasized that the Advisory Board's role is to focus on costs, rate impacts, and affordability for ratepayers, and that perspective must be weighed alongside other considerations.





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Joe Foti reported that MWRA Board members and staff have received a significant volume of correspondence from municipalities, including mayors, town managers, city councilors, and other local officials, urging the MWRA Board not to support the plan in its current form. He noted that while he had not reached a final position, the level of concern expressed by member communities is substantial and reflects anxiety about rate impacts.

Mr. Romero reiterated that rate and affordability impacts are central to the Advisory Board's mission. He encouraged Advisory Board members to engage with their local elected officials, noting that many community leaders may not have the same level of technical familiarity with CSO planning as Advisory Board members who routinely work with complex infrastructure issues.

Mr. Raiche emphasized the technical complexity of the CSO alternatives under consideration and noted that many of the details have not been fully conveyed in public-facing presentations. He suggested that a workshop-style session may be necessary to allow Advisory Board members and stakeholders to fully digest the technical and financial implications of different control levels.

Andy Pappastergion echoed concerns about the absence of clear rate impact information. He stated that once rate impacts are quantified and presented alongside other proposals, community leaders may reassess calls to significantly expand the current plan. He noted that a 60- or 90-day extension may be more realistic if substantial changes are contemplated.

Mr. Romero added that Advisory Board staff have been working with MWRA staff to develop cost impact analyses but have been waiting for the draft to be finalized to ensure accuracy. He explained that higher levels of CSO control would likely alter cost-sharing arrangements with Cambridge and Somerville, resulting in a larger share of costs being borne by MWRA ratepayers across all 43 member communities. He stressed the importance of clearly communicating these implications to stakeholders.

Mr. Raiche concluded that negotiating among the three parties and developing revised financial analyses would require significant time and coordination, making schedule management challenging.

## **E. Committee Reports**

### **a. Executive Committee – Richard Raiche**

Mr. Raiche reported that the Executive Committee met to develop the agenda for the meeting. He also reminded members of the upcoming Advisory Board Holiday Reception, describing it as an opportunity for informal interaction among Advisory Board members, MWRA staff, and local officials. He encouraged members to attend and to invite appropriate representatives from their communities.

### **b. Finance Committee – Elena Proakis Ellis**

Elena Proakis Ellis reported on Finance Committee updates. She noted that Advisory Board dashboards had been updated to reflect notable maintenance cost variances in the first quarter of FY26, as well as offsetting variances in energy, utilities, and other services. She highlighted new links to MWRA staff reports on the capital improvement program budget and performance metrics for water and





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wastewater programs. Christine Bennett encouraged members to review the dashboards, particularly the CIP dashboard, which now includes additional information as more FY26 data become available.

## c. Operations Committee – Michael Rademacher

Michael Rademacher reported on the November 3 meeting of the 8(m) permitting working group. He explained that the group was formed following a deep geothermal drilling incident in Brookline that damaged the Dorchester Tunnel. The working group reviewed differences in local permitting workflows, limitations of relying solely on DigSafe notifications, coordination challenges among local permitting offices, and potential improvements such as incorporating MWRA review into state-regulated licensing processes. MWRA staff described field challenges, including staffing limitations and the need for preliminary screening before inquiries are forwarded. Next steps include additional research and development of a mission statement, with a follow-up meeting scheduled for December 1, 2025.

## F. Action Item: Approval of Advisory Board meeting minutes from September 18, 2025

*A motion was made to approve the Advisory Board meeting minutes from September 18, 2025, as presented. It was moved by a representative from Arlington, seconded by a representative from Bedford, and added to the omnibus roll call vote at the end of the meeting.*

## G. STAB Presentation

Richard Raiche introduced a five-minute informational presentation by Save the Alewife Brook, noting that the Executive Committee determined the request was germane to the Advisory Board's mission. Kristin Anderson, co-founder of Save the Alewife Brook, described concerns related to combined sewer overflows in the Alewife Brook area, including flooding, public health impacts, and the role of stormwater and climate change. She outlined the group's perspective on CSO discharges and infrastructure capacity and encouraged consideration of stormwater management and system impacts. Written materials may be submitted for inclusion in a future meeting packet.

## H. New Business

None.

## I. Adjournment

*A motion was made to adjourn the meeting. It was moved by David Manugian (Bedford), seconded by Elena Proakis Ellis (Melrose), and added to the omnibus roll call vote at the end of the meeting.*

## J. Omnibus

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

- *Approval of the Advisory Board meeting minutes from September 18, 2025*





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- *Adjournment of the meeting*

*The following roll call vote took place:*

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David Cohen	Wellesley	Yes (remote)
Jamie Dunbar	Wilbraham	<i>Not present</i>
Joseph Lobao	Wilmington	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](mailto:mwra.ab@mwraadvisoryboard.com)

[mwraadvisoryboard.com](http://mwraadvisoryboard.com)

Matthew A.  
Matthew Romero