



Thursday April 16, 2026
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)
Mike Sprague	Bedford	Here (remote)
John Sullivan	Boston	Here (remote)
Jay Hersey	Brookline	Here (remote)
Brian White	Burlington	Here (remote)
Lucica Hiller	Cambridge	Here (remote)
Stephen Leone	Framingham	Here (remote)
Joe Beauchesne	Lynn	Here (remote)
James Finegan	Lynnfield WD	Here (remote)
Yem Lip	Malden	Here (remote)
Amy McHugh	Marblehead	Here (remote)
Tim McGivern	Medford	Here (remote)
Elena Proakis Ellis	Melrose	Here (remote)
Mike Retzky	Needham	Here (remote)

Name	Community	Vote
Thomas 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)
Gino Cresta	Swampscott	Here (remote)
Patrick Fasanello	Walpole	Here (remote)
Ian McKenzie	Waltham	Here (remote)
David Cohen	Wellesley	Here (remote)
Tona Capparello	Wilbraham	Here (remote)
Joseph Lobao	Wilmington	Here (remote)
Maurice Handel	MAPC	Here (remote)
J.R. Greene	Quabbin-Ware	Here (remote)

Board of Directors members:

Andrew Pappastergion, Lou Taverna, Joe Foti

Advisory Board and MWRA staff:

Matthew Romero, Nathan Coté, Christine Bennett, Abigail Bulman, Kishan Parida, Stephanie Ackley, Tom Durkin, Matthew Horan, Colleen Rizzi, David Wu, Brian Kubaska, Stephen Cullen, Kathy Murtagh, Katherine Ronan, Rebecca Weidman, Stacie Marley, Kimberly LeBeau, Matthew Dam, Michael O'Keefe, David Ruiz, Michael Cole, Sean Navin, Michele Gillen, Carolyn Francisco Murphy, Stephen Estes-Smargiassi, Kristin MacDougal





Also in attendance:

Andreae Downs (WAC), Craig Allen (WAC), Adriana Cillo (WAC), William Copithorne (WSCAC), Erin Bonney (WSCAC), Bill Fadden (WSCAC), Taber Keally (WAC), William Kiley (WSCAC), Warren Kimball (WSCAC), Karen Lachmayr (WAC), Paul Lauenstein (WSCAC), Bill Merriam (WSCAC), Martin Pillsbury (WAC/WSCAC, MAPC), Janet Rothrock (WSCAC), Paul Rybicki (WSCAC), Felina Silver (WAC), Moussa Siri (WSCAC), Jonathan Smith (WAC), Zhenyu Tian (WAC), Alfredo Vargas (WAC), Kannan Vembu (WAC),

Lydia Olson (Mass Rivers Alliance), Daniel Serna (Massachusetts Rural Water Association), Susy King (MassDEP), Kevin Brander (MassDEP), Cathy Coniaris (MassDEP), Juliet Simpson (MIT), Judith Pederson (MIT), Hampton Watkins (MIT), Nina Gordon-Kirsch (Connecticut River Conservancy), Emily Norton (Charles River Watershed Association), Andrew Hrycyna (Mystic River Watershed Association), Kristin Anderson (StAB), David Stoff (StAB), Bob Scherpf (AECOM), Brett Gonsalves (Town of Stoneham), Julie Greenwood (City of Cambridge), John Nardone (City of Cambridge), Diane Mahon (Town of Arlington), Michael Lonetto

B. Executive Director's Report

Matthew Romero, Executive Director of the MWRA Advisory Board, Mr. Romero noted that the meeting would focus on a full agenda of presentations and discussion items. He also clarified that the meeting was being held jointly with the Wastewater Advisory Committee (WAC), and that WAC members were invited to participate in discussion during the presentations.

C. Presentation: Draft Updated CSO Long-Term Control Plan Analysis

Mr. Romero introduced a new Advisory Board-developed CSO cost analysis dashboard, designed to provide a more detailed understanding of the financial implications of the proposed Combined Sewer Overflow Long-Term Control Plan at the community level.

Mr. Romero explained that prior discussions of CSO costs have largely focused on system-wide totals or average household impacts, which, while useful, do not fully capture how costs are experienced by individual communities. The purpose of the dashboard is to provide an additional lens, illustrating how costs are distributed over time and across communities, and to better support local decision-making.

The dashboard compares the Future Storm Protection (FSP) plan, reflecting the alternative approved by the MWRA Board in February 2026, with the Extreme Storm Protection (ESP) plan, which represents a higher level of control. Mr. Romero noted that MWRA's financial modeling currently extends through approximately 2050, and that Advisory Board staff expanded the analysis through 2072 using reasonable assumptions in order to better capture full lifecycle costs.

Under this expanded view, the future storm protection plan increases from approximately \$954 million through 2050 to approximately \$2.2 billion through 2072. The extreme storm protection plan increases to approximately \$6.6 to \$6.7 billion over the same period. Mr. Romero emphasized that the difference between the two plans represents a substantial increase in overall system costs.





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He also highlighted that the modeling incorporates forward-looking climate projections rather than relying solely on historical data.

Mr. Romero explained that a significant portion of total costs occurs after 2050, accounting for roughly two-thirds of total projected spending. He emphasized that the dashboard is intended to highlight these longer-term impacts and provide a clearer understanding of how costs accumulate over time.

Nathan Coté, Research & Policy Analyst for the MWRA Advisory Board, demonstrated the interactive dashboard, which allows users to select individual communities and view cost trajectories over time, compare MWRA-provided estimates through 2050 with extended projections through 2072, and translate system-wide costs into annual impacts relative to community sewer assessments.

Using Melrose as an example, Mr. Coté illustrated how projected peak-year costs could be evaluated alongside the community's historical sewer assessment levels to provide context for local budgeting. Mr. Romero noted that the dashboard would be released publicly following the meeting, along with documentation outlining the methodology and assumptions used in the analysis.

In discussion, members asked about the availability of the dashboard, and Mr. Romero confirmed it would be posted on the Advisory Board website. Questions were also raised regarding the underlying assumptions, and staff indicated that technical inquiries could be directed to Mr. Coté.

Andreae Downs asked about the relationship between CSO controls and water quality outcomes. David Wu, Director of Environmental Quality, explained that bacteria levels are the primary determinant of swimmability, and that while CSO discharges contribute to these levels, stormwater is a significant source. He noted that stormwater impacts persist longer than CSO impacts, which affects overall water quality conditions.

Discussion also addressed broader system implications. Members raised concerns about how mandated CSO spending could affect other capital priorities. Colleen Rizzi, Director of Environmental and Regulatory Affairs, and Brian Kubaska, Chief Engineer, explained that once approved, CSO investments would be incorporated into the capital program and could require deferral of other projects. Mr. Kubaska emphasized that many existing capital needs, particularly at Deer Island, are critical and not easily deferred.

Matthew Horan, Deputy Director of Finance and Treasurer, discussed financial considerations, noting that increased borrowing could place pressure on MWRA's credit rating, which would in turn increase borrowing costs. He explained that mandated spending reduces flexibility in sequencing other capital projects and must be accommodated within overall financial constraints.

Mr. Romero noted that the Advisory Board's extended analysis is intended to illustrate the general scale and direction of costs rather than provide precise long-term projections, given the uncertainty inherent in long-range assumptions.

The Chair noted that the CSO plan is expected to be submitted at the end of April 2026, followed by a public process including community engagement, a public meeting, and a formal public hearing.



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Matthew Romero



D. Presentation: Proposed FY27 Comments & Recommendations Preview

Mr. Romero provided an early preview of Advisory Board staff's review of the proposed FY27 MWRA budget and capital program.

He noted that the FY27 budget appears relatively stable in the near term, with a combined increase of approximately 3.0 percent. Staff's initial review suggests that there are limited opportunities for significant near-term reductions, reflecting a generally disciplined budget.

Mr. Romero emphasized that the primary concern is not the FY27 budget in isolation, but rather longer-term structural pressures. He explained that the current framework of predictable and sustainable assessments has been developed over time and is relied upon by communities for budgeting purposes. However, the system is entering a new phase characterized by large-scale capital investments, including CSO controls, tunnel redundancy, and asset rehabilitation.

He noted that projected capital financing expenses are expected to increase significantly over time, rising from approximately \$512 million in FY27 to approximately \$725 million by FY35, with corresponding increases in revenue requirements.

Mr. Romero identified several long-term pressure points, including CSO implementation, the Metropolitan Tunnel Redundancy Project, aging infrastructure such as Deer Island, pension obligations, and local system costs. He described these as multi-generational obligations that will be financed over time and layered onto existing costs.

He further explained that while the existing framework remains important, staff is considering whether an additional principle of "responsibility" should be incorporated into the Advisory Board's approach. This would focus on ensuring that investments are prudent, justified, and proportionate in light of cumulative financial burdens.

In terms of near-term review, Mr. Romero noted that personnel costs remain an area for potential scrutiny, with FY27 personnel expenses increasing by approximately 7.1 percent despite lower-than-expected spending trends in the current fiscal year.

He concluded by outlining the timeline for the Comments and Recommendations process, including Executive Committee review in early May, Advisory Board approval in mid-May, and formal transmittal to the MWRA Board later in May.

E. Committee Reports

a. Executive Committee – Richard Raiche

Chair Raiche reported that one of the Advisory Board's seats on the MWRA Board of Directors, currently held by Mr. Taverna, is up for election. He noted that the Executive Committee will serve as the nominating committee and that interested candidates are invited to submit materials for





consideration. The election will take place at the May meeting and will be conducted on a one community, one vote basis.

b. Finance Committee – Elena Proakis Ellis

For the Finance Committee, Elena Proakis Ellis deferred to staff. Christine Bennett, Research & Policy Analyst for the MWRA Advisory Board, presented a preview of a new interactive financial dashboard developed using Power BI. She explained that the tool allows users to explore budget data dynamically and noted that it is currently in a beta phase. Members will be invited to provide feedback before it is finalized and made publicly available.

c. Operations Committee – Michael Rademacher

Mr. Rademacher reported that there was no update from the Operations Committee.

F. Thank You and Farewell – MWRA Executive Director Fred Laskey

Mr. Romero noted that Mr. Laskey was unable to attend the meeting and conveyed his appreciation. He reported that the MWRA Board of Directors voted unanimously to rename the Spot Pond Covered Storage Facility and Pump Station in honor of Mr. Laskey, recognizing his 25 years of service.

Mr. Romero also announced that Stephen Estes-Smargiassi has been appointed as Interim Executive Director. Mr. Estes-Smargiassi addressed the Board, noting his long tenure with MWRA and expressing his commitment to maintaining continuity during the transition period while supporting the search for a permanent Executive Director.

G. Action Item: Approval of Advisory Board meeting minutes from March 19, 2026

A motion was made to approve the Advisory Board meeting minutes from March 19, 2026, as presented. It was moved by Maurice Hanel, seconded by Elena Proakis Ellis, and added to the omnibus roll call vote at the end of the meeting.

H. New Business

Christine Bennett reminded members of an upcoming joint Deer Island energy tour scheduled for May 15, which will provide an in-depth overview of MWRA's energy programs.

Andreae Downs noted that legislation related to WIPPES labeling has been incorporated into the Environmental Bond Bill and encouraged members to engage with legislators on the issue.

I. Adjournment + Omnibus

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting and conduct the omnibus roll call vote. It was moved by Maurice Handel and seconded by Elena Proakis Ellis.

The items included in the omnibus roll call vote were:





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- Approval of the Advisory Board meeting minutes from March 19, 2026
- Adjournment of the meeting

The following roll call vote took place:

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Michael Rademacher	Arlington	Yes (remote)
Daniel Maurer	Ashland	Yes (remote)
Mike Sprague	Bedford	Yes (remote)
John Sullivan	Boston	Yes (remote)
Jay Hersey	Brookline	Yes (remote)
Brian White	Burlington	Yes (remote)
Lucica Hiller	Cambridge	Yes (remote)
Stephen Leone	Framingham	Yes (remote)
Joe Beauchesne	Lynn	Yes (remote)
James Finegan	Lynnfield WD	Yes (remote)
Yem Lip	Malden	Not present
Amy McHugh	Marblehead	Yes (remote)
Tim McGivern	Medford	Yes (remote)
Elena Proakis Ellis	Melrose	Yes (remote)
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Robert Donnelly	Norwood	Yes (remote)
Margaret LaForest	Quincy	Yes (remote)
Chris Cole	Reading	Not present
Richard Raiche	Somerville	Yes (remote)
Sam Stivers	Southborough	Yes (remote)
Gino Cresta	Swampscott	Yes (remote)
Patrick Fasanello	Walpole	Yes (remote)
Ian McKenzie	Waltham	Yes (remote)
David Cohen	Wellesley	Yes (remote)
Tona Capparello	Wilbraham	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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