



APPROVED

MEWEA Executive Board Meeting

Friday, April 18, 2025

9:00 a.m.

Remote Access via Zoom

MINUTES

Attendance via Zoom: Terry Tucker, Rob Pontau, Amanda Smith, Emily Cole-Prescott, Phil Tucker, Stacy Thompson, Paula Drouin, Peter Zaykowski, Andrea Brousseau, Dan Marks, Charlene Poulin, Ali Clift, Jodi Keene, Gregg Wood, Sierra Kuun, Nancy Martin (MMA)

Absent: Travis Peaslee, Andy Begin

Call to Order: President Terry Tucker called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m.

Determination of a Quorum: It was determined there was a quorum to conduct the meeting.

Approval of Minutes: Terry Tucker reported on the minutes for February 25, 2025

Motion made by Emily Cole-Prescott, seconded by Rob Pontau, all approved the February 25, 2025. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report: Jeff McBurnie, submitted a verbal report.

Jeff compared current status to where MEWEA was at this time last year, and the group is \$500 ahead. There is just under \$60,000 in checking, in February we had \$70,000. MEWEA's CD is just over \$21,000 for a net sum of \$81,000. The biggest expenses in March were contributions to JETCC and a bill from the auditors. Other expenses included payment to Maine Water Utilities for services, Blackfly Media, Legislative Breakfast, Opts Challenge, and MMA admin cost.

A brief discussion regarding Opts Challenges expenses was held. What's been paid so far has been budgeted. There is an expectation of fund raising and they do a good job at that. Theresa Tucker reported that they've received two joint sponsors for a total of \$5,000.

Motion made by Emily Cole-Prescott, seconded by Andre Brousseau, all approved the Treasurer's report. Motion carried.

Old Business

None

Representative Reports

DEP Report: Gregg Wood reported the following:

The DEP is in final negotiations with the EPA to take over 316b portion of the Clean Water Act, which is clean water intake. The rules have been written and EPA has approved it. They are

working through some final delegation program details and hope to have them completed in another month. They hope to make the delegation program whole again.

Gregg reported that he is on his third appeal of the MS4 Permit modification and will get that out Wednesday, April 26th for the 20-day comment period. Permits will most likely not be approved until the rule making goes through. Approximately twenty-five permits are being held up.

Gregg stated that EPA compliance inspectors are making their way back up to Maine and may accompany DEP Compliance inspectors. A brief discussion on supporting SSO Reports To DEP vs. EPA. EPA has oversight of the program. However, it was delegated to DEP, he recommended reports be sent to the DEP and refer EPA to the DEP.

JETCC-NEIWPC Report: Peter Zaykoski reported the following:

Upcoming, a class on Chemical Feed Pumps in Biddeford on April 29 and then a series of collection systems classes that will be offered the week of May 19. On Tuesday, the MEWEA Collection System Committee is kicking off the first class in its series, focused on Cleaning and Jetting at EJP in Gardiner. On Wednesday and Thursday, a series of Fall Protection and Air Quality Workshops will be held in several locations across the state.

The Management Candidate School Class of 2025 continues at the Bangor Water District. Currently there are 19 participants in the program. The next MCS class may be held in Portland.

The 2025 North Country Convention was held on April 2-3, 2025 at Northern Maine Community College. There were 25 vendor booths with more than 50 vendor representatives. And more than 100 regular attendees. Peter thanked those from the EC who made the trip and contributed to the event.

Jon Helstrom, one of the MEWEA representatives on the Committee and the current Chair, is terming out in May of this year. The Committee elected Yarrisa Ortiz-Vidal to become the next Chair and Dustin Price as the Vice-Chair. *The committee is seeking support from the EC to fill Jon's position.* Peter stated that the committee had two recommendations, Dan Marks (Falmouth) and Nick Textor (Bangor), both have expressed interest in joining the committee. Amanda Smith provided a review of Nick's background and former work experience and stated that she had no doubt he would be a good addition to JETCC. Amanda Smith also said that no one can hold a candle to the amount of work that Dan Marks accomplishes. Dan Marks stated that he was willing to jump in if there was value, however, he believes with there is a lot of value bringing Nick into the fold. Theresa Tucker agreed that Nick would be a good candidate. Rob Pontau stated that Nick is new to the Ops team and is an invaluable member who has made a huge difference.

Motion made by Phil Tucker, seconded by Andre Brousseau, all approved Nick Textor to MEWEA's representative on the JETCC Committee. Motion carried.

NEXT MEETING/OTHER IMPORTANT DATES/DEADLINES: The next JETCC meeting is scheduled for June 26, 2025 tentatively in Rockland.

NEBRA Update: Phil Tucker reported:

Federally we still have the Circular Exemptions Legislation and the Wipe's Act. Both have a lot of support. H.R.2766 formerly known as the Special Districts Grants Accessibility Act made it through the House with overwhelming support last year, however, Senator Rand Paul blocked it in the last minute. It's been resubmitted this year under the new title: Special Districts Fairness & Accessibility Act, sponsored by Texas Republican Rep. Pat Fallon and Colorado Democrat Rep. Brittany Pettersen. Phil encouraged members to reach out to Representatives Golden, Pingree, as well as Senators King & Collins.

Locally, a lot of the bills MEWEA was watching on other states have died off. The newest bill in Maine is L.D. 1604, (An Act to Protect Groundwater and Surface Water from PFAS from Landfill Leachate) essentially, if you are taking in landfill leachate in a treatment facility, you must meet the guidelines for water quality. Since we don't have a treatment process for leachate, you would need to put it back on your pre-treatment program and get them to treat for PFAS before it comes to your facility. Or simply not accept it because we are not allowed to accept waste that would violate our permit.

Phil provided brief updates on bills pending in NH, VT,

NEWEA State Director: Andre Brousseau reported the following:

NEWEA is holding their Spring Conference on May 11 – 14, 2025 which lands on Mother's Day. The Executive Committee meeting will be postponed. The focus will be on supporting our Opts Challenge team, it's a showcase event that is being held in our home state of Maine. Andre encourages all in attendance to stop by the events and wish them luck.

NEWEA Operator for Maine Award and the Peloquin Award are coming up and will need to be discussed. Andre will reach out to Paula and ask for a list of potential nominees that can be forwarded to the group for consideration.

NEWEA ASA meeting date to be determined.

Andre, Terry, and Emily attended the DC Fly in on April 8 & 9th. They met with Pingree and attended the WEF's GAC meeting in DC. Addison from Oklahoma met with them in Pingree's office, they discussed the following talking points:

- State revolving funding and CDS funding remain available; Pingree's office released the statement that CDS deadline is April 25th
- PFAS circle of liability / looking for the best technology for PFAS destruction
- The need to keep municipal bonds tax exempt. Adding tax status could become very costly for municipalities
- Keep worker protection, expressed that it is important the OSHA stay
- Support for the Wipe's Act. Currently its 1092 and H.R. 2269

Terry Tucker reported she received a request for MEWEA's support for a Maine nominee for NEWEA's Safety Award. Gregg & Phil are both on the award's committee and will sit in on the meeting.

MMA Report: Nancy Martin reported the following:

Melissa White, Assistant Director, Educational Services & Conventions (MMA) will act liaison while Chelsea Carll is on maternity leave. The announcement for the Baseball Night at Hadlock

Field on June 21st was sent to all members. The Call for Abstracts for the conference was sent to 383 people on 3/12/25 and 4/11/25. Nancy agreed to Charlene's request to send additional blast for the Call for Abstracts on a weekly basis.

Council Directors & Committee Reports

Outreach Council: Phil Tucker, Director, reported the following:

Communications: Terry Tucker reported the following:

Nickie leaving has set up back a bit on the electronic newsletter and other planned items. Terry asked the Board's thoughts on creating their own MEWEA Mailchimp account and Bryanna Denis could create our own announcements. We could also send out more messages than allowed in MMA's contract. It costs \$45 per month for a Mailchimp account with up to 1,500 contacts.

Motion made by Phil Tucker, seconded by Paula Drouin, all approved create a MEWEA Mailchimp Account. Motion carried.

Government Affairs: Amanda Smith & Dan Marks reported:

They held a Government Affairs meeting yesterday and are tracking several bills. Last week Dan, Brian, and Melody provided testimony on LD 25 An Act to Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue to Fund Wastewater Treatment Facility Planning and Construction of Infrastructure Projects. To drum up more support, later today he, Brian and Ivey are talking Friends of Casco Bay.

L.D. 297 – reached out and asked for help carving a path for this. Discussed ways to gain support for L.D. 297. Amanda forwarded him a draft of Bangor's testimony on L.D. 297, we may want to use this as a template to send to membership so they can send in their support.

Emily is going to lead the charge on several housing bills that will impact MEWEA.

L.D. 1604 was created last week, it talks about monitoring treatment for landfill leachate. The bill is dubious in a couple of ways. Tim Wade will draft a testimony for this.

Membership: Phil Tucker reported the following:

He and Jen Nicholson receive monthly membership reports. Currently MEWEA has 705 members in the database and 165 of those have unpaid dues. He will meet with Jenn and bring a proposal to Executive Board...create a Champions Group with a member from each county to recruit new members.

Public Relations: Phil Tucker reported the following:

They continue to work with Black Fly Media the big push is for a story on the pilot studies (PFAS & Reduction of Biosolids) happening in Maine. And Climate Change/Climate Adaptation/Storm

Preparedness. Alex Buechner reminded the group that today is the last day to vote on the contest.

NEWEA has three awards that fall under Communications Counsel:

- 1.) Youth Educator Award, Maine has received this two out of the last three years.
- 2.) Paul Keough Award – Augusta received this award last year.
- 3.) DE&I Leadership Award

If you have any folks in mind for these awards, please submit them on NEWEA's website.

Dan Marks announced that USM is holding the Southern Maine Children's Water Festival for school kids on May 16th, and they are looking for companies to participate. He will send the info around to the group asking for volunteers. No exhibitors cost. Stacy & Phil agreed to man a booth.

Personnel Advancement Council: Stacey Thompson, Director reported the following:

- Charlene Poulin asks that MMA send out the Request for Abstracts on a weekly basis.
- Convention contract for 2026 Sunday River has been signed.
- Ski Day was a successful event. Attendance was down.
- Awards, nomination forms will be sent next week.

Young Professionals: Sierra Kuun

Personnel Advancement:

Treatment Systems Operations Council: Paula Drouin, Director reported the following:

- Treatment Plant Operators held their last meeting in March.
- They have a full team and two alternatives for the Ops Challenge. They continue promote peer-to-peer training which allows operators to train at other facilities to learn specific tasks and earn free hours.
- Working on their training abstract for the fall conference; they are hoping to do a joint presentation with DEP.

Collection Systems: met March 22nd, nothing to report.

Laboratory: The committee has been inactive for many years; they held their first meeting last month. Phyllis Arnold Rand and Alana Dougherty from PWD are co-chairs and they held an amazing meeting. David Dane & two operators joined the meeting and asked many questions; they had a great conversation. Peter Zaykoski stated that Phyllis was instrumental in helping him conceptualize the lab track at North Country and they thanked the lab committee in the program.

Pretreatment: scheduled to meet on May 8th. No report.

Residuals: Andre Brousseau reported the following:

Stormwater: met last month and asked if there was space for (8 – 10 people) them to meet at the Fall Conference? Stacy reports that there will be a room available...Paula will follow up with Justin with date and time. They are collaborating with wet weather groups. New England Environmental Finance Center (NEEFC) put out a few new publications: Save the Bay, Bay-Friendly Living guidebook and Property Owner Guide to Managing Storm Water.

Officer's Reports

President Report: Terry Tucker reported the following:

MMA's 89th Convention will be held October 8th & 9th at Cross Insurance Center, Bangor and they've asked MEWEA to hold a 75-minute session. She needs to provide a notice of intent by May 16th and the session content is due May 30th. Jeff McBurnie, Amanda Smith, and Alex Brousseau volunteered to assist during the session. Emily Prescott volunteered to be backup. Theresa stated she would send a notice of intent to Peter Osborn.

The following items were discussed: Terry and the group discussed the need and challenges using MMA's login process. The administrative Guide and upcoming expiring terms.

President-Elect Report: Rob Pontau reported the following:

Rob expressed concern with the process for donation/sponsoring the Opts Challenge. Is there a simpler option...Venmo, Square? Terry will reach out to Peter Osborn and ask about options for simplifying the process.

Vice President Report: Amanda Smith, no report

Immediate Past President Report: Emily Cole-Prescott

The Nominating Committee meets April 28th at 9:00 a.m.
Emily thanked Andre for his work on the Fly In.

Other New Business:

No new business

Adjournment

Motion made by Rob Pontau, seconded by Amanda Smith, all approved to adjourn the meeting at 10:31 a.m.