

BOSTON GROUNDWATER TRUST (BGwT)  
BOARD MEETING  
January 29, 2009

The Board of Trustees of the Boston Groundwater Trust held its meeting in the Conference Room of the Azure Restaurant, located in the Lenox Hotel. The Executive Director posted a meeting notice at City Hall in accordance with provision of the Commonwealth's Open Meeting Law. Mr. Mitchell called the meeting to order at 4:02 pm. The following trustees were present, and the Chairman declared that there was a quorum:

Mr. Gary Saunders, Boston Back Bay Association  
Mr. Tim Mitchell, Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay  
Mr. Peter Sherin, Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce  
Mr. Galen Gilbert, Fenway Community Development Corporation (CDC)  
Mr. Jim Hunt, Mayor's Office  
Mr. Aaron Michlewitz, North End Waterfront Neighborhood Council  
Ms. Nancy Grillk, Mayor's office  
Ms. Molly Sherden, Beacon Hill Civic Association  
Mr. Bill Linehan, City Council District 2  
Mr. Peter Shilland, Ellis Neighborhood Association

Also present:

Elliott Laffer, BGwT Executive Director; Christian Simonelli, BGwT Technical Coordinator; Professor James Lambrechts, Wentworth Institute of Technology; Anne M. Pistorio, North End Water Front Residents Association (NEWRA) Groundwater Working Group; Paul Nelson, Resident North End: Fulton Street; Mr. Gordon Richardson, City-wide Groundwater Emergency Task Force (GET); Meg Mainzer-Cohen, President of Back Bay Association; Ms. Sigrid Haaland, Boston University

**1. Adoption of the minutes of the November 20, 2008 Meeting**

Minutes were distributed to board members for review. Discussion followed.

Mr. Hunt, Trustee, moved to adopt the minutes. Ms. Sherden, Trustee, seconded the motion.

**Voted:** To accept the minutes of the November 20, 2008 meeting.

**2. New Trustee Introductions**

Mr. Shilland, Trustee, introduced himself to the board. He currently works for Camp Dresser McKee and represents the Ellis Neighborhood Association. Discussion followed.

Mr. Linehan, Trustee, introduced himself to the board. He is a City Councilor for District 2 and was elected in 2007. He also has served as the Director of Operations for the City of Boston's Parks Dept. and most recently as the Special Assistant to the Chief Operating Officer of the City of Boston for the past six years. Discussion followed.

**3. Neighborhood Focus: Back Bay**

Mr. Mitchell, Trustee, and Mr. Simonelli reviewed the current dynamics of the Back Bay. Topics reviewed were pile cut-off elevations, assessed value of the buildings in the area, deep infrastructure, observation well levels and coverage, and recharge. Discussion followed.

**4. Finance Report**

Mr. Sherin, Trustee, reviewed the BGwT *Financial Report and Reconciliation Detail*. Discussion followed. Mr. Laffer noted that the funds are now 100% insured by the FDIC. Discussion followed.

**5. FY 2010 Budget**

Mr. Laffer reviewed the proposed FY 2010 budget. Discussion followed.

Mr. Hunt discussed the current state of the City's finances in these difficult economic times. Discussion followed. He noted that the BGwT has done an excellent job running an efficient and cost effective operation. Discussion followed.

Mr. Linehan noted that the city council is projecting a 7% cut across the board from FY09 funding. Discussion followed. Mr. Hunt suggested the BGwT run a FY 2010 budget scenario with a 7% reduction from FY09 that does not tap into reserves. Discussion followed.

Mr. Gilbert, Trustee, questioned the frequency with which wells are read and whether or not the BGwT should look at decreasing with which the wells are read. Mr. Laffer noted that reading the wells is the top priority of the BGwT and that should be the last thing the BGwT should look at trimming. Mr. Richardson agreed and noted that city-wide GET would be opposed to reading the well network less frequently. Discussion followed.

**6. FY 2009 SEP-IRA Contribution Approval**

Mr. Laffer reviewed the budget allowance in FY09 for the Trust's contribution to full time employees SEP-IRA accounts, and that it reflected a contribution of 3% of calendar year earnings as had been voted in the past. Discussion followed.

Mr. Hunt moved to adopt the contribution of 3% of earnings. Ms. Sherden seconded the motion.

**Voted:** To approve the annual 3% contribution to the Trust employees IRA-SEP.

**7. City-State Groundwater Working Group Update**

Mr. Laffer reviewed the topics covered at the latest meeting. Discussion followed. Refer to the attached *Executive Director's Report: January 29, 2009*, for a summary.

Mr. Gilbert questioned where the BGwT is on obtaining information for the various pumps located throughout the city, which are owned by the agencies represented at the working group. Discussion followed.

Mr. Laffer said he has asked and not yet received any information. He noted that he will continue to look at it and give some thought as to how the BGwT can obtain that information. Discussion followed.

**8. Executive Director's Report**

BGwT Executive Director Mr. Elliott Laffer distributed his report. Discussion followed. Refer to the attached *Executive Director's Report: January 29, 2009*, for a complete list of all activities.

**9. Technical Coordinator's Report**

BGwT Technical Coordinator Mr. Christian Simonelli presented his activities since last meeting. Discussion followed. Refer to the attached *Technical Coordinator's Well Monitoring Update BGwT Meeting: January 29, 2009* for a complete list of all activities.

**The meeting adjourned at 6:00p.m.**

**NEXT MEETING: March 26, 2009 @ 4:00 pm at the Lenox Hotel.**

**Notes submitted by Christian Simonelli, BGwT Technical Coordinator, on 1/30/09.**

Respectfully submitted,



Galen Gilbert, Secretary

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**  
**January 29, 2009**

1. **City-State Groundwater Working Group** – The Group met again last week. Attendance and, more importantly, participation continues to be excellent. Information from individual agencies is included in reports below.
2. **MBTA** – The MBTA has encountered an unexpected technical issue on the long term solution to low groundwater in the Back Bay Station area in the South End. The need to agree on whether there is an appropriate location for a storage tank or whether they will need to use a pumped system instead of gravity feed has held up final contract signing for the engineer. This is expected to be resolved shortly, with a signing by the March board meeting.
3. **DCR** – DCR has completed permitting issues for the interim recharge system connection from the west pump station at the Storrow Drive Tunnel. Construction on the main project is proceeding ahead of schedule, and completion of the connection is expected in the Spring. There will probably be a ceremony to commemorate the beginning of the recharge.
4. **BWSC** – BWSC expects to have divers conducting the repairs to leaks on Commercial Street in the North End and Beacon Street in Back Bay in March. Repairs to a leaking sewer line in Blagdon Street behind the Boston Public Library are more complex, but they are expected to be completed within about six months. BWSC will be repairing leaking sewer lines in several locations in Back Bay and the Flat of Beacon Hill in the next year; repairs will include the installation of recharge systems.
5. **MTA** – The MTA has completed the repairs to three manholes along and above the Central Artery in the North End. Within two months, they expect to complete repairs to a drain line from the Turnpike near Clarendon Street. They have inspected their drains in the Prudential Tunnel area and have found no signs of leakage.
6. **MWRA** – Construction has begun on their project to replace their sewer system in East Boston. As part of this work, they will deactivate and fill the sewer along Porter Street that is in the area of consistently very low readings; the pipe should be filled before the end of 2009.
7. **GCOD** – Compliance with GCOD remains excellent. Although applications to the Board of Appeals seem to have dropped because of the slowing economy, there continue to be several recharge systems approved under GCOD almost every hearing session.
8. **Research Projects** – Jim Lambrechts is soon to provide a final draft of the report on the project to develop an alternative lower cost means of overcoming piling damage. Unfortunately, the project to develop a means to remotely sense pile cutoff elevations has made little headway; what had looked promising turned out to be a false positive. Finally, an undergraduate student group at Tufts, under the guidance of Prof. Rich Vogel, will be doing a project to try to demonstrate if there is yet detectable impact from recharge systems installed under GCOD. We'll be providing guidance and information, but there will be no financial cost to the Trust. If the data is encouraging, we may be able to pursue a more detailed study conducted by Professor Vogel as a consultant, reducing costs that would be incurred if this were sponsored research through the university.
9. **Website** – The website was down for about a day and a half because of a registration snafu that has since been resolved. Other than that, traffic has been picking up since the end of the holiday season.
10. **Data Loggers** – After discussion with our Technical Advisory Committee, we will be removing the loggers from the wells in the North End and redeploying several to wells in the Fenway, South End, and Bay Village to aid in our monitoring of conditions in those neighborhoods. The change will take place when accessibility to the wells improves after some snow melt.

**TECHNICAL COORDINATOR'S  
WELL MONITORING UPDATE  
BGwT Meeting: January 29, 2009**

NEW PART-TIMER / WELL MONITORING

- Katrina Brown, from Wentworth Institute of Technology, started on Wednesday January 20<sup>th</sup>, 2009 reading the BGwT network.
- Ms. Brown has had some difficulty in finding most of the wells as they are covered with snow. Therefore, this round of readings may not yield that much information.

LEVELOGGERS

- We continue to upload dataloggers at the following locations on a weekly basis:
  - 2 on and around Saint Charles St. and 2 on Cazenove Street
  - 5 on Beacon St., in the Berkeley to Clarendon St. block
  - 3 in the North End around Fulton and Commercial Streets
  - 5 wells installed along the Back Bay Station Railroad alignment
  - 1 adjacent to Trinity Church

ISD REASEARCH

- We continue to look for building permits and any underpinned buildings.
- The search engine server appears to have been updated and is now pulling information much faster.