

**BOSTON GROUNDWATER TRUST (BGwT)**  
**BOARD MEETING**  
**May 21<sup>st</sup>, 2015**

The Board of Trustees of the Boston Groundwater Trust held its meeting in the Patriot room of the Lenox Hotel. The Executive Director posted a meeting notice at Boston City Hall in accordance with provisions of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts' Open Meeting Law. Mr. Mitchell, co-chair, called the meeting to order at 4:08 pm. The following trustees were present:

Mr. Tim Mitchell, Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay  
Mr. Gary Saunders, Boston Back Bay Association  
Mr. Josh Zakim, City Council District 8  
Mr. Austin Blackmon, Chief of Environment, Energy, & Open Space, City of Boston  
Ms. Janine Commerford, Greater Boston Real Estate Board (GBREB)  
Mr. Greg Galer, the Boston Preservation Alliance  
Ms. Charlotte Moffat, Boston Conservation Commission

Also present:

Mr. Christian Simonelli, Executive Director; Mr. Anthony Gilardi, Chief of Staff to Trustee Blackmon; Ms. Mohona Siddique, Neighborhood Liaison at the Office of Boston City Councilor Josh Zakim

**1. Adoption of the minutes of the March 19<sup>th</sup>, 2015 Meeting**

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

Mr. Blackmon, Trustee, moved to adopt the minutes; Mr. Galer, Trustee, seconded the motion.

**Voted:** To accept the minutes of the March 19<sup>th</sup>, 2015 meeting.

**2. Financial Report**

In Mr. Hemenway's absence, Mr. Simonelli reviewed the BGwT's financial reports. Discussion followed.

**3. Adoption of the FY 2016 Budget**

Mr. Simonelli reviewed the proposed FY 2016 budget. Discussion followed. Ms. Commerford, Trustee, noted the cost for year-end accounting and inquired if the cost was typical of what other similar organizations paid. Mr. Galer noted that the rules for filing a 990 return changed a few years ago and not all accountants are licensed to process 990 returns. Discussion followed. The Board suggested that Mr. Simonelli obtain pricing for accounting services from other vendors and report back to them at the July meeting.

Mr. Galer moved to adopt the FY 2016 budget; Mr. Blackmon seconded the motion.

**Voted:** To adopt the FY 2016 budget.

**4. Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR) Feasibility Proposal**

Mr. Simonelli reviewed the GPR proposal submitted by Hager GeoScience, Inc. to determine wood pile elevations. Mr. Simonelli noted that this technology had been previously explored in 2009 with no definitive results. Discussion followed. Mr. Mitchell, co-chair, noted that the proposal did not include an example of identifying piles under a typical Rowhouse. Discussion followed. Ms. Commerford asked if the Trust's technical advisory committee had reviewed the proposal. Mr. Simonelli noted that he had sent the proposal to the committee and will review it with them at their next meeting in June. Discussion followed. Mr. Simonelli will follow-up with Hager GeoScience, Inc. and report back to the Board at the July meeting.

**5. Datalogger Quotes**

Mr. Simonelli reviewed the quotes that he and Mr. Shilland, Trustee obtained for the purchase of 20 dataloggers from In-Situ, Inc. Discussion followed. Mr. Simonelli noted that the current units purchased from Solinst, Inc. in 2012 have not performed well and recommended that the Trust purchase the In-Situ units. Discussion followed. Mr. Mitchell noted that having the loggers provides the Trust with an important tool to help understand groundwater trends. Discussion followed. Mr. Simonelli will follow-up with In-Situ, Inc. and report back to the Board at the July meeting.

**6. MBTA Groundwater Funds Transfer for Ellis Recharge**

Mr. Simonelli reviewed the memorandum sent by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Executive Office of Environmental Affairs requesting the release and finalization of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for the ongoing costs of the South End recharge in the Ellis neighborhood. Discussion followed. Mr. Simonelli noted that City-State working group co-chairs Trustee Blackmon and Dan Sieger of EEA facilitated drafting of the memorandum and the subsequent release of the MOU by MBTA. Discussion followed. Mr. Simonelli will follow-up with MBTA and report back to the Board at the July meeting.

**7. Executive Director's Report**

BGwT Executive Director Mr. Christian Simonelli distributed his report. Discussion followed. Trustee Blackmon referred to item 5 (MassDOT). Mr. Simonelli noted that he has been unable to reach the contact at MassDOT. Trustee Blackmon suggested Mr. Simonelli reach out to his office for assistance if additional attempts go unanswered. Refer to the attached *Executive Director's Report: May 21<sup>st</sup>, 2015* for a complete list of activities.


**8. Other Business**

Mr. Mitchell suggested the Trust develop a policy for buildings with cut-offs elevations higher than elevation 5' BCB. Discussion followed. Mr. Simonelli noted the he will compile a list of all the information the Trust has on known pile cutoffs and will report back to the Board at the July meeting.

**The meeting adjourned at 5:32 p.m.**

**NEXT MEETING: July 16<sup>th</sup>, 2015 @ 4:00 pm at the Lenox Hotel.**

Notes submitted by Christian Simonelli, BGwT Executive Director, on 5/22/15.



Approved – J. Commerford, Secretary

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**  
**May 21<sup>st</sup>, 2015**

1. **Readings & Surveying**– We wrapped up our first set of well readings for 2015 on May 5<sup>th</sup>. I hired a new part-time field engineer and we started a new set of readings on Thursday May, 7<sup>th</sup>.
2. **City-State Groundwater Working Group** – The Working Group met on April 23<sup>rd</sup>. Reports from individual agencies are described below.
3. **MBTA** – Approximately 52.2 gpm is being injected into recharge wells in the area. In addition to our manual monitoring we have 4 wells in the area with dataloggers recording a water level every 60 min. Levels in the Appleton & Tremont Street area are lower than what was projected. The T is looking into why levels are not higher and will report back to us.
4. **BWSC** – BWSC performed periodic checks and implemented electro scanning to investigate the cause of low groundwater levels near the corner of Commercial and Richmond Streets in the North End. Neither indicated anything significant. They will continue to investigate. Due the heavy Snow this past winter inspections were delayed on Clarendon St. in the South End by Gray St. BWSC will conduct video and dye tests to see if any points of infiltration are present and will report back to us. BWSC continues their investigation in Alley 430 and will be issuing a letter to all interested parties to provide an update on their efforts.
5. **MassDOT** – MassDOT was unable to get out and inspect the drainage line over on Huntington Ave. by the Prudential building due to weather. MassDOT will attempt to measure flow in pipe during dry weather using a new low flow device. Previous investigations in the line revealed some leakage in the ceiling of the Prudential tunnel. MassDOT has attempted to coordinate with the Simon property group but has been unsuccessful. MassDOT will continue to try to coordinate with them.
6. **DCR** – DCR indicated that both recharge pumps are performing as designed. DCR will coordinate with BWSC to inspect the Back Street recharge galleys and will update us on their condition.
7. **MWRA** – The MWRA has no major projects in the City of Boston at this time. We have been receiving reports as permits have been applied for dewatering. This is helpful to us if we see a sudden drop in an area that we cannot explain. This additional notification will be yet another piece to the puzzle in assisting us in identifying groundwater level trends.
8. **Veolia Energy** – Veolia is looking at 3 potential locations where steam discharge can be reintroduced as groundwater recharge. The BPL is one location they are focusing on. Veolia submitted data to DEP on discharge content and are waiting to hear back from DEP on where they stand. A handful of potential locations were selected and Veolia and they continue to look at the feasibility of these locations.
9. **Exeter St/Huntington Ave Area** – Although still low, levels in this area have rebounded significantly. A nearby underpinning project may have had an effect on levels in the nearby wells since last April. We have three dataloggers in the area and will keep these in place until the nearby underpinning work has been completed.
10. **GCOD** – We have entered into an MOU with ISD for approving projects that only trigger GCOD zoning. Once the proposed project plans are approved pursuant to Article 32 requirements, then the applicant will submit the BWSC approved plans and BWSC Article 32 letter to the ISD Plans Examiner and the Zoning Board of Appeal. Upon receipt of the letter and plan, the Boston Groundwater Trust will communicate any comments to the BWSC and the ZBA for consideration within 5 business days. Upon approval of the Zoning Appeal, the Board of Appeal shall file its written decision within two weeks of the hearing date, and upon expiration of the 20 day appeal period, ISD will issue the Conditional Use Permit.
11. **Porous Alley 543** –We continue to datalog (using instruments to record a water level every 60 mins.) six wells in the area and levels in these wells continue to be above post-porous alley installation levels. The City (as they committed) has vacuumed and inspected the Alley for the spring.

- 12. Meetings** – I presented the piling issue to the Goethe Institut (3/26) and the Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay (NABB) condominium management group (4/29). Both audiences were engaged and the presentations were well received. I attended the scoping session for the AC Hotel in the South End (4/29). I met with Trustee Blackmon and ISD Commissioner Christopher (3/31) to finalize the GCOD MOU language. I visited the Fairmont Copley Square Hotel (4/2) to investigate water in their basement. I visited the Copley Square Hotel (4/16) to observe their current underpinning project. I met with the stakeholders of the Boston Architectural College (BAC) (5/11) porous alley project. We reviewed the alley's current condition and discussed my role in an upcoming presentation (6/18) on the alley's performance. I visited the BPL (5/20) to inform the project manager about groundwater levels and the nearby observation well.
- 13. Website** – I added some new content to our website. The most recent items are posted under our "Newest" tab on our homepage. I've added two comment letters and my presentation to the NABB Condo Management Group. As always, I would appreciate any feedback you may have.