

BOSTON GROUNDWATER TRUST (BGwT)
BOARD MEETING
March 19th, 2015

The Board of Trustees of the Boston Groundwater Trust held its meeting in room #305 of the Boston Common Hotel & Conference Center. The Executive Director posted a meeting notice at City Hall in accordance with provisions of the Commonwealth's Open Meeting Law. Mr. Saunders, co-chair, called the meeting to order at 4:04 pm. The following trustees were present:

Mr. Gary Saunders, Boston Back Bay Association
Mr. Tim Mitchell, Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay
Mr. Peter Shilland, Ellis Neighborhood Association
Ms. Janine Commerford, Greater Boston Real Estate Board (GBREB)
Mr. Greg Galer, the Boston Preservation Alliance
Mr. John Hemenway, Beacon Hill Civic Association
Ms. Charlotte Moffat, Boston Conservation Commission
Ms. Lisa Soli, Fenway Community Development Corporation
Mr. Austin Blackmon, Chief of Environment, Energy, & Open Space, City of Boston

Also present:

Mr. Christian Simonelli, Executive Director; Ms. Van Du, Special Assistant/Sustainability Adviser at Department of Environment, Energy, & Open Space, City of Boston; Ms. Mohona Siddique, Neighborhood Liaison at the Office of Boston City Councilor Josh Zakim

1. **Adoption of the minutes of the January 15th, 2015 Meeting**

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

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

Voted: To accept the minutes of the January 15th, 2015 meeting.

2. **Financial Report**

Mr. Hemenway, Treasurer, reviewed the BGwT financial reports. Discussion followed. Mr. Simonelli noted that the Trust has received its annual contribution of \$25K from the Boston Water & Sewer Commission. Discussion followed.

3. **FY 2016 Preliminary Budget Discussion**

Mr. Simonelli and co-chairs Mr. Saunders and Mr. Mitchell reviewed the draft FY 2016 Budget. Discussion followed.

Mr. Simonelli will follow-up with the recommendations made by the Board and provide an update at the next Board meeting. The board will review the budget at that time, suggest any edits, and bring it to a vote at the May 14th Board meeting.

4. **Potential Research and Pilot Projects**

Mr. Simonelli described past research and pilot projects in which the Trust has invested. The Trustees recommended several potential research and/or pilot projects for consideration and possible future implementation. Discussion followed. Mr. Simonelli will research the Trustees' recommendations and report back to the Board.

5. **Groundwater Conservation Overlay District (GCOD) Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)**

Mr. Simonelli reviewed the draft GCOD MOU between the Trust, the Boston Inspectional Services Department (ISD), and the Boston Water and Sewer Commission (BWSC) with the Board. Discussion followed. Mr. Simonelli will meet with Trustee Blackmon and ISD Commissioner William Christopher to discuss the Board's suggested revisions. Mr. Simonelli will report back to the Board.

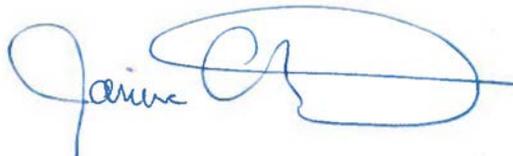
6. **Executive Director's Report**

BGwT Executive Director Mr. Christian Simonelli distributed his report. Discussion followed. Refer to the attached *Executive Director's Report: March 19th, 2015* for a complete list of activities.

The meeting adjourned at 5:54 p.m.

NEXT MEETING: May 14th, 2015 @ 4:00 pm at the Lenox Hotel.

Notes submitted by Christian Simonelli, BGwT Executive Director, on 3/20/15.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Christian Simonelli", is written over a large, light blue oval scribble.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT
March 19th, 2015

1. **Readings** – We restarted reading the well network this week. Due to this winter's snowfall record (108.6" and counting) it's been seven weeks since we last read wells. We're roughly halfway through this reading set and if the good weather holds we'll be finished by the beginning of April.
2. **City-State Groundwater Working Group** – The Working Group met on January 22nd. Reports from individual agencies are described below.
3. **MBTA** – The T along with their consultant GZA GeoEnvironmental adjusted the flowrates of the recharge systems in the Ellis Neighborhood area. Approximately 52.2 gpm is being injected into recharge wells in the area. In addition to our manual monitoring we have 2 wells in the area with dataloggers recording a water level every 60 min. Levels are up a bit and once we can get at the wells we hope that this upward trend continues.
4. **BWSC** – BWSC continues to investigate the cause of low groundwater levels near the corner of Commercial and Richmond Streets in the North End. No substantial infiltration was observed. They have used new robot technology to look at the lines in the area and are in the process of reviewing the video that was taken. On Blagden Street, point repairs were made at the corner of Blagden St. and Huntington Ave. They re-inspected the repairs made and the line in Blagden St. and no new infiltration points have been discovered. Inspections have started on Clarendon St. in the South End by Gray St. BWSC will conduct video and dye test to if any points of infiltration are present.
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 replaced one of the recharge pumps in November for failing to perform as designed. DCR also jetted (cleaned out) pipes that carry the water to the recharge galleys in Back Street. The pump controller and both recharge pumps are now operating as designed.
7. **MWRA** – The MWRA will be notifying us by email of permits that are submitted for dewatering. This is helpful to us if we see a sudden drop of groundwater levels in an area that we cannot explain. I instruct our well readers to make note of construction activities that may have potential negative effects on groundwater levels. However, this additional notification will be yet another piece to the puzzle in assisting us in identifying groundwater level trends. We have been receiving reports as permits have been applied.
8. **Veolia Energy** – Veolia Energy investigated the abnormally high temperatures in observation wells located on Blagden St. They discovered that the wells are approximately 10' away from their steam lines and the wells' close proximity to these lines results in abnormally high groundwater temperatures. Their steam piping infrastructure along Huntington Ave. is in good shape and is located above the groundwater table, and so does not have any effect on groundwater levels in that area. They are also investigating their line at the corner of Blagden and Exeter St. for a potential leak. I met with Veolia and discussed locations where steam discharge can be re-introduced as groundwater recharge. A handful of potential locations were selected and Veolia will report back to us on the feasibility of these locations.
9. **Exeter St/Huntington Ave Area** – Although still very 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** – Efforts are being made to streamline the GCOD process and potentially remove compliant projects that only trigger GCOD requirements because of substantial renovations from the Board of Appeals process. The special session for GCOD-only requests that was implemented by the Board of Appeals this past summer has reduced the wait for these projects by as much as two months and has worked very well. Elliott and I met with ISD & BWSC at the beginning of the month to discuss Elliott’s proposed GCOD MOU. It was a very productive meeting and we are working with ISD & BWSC on finalizing the language of the MOU.
- 11. Porous Alley 543** – We partnered in a demonstration project with Public Works and the Charles River Watershed Association in an effort to use the City’s alleys as a vehicle for capturing precipitation to raise local groundwater levels. So far the initial results look very promising. We have been datalogging (using instruments to record a water level every 60 mins.) six wells in the area since August 2013 and levels in these wells are up considerably. We’ll continue to datalog these wells to judge the performance of the Porous Alley.
- 12. Meetings** – I met with our Technical Advisory Committee and we reviewed the latest readings and logger data. I met with directors from the Goethe Institut at 170 Beacon Street to discuss the piling issue and the potential cost associated with underpinning.
- 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 a link to an interactive map that illustrates the history of Boston filling, article in the Boston Courant, video detailing the piling issue in the City, updated recharge map, and photos from Elliott’s party. As always, I would appreciate any feedback you may have.