NORTH CHELMSFORD WATER DISTRICT

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The Monthly Meeting of the Board of Water Commissioners ("Board") of the North Chelmsford Water District ("District") was held on October 5, 2026, at the District's office. The meeting was convened at 4:00 PM with Commissioners Bruce Clark, David Irvine and Cynthia Leczynski, Superintendent Aurora Bas, Treasurer/Office Manager Daysha Morell, and Office Assistant/Clerk Elsa Ramos.

Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

- The Board reviewed the minutes from the September 14, 2026, regular meeting and the September 14, 2026, special meeting.
- Commissioner Clark made a motion to approve the regular meeting minutes. Vote was unanimously approved.
- Commissioner Clark made a separate motion to approve the special meeting minutes, which included the election of Cynthia Leczynski to fill a vacant term. Vote was unanimously approved.

Laura Stone, Managing Director, from CBIZ called in to review the Audit & Financial Statements.

Presentation of Annual Financial Statements and Audit Results

- Ms. Stone presented the District's annual financial statements and reviewed the results of the audit. She thanked the District's staff for their cooperation and timely submission of records, noting that the audit was completed efficiently and the financial statements were issued before September.
- Ms. Stone reported an unmodified (clean) audit opinion, with no material issues, reportable findings, material weaknesses, or significant deficiencies identified.

Financial statement overview:

- Ms. Stone reviewed the independent auditor's report, management's discussion and analysis, statement of net position, statement of revenues, expenses, and changes in net position, and fiduciary financial statements.

  GASB Statement No. 103:
  The implementation of the new governmental accounting standard resulted in changes to certain headings, presentation, and terminology. Ms. Stone explained that these changes did not materially affect the District's financial position or bottom-line results.
  Notes to the financial statements:
  Note 10, concerning commitments and contingencies, was reviewed, particularly the disclosure of the PFAS class-action litigation settlements. Ms. Stone explained that additional information regarding settlement payments and potential future claims was available compared with the prior year. Claims that have not yet been approved were disclosed but not recorded as receivables.

Pension liability:
The District's proportionate share of the Middlesex County retirement system liability was reviewed, along with the related required supplementary information and historical trend schedules.
Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB):
The District's OPEB trust held approximately $792,000 at year-end. The total OPEB liability was approximately $1.1 million, resulting in a net liability of approximately $348,000. The District's funded ratio increased from approximately 44% in the prior year to 69.45%, reflecting additional contributions and investment earnings.
Combining and budgetary schedules: Ms. Stone reviewed the schedules detailing the District's operating activities, debt service, capital projects, long-term liabilities, capital assets, and budgeted versus actual expenditures.
Internal controls: Ms. Stone confirmed that no matters requiring written reporting were identified.

PFAS Settlement Discussion

- Commissioner Leczynski asked whether there was an anticipated timeline for receiving the remaining PFAS settlement funds.
- Ms. Stone explained that payments depend on the settlement phases, claim eligibility, approval processes, and the terms established by the participating companies. Certain settlement phases extend through 2030, although the District's eligibility for future phases remains uncertain.
- Approximately $300,000 in additional payments was estimated to remain from the District's 3M Phase One settlement, subject to applicable fees and final payment calculations. Ms. Stone anticipated that these funds could be received over the next one to two years, although no specific payment date could be guaranteed.
- Additional claims, including special-needs claims and other potential settlement phases, remain subject to approval and further information from the District's legal counsel.
- The Board thanked Ms. Stone for the presentation. No further questions were raised.

Submission of Financial Statements to the Department of Revenue

- District staff confirmed that the completed financial statements had been submitted to the Massachusetts Department of Revenue (DOR).
- The District's DOR representative acknowledged receipt and indicated that several submissions were ahead of the District's in the review queue. She will contact the District if additional information or clarification is required.

Engineering and Legal Updates

- No significant updates or outstanding matters requiring Board action were reported by the engineering or legal representatives.

Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) Regulations

- The Board discussed the draft ADU-related document and proposed revisions. Ms. Bas explained that the draft was not yet final because the state's regulatory process and public comment period concerning ADUs remained ongoing.

- There was particular concern about potential regulations affecting public water systems' authority to determine connection requirements. The District is awaiting further clarification before finalizing its local provisions.

- The discussion also addressed potential requirements involving special permits, floodplain and aquifer protection overlays, and the need for clear, objective, and nondiscretionary criteria.

Ms. Bas will continue monitoring state developments and revise the draft as necessary once the regulations are finalized.

Pilot Study Update

- Pilot study is progressing satisfactorily.
- Ms. Bas discussed the need to construct a small protective enclosure for an exterior pump to prevent freezing during winter operations.
- Ms. Bas will continue to review results and address operational needs as they arise.

Lead and Copper Sampling Pilot Program

- Ms. Bas reported that the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) had offered the District an opportunity to participate in a free lead and copper pilot program.

- The program is intended to help water systems prepare for the Lead and Copper Rule Revisions requirements expected to take effect in November 2027.

- The District was accepted into the initial phase of the program. Ms. Bas and the program representative began coordinating lead and copper sampling at schools, including the collection of samples from school taps, together with related outreach and education.

- The District currently has approximately seven schools and early education childcare facilities subject to the relevant requirements. Ms. Bas discussed existing sampling obligations and anticipated changes that may require sampling at additional facilities.

- The Board acknowledged the value of participating in the program to support compliance with future regulations.

Hydrant Flushing and System Maintenance

- Ms. Bas reported that the annual hydrant-flushing program was underway following the end of the seasonal water-use restrictions.

- Ms. Bas has been using the Distric's Facebook page/website to provide residents with street-specific flushing schedules, in addition to posting signs in affected areas.

- Ms. Bas also reported that a hydrant on Wotton Street was struck by a vehicle the previous Friday. The hydrant was repaired, and additional flushing was performed to address discolored water resulting from the disturbance. The incident affected an area connected to the 12-inch water main extending toward Williamsburg Condos.

- Ms. Bas will investigate whether nearby surveillance cameras may help identify the vehicle responsible for the damage.

Water Meter Inspections and Replacement Program

- Ms. Bas reported continued efforts to contact customers identified through continuous-consumption reports to alert them to possible leaks and help prevent unexpectedly high water bills.
- Ms. Bas has also begun reviewing accounts showing no recorded water usage. This work has identified several malfunctioning meters, including compound meters with defective components that may have resulted in unrecorded consumption.
- Ms. Bas explained that compound meters were designed to measure both low and high water flows but can fail to record all usage when one component stops functioning.
- The District intends to phase out these older meters and replace them with ultrasonic meters. The replacement program is expected to improve measurement accuracy, reduce unaccounted-for water, recover lost revenue, and improve the accuracy for the Annual Statistics Report.
- Ms. Bas also reported addressing meter-tampering incidents.
- The Board acknowledged the importance of these efforts and the benefits of improved meter technology.

PFAS Litigation Update

- Ms. Bas advised that the attorneys handling the class action lawsuit decided to withdraw that specific case.
- No further action by the District is required at this time.

Pickwick Estates Water Damage and Filtration Request

- The Board discussed the water damage incident at Pickwick Estates (the damage was within the internal plumbing system) and a request from the building's Board of Trustees for the District to install a water filtration system.
- The building's representatives raised concerns that the District's water quality may have contributed to plumbing corrosion. Ms. Bas explained that corrosion can have multiple causes, including building plumbing conditions and electrical grounding issues, and noted that no similar complaints had been received from other customers in the surrounding area.
- Ms. Bas also observed that available water-consumption records did not show a significant usage spike corresponding to the reported flooding, which she shared with the engineer investigating the incident.
- The Board discussed the importance of obtaining further information from the Building Department and Fire Department regarding the investigation and the work performed at the property.
- Ms. Bas will contact the Building Inspector to clarify what occurred.
- No decision was made to install a filtration system.

District Operations, Customer Service, and Technology

- Outreach to customers identified through continuous-consumption reports has helped residents identify potential leaks and better understand their water usage. Ms. Bas intends
- to continue improving customer access to consumption information.
- Ms. Bas reiterated the goal of implementing My360, which would allow customers to monitor their own water usage and potentially receive alerts when consumption exceeds a threshold they establish. The portal is expected to support conservation, early leak detection, and more informed customer decisions.
- Repairs to broken curb boxes have continued in preparation for winter. These components allow the District to shut off water service from outside the property when necessary, including during emergencies and freeze-related incidents.
- Ms. Bas discussed the District's digital mapping system, which incorporates hydrant locations, water-system infrastructure, maintenance records, photographs, and other operational information. Field staff can access these resources while working in the system.
- The mapping system has improved the ability to locate valves and hydrants, plan flushing operations, document equipment conditions, and respond to water-main breaks. Ms. Bas intends to link additional records directly to individual properties and incorporate further infrastructure layers.
- The Board recognized the value of these improvements and commended staff for their work modernizing District operations.

Recognition of District Staff

- Commissioner Irvine acknowledged the staff's commitment to regulatory compliance, operational improvements, customer service, and modernization of the District's infrastructure and recordkeeping systems.

Adjournment

Commissioner Clark made a motion to adjourn at 4:55 PM. The vote was unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Elsa Ramos, Clerk