Auburn Sewerage District
Role and Function of Trustees

By Superintendent, John Storer

The Auburn Sewerage District is a quasi-municipal utility providing sewer collection services to over 5,300 residential, commercial, and industrial customers located within the City of Auburn. We do not provide any treatment of the sanitary waste. All waste is conveyed to the Lewiston-Auburn Water Pollution Control Authority (LAWPCA) located on the banks of the Androscoggin River in Lewiston. LAWPCA is the licensed authority that treats all public sanitary waste generated in Lewiston and Auburn.

The Auburn Sewerage District was formally organized by a Charter granted by the Maine Legislature in 1919. The fiscal and operational decisions of the District are made by a seven-member Board of Trustees that is appointed by the Mayor of the City of Auburn and the Auburn City Council. The City Council appoints 6 of the Trustees on staggered 4-year terms. The Mayor is allocated the 7th position, but historically the Mayor has appointed a designated representative (usually a current City Councilor) to provide a direct liaison back to the City Council. The Trustee meetings are open to the public and are tentatively scheduled to take place at 4:00 PM every third Tuesday of the month at the District office building at 268 Court Street.

The Sewerage District employees a full-time Superintendent to implement and oversee the day-to-day business operations of the District. To collect, handle and transport the sewerage waste generated within the City of Auburn, the Sewer District operates and maintains 23 wastewater pump stations, over 2,000 manholes, and 135 miles of pipe ranging from 8-inches to 54-inches in diameter. The projected 2014 Budget is expected to be $3.96 million.

Serving as the Superintendent, it is helpful to have Board members with diverse and varying backgrounds. I believe it is beneficial to have a few long-standing members, such that there is continuity and institutional knowledge in regards to some long-standing issues.

Although there is nothing specifically listed in the original District Charter, historical practice has tried to accommodate a representative from each of the 5 City Wards.

In my opinion, any citizen of Auburn could serve effectively as a Trustee. The person would just need to devote sufficient time and attention to reviewing monthly reports and data. Related skills as a private business owner, engineer, chemist, fire service, accounting, legal, financial, etc. might provide some valued skills to diversify the Trustee make-up.