



**Stamford Water Pollution Control Authority Board Meeting**

**Monday, April 17, 2023**

**5:30 p.m.**

**Meeting held via teleconference**

**Full Meeting Minutes**

**Attendees**

|                         |  |
|-------------------------|--|
| Ed Kelly                | Chairman, WPCA Board Member                    |
| Merritt Nesin           | WPCA Board Member/Technical Committee Chair    |
| Matthew Quinones        | WPCA Board Member/ Director of Operations      |
| Sandra Dennies          | WPCA Board Member / Director of Administration |
| Amiel Goldberg (Absent) | WPCA Board Member/Board of Reps                |
| J.R. McMullen (Absent)  | WPCA Board Member/Board of Finance             |
| Robert Barocas          | WPCA Board Member/Finance Committee Chair      |
| Steven Bagwin           | WPCA Board Member/Workforce Development Chair  |
| William Brink           | Executive Director, WPCA                       |
| Rhudean Bull            | Administration Manager, WPCA                   |
| Ann Brown               | Supervising Engineer, WPCA                     |
| Vernessa DeCausey       | Financial Manager, WPCA                        |
| Mark Turndahl           | Financial Manager, WPCA                        |
| Crystal Blair           | Administrative Account Assistant, WPCA         |
| Abigail Logrono         | Administrative Account Assistant, WPCA         |
| Robert Pudelka          | Plant Supervisor                               |
| Steve Pietrzyk          | Collections System Supervisor                  |
| David Yanik             | City Comptroller                               |
| William Ward            | Collection Attorney (Pilicy Ryan & Ward, P.C.) |
| James Mulhall           | Collection Attorney (Pilicy Ryan & Ward, P.C.) |
| Lynda Roca              | CompUtil                                       |
| Frank Salem             | Member of the Public                           |

**Call to Order, Pledge and Roll Call**

E. Kelly, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 5:31 pm with roll call; there was no pledge of allegiance. A quorum was present seven (6 Board Members).

**Public Participation**

No members of the public were present

**Minutes Approval of the Full Board Meeting of March 20, 2023**

S. Bagwin motion to approve the March 20, 2023 minutes; seconded by R. Barocas. There was no further discussion.

**Vote 6-0-0**

**Note:**

E. Kelly made a motion to take agenda item 8 out of order; seconded by S. Dennies. There was no further discussion. **Vote 6-0-0**

**Update FY 2022 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report**

D. Yanik reported an overview of WPCA's financials for the year ending June 30, 2022, a comparative financial statement, that included the prior year's information. He explained that the WPCA is an Enterprise fund of the City of Stamford, and that the Auditors' opinion was clean; that there were no exceptions or other issues cited in the report. He went on to say that he wanted to take the opportunity to thank M. Turndahl, WPCA Financial Manager,

for all his hard work, saying that he was instrumental in helping them to meet the deadline, but especially with preparing the MD&A that holds wealth of information.

D. Yanik briefly touched on some highlights from the first page of the MD&A. He said that the WPCA had a healthy increase in their net position, going from 105.7 to 111.5 and the increase was based on a modest increase in revenue and a slight increase in operating expenses. He stated that this feat was accredited to WPCA's management managing accordingly. He briefly reported on the balance sheet, the bond proceed balance and available funds. He reviewed the comparative statement and reported on the A/R side, stating that collections are still very strong. He stated that the WPCA has come a long way turning the financials around, which again, is a tribute to management ability to focus on collections and making sure the billing process went smoothly. He reported on the WPCA Revenues, mentioning operational revenues and expenditures and the change in net position. He pointed out the financial history over time and how the WPCA operated and grew the change in their net position over the last 10 years, on a very healthy basis, as well as building the cash position. He ended with the pension and OPEB funding percentages saying both were in a good position. He said that overall that WPCA is in a great financial position and hopes that it will continue for the years ahead. He also remarked that the transition from M. Turndahl to V. DeCausey as Financial Manager will be smooth.

### **Administrative/Budget Report**

R. Bull reported the following:

- Staffing vacancies
- IUOE positions
- There were three (3) Injuries reported
- IUOE contract settlement
- No vehicle accidents
- No positive Covid cases
- City's Oracle Cloud Financials system update
- Budget breakdown review
- Electrical budget review

### **Sub-Committee Reports**

#### **Finance Committee**

R. Barocas stated that the Finance Committee was held before the Board meeting and the following occurred:

- Received an in-depth review of the FY'22 Annual Financial Statement
- Financial update from V. DeCausey, new Finance Manager
- Assessment of charging fees to property owners on sewer streets not connected to the sanitary sewer
- Introduced potential Board Member Frank Salem

#### **Technical Committee**

M. Nesin reported the committee meeting was held on Wednesday, April 12, 2023, and the following was discussed:

- Future of the Plant and what to do with the sludge
- Site visit to Camden County Municipal Utilities Authority
- Plant operations
- Sludge Dryer service contract with Synagro expiring March 3, 2024

#### **Workforce Development Committee**

S. Bagwin reported there was a committee meeting held on Wednesday, April 12, 2023. But that R. Bull had reported on what would have been discussed at the meeting in her admin report.

### **Financial Update**

#### **CompUtil Report**

L. Roca reported that the April bills were sent out in the mail and that money is coming in. She reported that just over \$11 million dollars was billed for the April billing. She stated that things are going well, and phone calls are coming in along with payments. She said that there are 19,810 active accounts with 630 liens and that out of the twenty-five (25) times billed, twenty (20) bills are over 99% with the April bill being just under 11% because this is the first week of the cycle. She said that Tuesday should be a big day because it's the biggest lockbox day of the week. She said that closings are increasing again, which is surprising because of the high interest rates. She concluded saying the overall collection rate is at 96% and that the mail seems to be getting returned in error but

that once the returned mail is received, customers are contacted and the bill is sent back out or emailed to the customers right away.

### **Receivables & Arrears**

M. Turndahl reported for the month of March

- \$2.420 million received verses \$2.216 million previous year sewer use fees
- Oldest receivables by year was paid down by \$12,746
- Average collection rate 95.32% vs 99.36% last month's
- Seven % of the April bill collected
- Cash collection through March \$35,000 below last year
- 61% of the budget collected from sewer use

### **A&W Collections Report & Update**

W. Ward reported the following:

- 269 active files
- 58 accounts with balances above (\$5,000) Foreclosure Threshold
- 29 In Payment Plans, 1 stayed due to bankruptcy filings
- 21 active foreclosures
- 194 with no payment plan below Foreclosure Threshold
- No referrals for April due to April 2023 Billing
- 7 Files closed since last meeting
- Collected \$17,703.76 for April
- Total collected for 2023 \$122,188.18

### **Note:**

S. Dennies requested the floor, to which the Board agreed. She stated to L. Roca that if customers are behind on their payments, they can contact the Economic Development Office of the City of Stamford, that she believes has put out their first round of grants. She said that grants are issued for up to \$7,500 for a business in need and that customers can assess the program if behind on their WPCA payments. L. Roca asked for the information to provide to customers.

### **Executive Director's Top Ten**

B. Brink briefly went over his monthly report; the report will be made a part of these minutes.

### **Discussion and Vote: Transfers from Contingency Accounts**

R. Bull explained that the Board must approve transfers from the two Contingency accounts. She further explained that the additional funding is needed for Process Control Natural Gas, Hurricane Barrier Electric and Gas, and Sludge Processing Contracted Services and requested the following transfers to avoid ending the fiscal year in a deficit for the listed accounts.

**a. Approval to transfer \$100,000 from Utility Contingency to Sludge Processing Natural Gas**

R. Bull requested approval to transfer \$100,000 from Utility Contingency to Sludge Processing Natural Gas.

S. Dennies made the motion to transfer \$100,000 from Utility Contingency to Sludge Processing Natural Gas; seconded by R. Barocas. There was no further discussion. **Vote:6-0-0**

**b. Approval to Transfer \$299,000 from Miscellaneous Contingency**

R. Bull requested approval to transfer \$299,000 from Miscellaneous Contingency divided among the following line items / account: Sludge Processing Natural Gas, Hurricane Barrier Electric and Gas and Sludge Processing Contracted Services.

- i. R. Bull requested approval to transfer \$150,000 from Miscellaneous Contingency to Sludge Processing Natural Gas. R. Barocas made the motion to transfer \$150,000 from Miscellaneous Contingency to Sludge Processing Natural Gas; seconded by M. Nesin. There was no further discussion. **Vote:6-0-0**
- ii. R. Bull requested approval to transfer \$54,000 from Miscellaneous Contingency to Hurricane Barrier Electric. R. Barocas made the motion to transfer \$54,000 from Miscellaneous Contingency to Hurricane Barrier Electric; seconded by S. Bagwin. There was no further discussion. **Vote:6-0-0**
- iii. R. Bull requested approval to transfer \$25,000 from Miscellaneous Contingency to Hurricane Barrier Natural Gas. S. Bagwin made the motion to transfer \$25,000 from Miscellaneous Contingency to Hurricane Barrier Natural Gas; seconded by S. Dennies. There was no further discussion. **Vote:6-0-0**
- iv. R. Bull requested approval to transfer \$70,000 from Miscellaneous Contingency to Sludge Processing Contracted Services. S. Bagwin made the motion to transfer \$70,000 from Miscellaneous Contingency

to Sludge Processing Contracted Services; seconded by M. Negin. There was no further discussion.  
**Vote:6-0-0**

**Old Business:**

No old business discussed

**New Business:**

No new business discussed

At 6:27 pm, R. Barocas made a motion to adjourn the March meeting; seconded by S. Dennies. There was no further discussion. **Vote: 6-0-0.**

**Stamford WPCA Top Issues (4/17/23)**

| No. | Issue  | Action Description  | Impact  | Status   | Schedule   |
|-----|--|---|---|--|--|
| 1   | Service Contract with Synagro to Operate and Maintain Sludge Dryer and Dispose of Sludge Solids expires on March 3, 2024   | Evaluate options for operating the sludge dryer and sludge disposal.  | Operations and Financial  | W Brink to begin evaluating options for operating the sludge dryer and sludge disposal.  |  |
| 2   | Primary sludge pumping and degritting equipment is aged and in need of replacement. Equipment in primary clarifier No. 1 is severely corroded and needs to be replaced.        | Upgrade the primary sludge pumping and degritting system with new equipment to improve primary sludge pumping and grit removal. Replace the equipment in Primary Clarifier No. 1      | Increase system reliability and improve grit removal to protect downstream equipment. | C H Nickerson in process of providing required submittals and planning to mobilize on-site in the spring.  | Construction expected to take up to 2 years.   |
| 3   | Providing sanitary sewers to Perna Lane Area   | Evaluate cost effective options for providing sanitary sewers to the Perna Lane Area.   | Operations  | Tighe & Bond has completed re-design of the sanitary sewers in Phase I. Currently designing the Perna Lane pump station. Scheduling a coordination meeting with water and gas utilities and traffic control plan with CTDOT. | Bid the project for construction this summer if the necessary permits from CTDOT and City EPB can be attained by then.                 |
| 4   | Extreme wet weather - high flow discharge and permit exceedance on 5/1/14. Record rainfall on 7/9/21 and 9/1/21 caused plant flows that approached or exceeded plant capacity. | Perform an Infiltration and Inflow (I/I) Study to identify and remove extraneous flows caused by rainfall and high groundwater  | Regulatory and Operations   | Bid, awarded and signed construction contract with National Water Main for sewer rehabilitation in Phase II subareas next on priority list for I/I removal.  | Sewer rehabilitation expected to be completed in the spring and summer of 2023.  |
| 5   | BOR Resolution No. 4113 calls for planning for upgrading City drainage infrastructure and the WWTF to cope with extreme weather events.  | Coordinate with City Engineering to evaluate impact of extreme weather events on the Hurricane Barrier and three (3) pump stations. Evaluate impact on SWPCA's pump stations and WWTF | Regulatory and Operations   | Hazen completed a hydraulic evaluation of WPCF. Maximum raw sewage flow before overtopping mixed liquor channel to FST's is 69 mgd..   | Will coordinate with Matt Quinones, Director of Operations and City Engineering to develop short and long term action plans for SWPCA. |
| 6   | Personnel Safety   | Comply with requirements for arc flash protection.  | Operations  | Siemens has completed electrical preventive maintenance (EPM) on the electrical switchgear at the treatment plant.   | Data collected by Siemens from the EPM will be used by Tighe & Bond to complete the arc flash analyses and MCC panel labeling.         |

|    |  |  |                           |   |   |
|----|--|--|---------------------------|---|---|
| 7  | Sludge dryer is operating close to its capacity and there are limited options for disposal of sludge cake due to incinerators operating at their capacity and landfills that are closing, or won't accept sludge cake. | SWPCA needs to evaluate its future options for sludge processing and disposal and develop a long term Sludge Management Plan.  | Operations                | W Brink, A Brown, R Pudelka and M Negin visited Schenectady, NY WPCF to see a sludge pyrolysis process in development, and new anaerobic digesters at Camden, NJ WPCF. W Brink, A Brown and R Pudelka visited the Mattabasset WPCF in Cromwell, CT to see a sewage sludge incinerator that was installed in 2017. | These sludge treatment and disposal technologies were short listed in the Sludge Management Plan.   |
| 8  | WPCF evaluations and improvements  | Study, design, and construct new plant water and return activated sludge (RAS) and waste activated sludge (WAS) pumps to replace aged equipment and increase operations and energy efficiency. | Regulatory and Operations | Gannett Fleming Engineers has completed the Basis of Design Report.   | Gannett Fleming to complete the final design by the end of 2023. Plan to bid the project for construction in the spring of 2023.          |
| 9  | Facilities Building 6A which houses SWPCA Collection System, Electricians and Regulatory Compliance staff is deteriorated and has a leaking roof that cannot be fixed.   | Evaluate options for relocating SWPCA staff that currently work in Building 6A   | Operations                | Leasing two (2) temporary portable buildings fitted with office space to house the Collection System staff. Need to issue PO and coordinate fit out with the temporary trailers supplier.   | Advertise RFQ on 4/20 for an architect to develop a conceptual design for a new building to house SWPCA staff displaced from Building 6A. |
| 10 | Upgrade Alvord Lane, Commerce Drive and Saddle Rock Pump Stations  | Pump Stations are aged and in need of upgrade or replacement   | Operations                | Selected Tighe & Bond Engineers to perform the study, design and engineering during construction services for upgrading the three (3) pump stations.  | Tighe & Bond currently completing the site survey and field investigations of the three (3) pump stations.                                |