



Stamford Water Pollution Control Authority Board Meeting

Monday, June 26, 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 (Absent)	WPCA Board Member/ Director of Operations
Amiel Goldberg	WPCA Board Member/Board of Reps
J.R. McMullen	WPCA Board Member/Board of Finance
Robert Barocas	WPCA Board Member/Finance Committee Chair
Steven Bagwin	WPCA Board Member
Frank Salem	WPCA Board Member
William Brink	Executive Director, WPCA
Rhudean Bull	Administration Manager, WPCA
Ann Brown	Supervising Engineer, WPCA
Vernessa DeCausey	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.)
Lynda Roca	CompUtil

Call to Order, Pledge and Roll Call

E. Kelly, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm with roll call; there was no pledge of allegiance. A quorum was present seven (7 Board Members).

Public Participation

No members of the public were present

Minutes Approval of the Full Board Meeting of May 15, 2023

S. Bagwin motion to approve the May 15, 2023, minutes; seconded by M. Nesin. There was no further discussion.
Vote 7-0-0.

Administrative/Budget Report

R. Bull reported the following:

- Staffing vacancies
- IUOE positions
- IUOE retro pay
- There was (1) Injury reported
- IUOE contract settlement
- No Vehicle accidents
- No positive Covid cases
- City's Oracle Cloud Financials system update
- Budget breakdown review
- Electrical budget review
- WPCA Annual Cookout

Sub-Committee Reports

Finance Committee

A. Goldberg stated that the Finance Committee was held before the Board meeting and the following occurred:

- Welcomed new Board Member, Frank Salem to the Board of Finance
- Financial update from V. DeCausey, Finance Manager
- Assessment of charging fees to property owners on sewer streets not connected to the sanitary sewer
- Stamford Housing Authority Accounts receivables legal opinion
- Discussed update plan for bond use

Technical Committee

M. Nesin reported the committee meeting was held on Wednesday, June 21, 2023, and the following was discussed:

- Sludge dryer explosion improvements
- Plant operations
- Engineering Studies & Designs for methanol
- Construction project update

Workforce Development Committee

S. Bagwin reported there was no committee meeting held for the month of June.

Financial Update

CompUtil Report

L. Roca reported that intent to lien letters are set to go out next month for anybody who has a principal balance on the April bill of \$30 or more. She stated that the April bill will be up to 90% collected by the following day. She said out of the twenty-five (25) times they billed, twenty (20) of the bills are over 99%, three (3) are over 98%, almost 99%, and one (1) is at 97%. She reported that they've been getting a lot of calls and sending out reminder bills along with tax warrant letters; that closings have slowed down, but they're getting a lot of follow up calls from attorneys for possible foreclosures and short sales. She said right now we have 19,800 accounts and there's about 520 that have liens on them; that some of the accounts have multiple liens. She went on to say that with the internal collection's attorney William Ward, they keep the debt protected and attempt to ensure everybody is paying off their bills.

Receivables & Arrears

V. DeCausey reported for the month of May

- \$4,034 million received versus \$4,102 million previous year sewer use fees
- Average collection rate 99.03% vs 98.31% last month's
- 90% of the April bill collected
- 105% of the budget collected from sewer use

Pilicy Ryan & Ward, P.C. Collections Report & Update

W. Ward reported the following:

- 258 active files
- 63 accounts with balances above (\$5,000) Foreclosure Threshold
- 27 In Payment Plans, 1 stayed due to bankruptcy filings
- 21 active foreclosures
- 189 with no payment plan below Foreclosure Threshold
- 9 Files referred
- 7 Files closed since last meeting
- Collected \$15,426.01 for June
- Total collected for 2023 \$215,170.24

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: WPCA Board Elections

a. WPCA Board Chairman

The Chairman opened the discussion saying that he's been on the board for 9 years, which is shocking, and he has served as chairman for 3 terms. He stated he was happy, and it has been an honor, as well as a

privilege to serve the city and the WPCA. He went on to say he wanted to caution that the Board has a forward sense, not just use to the same people all the time; that the board must ensure we have smart, dedicated people who know how to think can serve. After that statement he opened the nomination for Chairman. J. R. McMullen nominated E. Kelly to remain as Chairman, seconded by R. Barocas. There was no further discussion. **Vote 7-0-0**

b. WPCA Board Vice Chairman

The Chairman asked for nominations for Vice-Chairman. R. Barocas nominated A. Goldberg; seconded by J. R. McMullen. There was no further discussion. **Vote 7-0-0**. The Chairman stated he forgot to ask if there were any other nomination. After a brief discussion, he stated, "hearing none, the vote carries".

The Chairman expressed that the terms of several Board members had come to an end and that in the past, it had been the practice for members to continue serving until they received notification otherwise, even after the designated term ending date. The Chairman suggested that it would be appropriate to contact the mayor's office in order to address this matter and ensure that the Water Pollution Control Authority (WPCA) remains compliant. After a brief discussion, A. Goldberg stated he would reach out to the mayor's office.

Discussion and Vote: Renewal of Agreement with the Town of Darien to provide conveyance and treatment of wastewater originating from the Town of Darien for another 5-year term

B. Brink provided some background information regarding the agreement. He stated that both parties are happy with the current agreement; that it is a fair agreement, and the Board needs to vote to accept this newest five (5) year agreement with the Town of Darien. E. Kelly made a motion to renew the agreement with the Town of Darien to provide conveyance and treatment of wastewater originating from the Town of Darien for another 5-year term; seconded by S. Bagwin. There was no further discussion. **Vote 7-0-0**

Discussion & Vote: SWPCA Email Billing Capability Options

R. Bull explained that the WPCA does not have e-billing capabilities since its separation for MCC, a subsidiary of Invoice Cloud. She went on to explain that the WPCA uses KUBRA for bill pay capabilities only but that she and V. DeCausey meet with the KUBRA representative, Ken Hui about the possibility of implementing their MyHQ Platform for e-billing. She presented the two options, one, the MyHQ, which is their full biller direct site at an initial cost of \$280,125 to build and implement the program. She explained that the platform would include simple registration with a two-factor authorization, accessible payment and bill history, detailed usage reports, quick bill views and payments, intuitive dashboard that is compatible with mobile phones. She further explained that this option promises six (6) months from project to deployment and would include additional recurring costs for customers to view the bills and make payments. She presented the second option saying that it would be the PDF plus DocWeb secure email where the customers would see a copy of the bill but, would not be able to make any type of payment; that this option would cost \$44,100 plus additional monthly recurring cost. After a lengthy discussion, the Board agreed to allow the WPCA to do further investigation into other options for e-billing. E. Kelly made a motion to allow R. Bull and V. DeCausey to continue to analyze this and get back to the Board at the next or the next couple of board meetings; seconded by F. Salem. There was no further discussion. **Vote 7-0-0**

Old Business:

No old business discussed.

New Business:

No new business discussed.

At 6:47 pm, E. Kelly made a motion to adjourn the June meeting; seconded by F. Salem. There was no further discussion. **Vote: 7-0-0.**

Stamford WPCA Top Issues (6/26/23)

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	SWPCA staff to evaluate options for operating the sludge dryer and sludge disposal. Learned that Synagro acquired NEFCO, which also operates sludge drying facilities and responded to our RFP in 2014.	Requested proposal from Synagro for renewal of the service contract for another 5 years.
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 has mobilized on site and preparing deep excavation to replace primary sludge piping between primary settling tanks and primary sludge pump building.	Will be replacing primary sludge piping this summer and primary settling tank No. 1 equipment in February. 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. Met with CTDOT on 5/5/23 regarding traffic control during construction on High Ridge Road.	Bid the project for construction this summer if the necessary permits from CTDOT 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	Notice to proceed given to National Water Main for sewer rehabilitation in Phase II subareas next on priority list for I/I removal.	Awaiting construction schedule from National Water Main.
5	Hurricane barrier gate on East Branch of Stamford Harbor needs repair. Gate may need to be removed for at least 4 to 6 months to do the repair.	Need to evaluate impact of an extreme weather event and storm surge occurring during the gate repair on the treatment plant and three (3) storm water pump stations.	Operations	Army Corps of Engineers currently evaluating the extent of the repair and duration it will be out of service.	

6	Personnel Safety	Comply with requirements for arc flash protection.	Operations	Need to coordinate data collection on electrical switchgear by Siemens required by Tighe & Bond to complete Arc Flash analysis.	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	Met with Hazen on 5/10/23 to review the results of the Sludge Management Study and facility tours. Hazen to finalize the study report and the "road map" to guide our future course of action.	Will continue to monitor the development of sludge treatment technologies, especially pyrolysis and gasification. May want to further evaluate anaerobic digestion through facilities planning using CTDEEP planning grant.
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.	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. Trailers were delivered on 5/10/23. Awaiting connection of electrical and IT.	City is planning to replace the roofs on the Facilities Buildings, including Building 6A, by the end of this year.
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 has completed the site survey and field investigations of the three (3) pump stations and working on developing recommendation for the pump stations upgrade/replacement.