



Stamford Water Pollution Control Authority Board Meeting

Monday, August 21, 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
Amiel Goldberg (Absent)	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 (Absent)	WPCA Board Member
William Brink	Executive Director, WPCA
Rhudean Bull (On line)	Administration Manager, WPCA
Ann Brown	Supervising Engineer, WPCA
Vernesa 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 not present four (4 Board Members).

Public Participation

No members of the public were present.

Safety Report

R. Pudelka provided an updated safety report on the following:

- Safety inspections for the fire extinguishers were completed by the Operators.
- An annual inspection is done by a sub-contracted company, and they update and, or exchange the fire extinguishers as needed.
- Air monitoring equipment that is fixed in the Plant.
- Additional inspections include eyewash stations, hearing protection, and the sprinkler system, which have all been inspected.
- The WPCA Safety Committee met on Thursday, August 3rd.

- Confined Space training was completed by National Safety.
- M. Stuhlman from Risk Management provided Bloodborne Pathogens safety at the quarterly staff meeting Thursday, August 17th.

NOTE:

At 5:34pm, Board member R. Barocas joined the meeting. Five (5) Board Members were present.

Minutes Approval of the Full Board Meeting of July 17, 2023

E. Kelly made a motion to approve the July 17, 2023, minutes; seconded by S. Bagwin. There was no further discussion. **Vote 5-0-0.**

Administrative/Budget Report

A. Brown briefly reported the following:

- Staffing vacancies
- Staffing issues
- There was (1) Injury reported
- Workers Comp update
- IUOE retro pay
- No positive Covid cases
- City's Oracle Cloud Financials system update
- WPCA Annual Cookout update
- Expense report review

SWPCA Minimum Charge

a. Vote to adjourn for the 5:45pm Minimum Charge Public Hearing

At 5:45pm, E. Kelly, Chairman, motioned to adjourn the regular Board meeting and convened the public hearing for the Minimum Charge; seconded by M. Negin. There was no discussion. **Vote: 5-0-0**

b. Vote to Reconvene after Public Hearing

There was no one present for the public hearing. At 5:47pm, E. Kelly made a motion to adjourn the public hearing for the Minimum Charge and reconvened the regular board meeting; Seconded by S. Bagwin. There was no further discussion.

Vote: 5-0-0

c. Discussion & Vote of the SWPCA Minimum Charge

At 5:47pm, the regular board meeting reconvened. M. Quinones asked B. Brink to summarize the justification for the minimum charge increase. B. Brink explained that those who use very little water during the winter months, which are between October - March, should still pay more than \$30.00 as their minimum share, because they still have facilities available for their use. He stated that certain minimum fixed expenses are all directly related to usage, therefore, these residents are not contributing enough. He explained that anyone using nine ccfs (9) or less than will be billed the minimum \$50.00 charge. E. Kelly made a motion to approve the Minimum Charge increase from \$30.00 to \$50.00 and increase the ccfs to nine (9) from the current five (5) ccfs; seconded by S. Bagwin. There was no further discussion. **Vote: 5-0-0.**

Sub-Committee Reports

Finance Committee

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

- There was not a quorum, so no decisions were made
- The September agenda will include outside experts as well as the first statement of financials from the Oracle system.

Technical Committee

M. Negin reported the committee meeting was held on Wednesday, August 16, 2023, and the following was discussed:

- Update on construction projects
- Amendment to agreement with Gannet Fleming

- Plant operations
- Collection system

Workforce Development Committee

E. Kelly stated that there was a meeting held on Wednesday, August 16, 2023, and the following was discussed:

- Position vacancies and strategies for filling those positions
- IUOE contract settlement and retro payout to retirees
- New building for the Collection system employees

Financial Update

CompUtil Report

L. Roca reported that they lien the April bill to secure the debt; that out of 19,806 accounts, liens were placed on 872 accounts. She stated that the April bill is over 95%. She said that due to the Collection policy, some of the liens were made manually without the fee, because the policy states customers that are in a current payment plan and paying their current bill are not billed the \$60 lien fee. She went on to say that they continue to make collection calls and stay busy.

Receivables & Arrears

V. DeCausey reported for the month of July

- \$539,000 sewer use & assessment fees collected
- 2% of the budget revenues collected YTD
- As of July 31st, total aging is 2.8 million
- Average collection rate 99.33% vs. 92.13% last month's
- 95.16% of the April bill collected

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

W. Ward reported the following:

- 259 active files
- 60 accounts with balances above (\$5,000) Foreclosure Threshold
- 21 In Payment Plans, 1 stayed due to bankruptcy filing
- 28 active foreclosures
- 194 with no payment plan below Foreclosure Threshold
- 16 Files referred
- 15 Files closed since last meeting
- Collected \$23,558.68 for August as of today
- Total collected for 2023 \$325,504.70

W. Ward reported that he has hired a new attorney named Tom McCurdy. He stated that Tom will be presenting the monthly report at the September Board meeting without a formal introduction because he will not be able to attend next month's meeting.

NOTE:

At 6:00pm, Board member J.R. McMullen joined the meeting. Six (6) Board Members were present.

FY 2023 – 2024 WPCA User Charge

a. Vote to Adjourn for the 6:00 pm User Charge Public Hearing

At 6:00 pm, E. Kelly motioned to adjourn the regular Board meeting and open the public hearing for the User Charge; seconded S. Bagwin. There was no discussion. **Vote 6-0-0**

b. Vote to Reconvene after Public Hearing

There was no one present for the public hearing. At 6:04 pm E. Kelly made a motion to adjourn the public hearing for the User Charge and reconvened the regular board meeting; seconded by S. Bagwin. There was no further discussion. **Vote: 6-0-0**

c. Discussion and Vote of FY 2023-2024 User Charge

B. Brink explained that the user charge proposed rate will remain at \$5.33 per ccf for FY 2024; that this rate will generate enough revenue to cover the operating budget, including a debt service of \$28.4 million, which is a 2.5 percent increase from the prior year, plus adjustments for additional revenue to maintain a debt service coverage ratio of 1.15 or \$695,000. He explained that the total revenue requirements this year is \$22.6 million, which is a 4.2 percent increase over last year and that this will generate enough revenue to meet the requirements with a 97.5 percent collection rate. E. Kelly made a motion to approve the FY 2023-2024 User Charge rate of \$5.33 per ccf; seconded by J.R. McMullen. There was no further discussion. **Vote 6-0-0**

Discussion: FY'23 Year End Report

A. Brown gave a brief overview of the Year End report for R. Bull. She explained some errors in the cost centers, stating they were caused during the transition from HTE to Oracle. She stated that these Oracle errors reflect a surplus of \$2.5 million, which will be rectified later.

Discussion & Vote: FY'23 Year End Salary Transfers

A. Brown briefly explained that there are cost centers with deficits errors within the Oracle system. She explained that funds were allocated to the wrong accounts causing deficits and surpluses within the salary accounts. She reported that there is a surplus of \$211,563 in salaries that can offset the \$150,155.93 deficit and that after the transfer salaries would have a surplus of \$60,000 remaining. R. Barocas made a motion to transfer \$150,593 from the \$211,563 surplus accounts to offset the deficit, seconded by S. Bagwin. There was no further discussion. **Vote 6-0-0**

Discussion & Vote: Approval of Amendment to Agreement with Gannett Fleming for the RAS/WAS/PW Improvements Design Fee and Scope of Services for Preliminary and Final Design in an amount not to exceed \$598,489

A. Brown reported that there was an RFQ for this project and Gannett Fleming was the selected engineering firm for the engineering design services for the next phase of the RAS/WAS/PW Improvements project. She explained that Gannett Fleming prepared and submitted a Basis of Design report as the first task or first phase of the project. She stated that they're looking for them to proceed with the next two tasks, which are the preliminary and final design and that they gave a scope of services and a fee schedule that seemed reasonable. She went on to say that the WPCA is asking for approval to move ahead with the two tasks in the amount of \$598,489. After a brief discussion, M. Nesin made a motion to approve the Amendment to Agreement with Gannett Fleming for the RAS/WAS/PW Improvements Design Fee and Scope of Services for the Preliminary and Final Design in the amount not to exceed \$589,489; seconded by R. Barocas. There was no further discussion. **Vote:6-0-0.**

Old Business:

No old business discussed.

New Business:

No new business discussed.

At 6:13 pm, E. Kelly made a motion to adjourn the August meeting; seconded by S. Bagwin. There was no further discussion.

Vote: 6-0-0.

NOTE: THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S TOP TEN REPORT IS NOT AVAILABLE FOR THE MONTH OF AUGUST; IT WILL BE AVAILABLE IN SEPTEMBER AND ATTACHED TO THE SEPTEMBER MINUTES.