



Stamford Water Pollution Control Authority Board Meeting

Monday, August 19, 2024

5:30 p.m.

Meeting held via teleconference

Full Meeting Minutes

Attendees

Ed Kelly	Chairman, WPCA Board Member
Steven Bagwin	Vice Chair, WPCA Board Member/ WFD Chair
Amiel Goldberg	WPCA Board Member/Board of Reps
Benjamin Barnes	WPCA Board Member/ Director of Administration
Matthew Quinones (Absent)	WPCA Board Member/ Director of Operations
J.R. McMullen	WPCA Board Member/Board of Finance
Robert Barocas	WPCA Board Member/Finance Committee Chair
Frank Salem	WPCA Board Member
William Brink	Executive Director, WPCA
Rhudean Bull	Administration Manager, WPCA
Ann Brown	Supervising Engineer, WPCA
Vernesa DeCausey	Financial Manager, WPCA
Crystal Blair	Administrative Account Assistant, WPCA
Abigail Logrono (Absent)	Procurement Coordinator, WPCA
Maria LoDolce	Seasonal, WPCA
Steve Pietrzyk (Absent)	Collections System Supervisor, WPCA
Tom McKirdy	Collection Attorney Ackerly & Ward
Lynda Roca	CompUtil
Michael Hoherchak	Contractor

Call to Order, Pledge and Roll Call

E. Kelly, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 5:34 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 July 15, 2024

E. Kelly made a motion to approve the July 15, 2024, minutes; seconded by J.R. McMullen. There was no further discussion. **Vote 5-0-2**. A. Goldberg and F. Salem abstained.

Administrative/Budget Report

R. Bull briefly reported the following:

- Staffing vacancies
- Staffing issues
- No COVID19 case reported
- One (1) Injury reported
- No vehicle accidents reported
- IUOE payout completed
- Quarterly Staff Meeting
- KUBRA EZPay
- FY'24 Budget breakdown

Sub-Committee Reports

Finance Committee

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

- Approval of the July 15, 2024, Meeting Minutes
- Received an update on the August 2024 Financials
- Discussed catastrophic insurance policy
- Approval of Pool cash transfer

FY 2024 – 2025 WPCA User Charge

a. Vote to Adjourn for the 5:45 pm User Charge Public Hearing

At 5:45 pm, E. Kelly motioned to adjourn the regular Board meeting and open the public hearing for the FY '25 User Charge; seconded S. Bagwin. There was no discussion. **Vote 7-0-0**

b. Vote to Reconvene after Public Hearing

At 6:00 pm E. Kelly made a motion to adjourn the public hearing for the FY'25 User Charge and reconvened the regular Board meeting; seconded by S. Bagwin There was no further discussion. **Vote: 7-0-0**

c. Discussion and Vote of FY 2024-2025 User Charge

No members of the public were present for the public hearing. However, a contractor, Michael Hoherchak, attended the meeting to observe how it operates and had nothing to contribute to the discussion.

B. Brink reviewed the Rate Setting model discussed at the July meeting, where the Board approved a proposed rate of \$5.46, representing a 2.5 percent increase from the previous year. He explained that for a typical single-family household using 45 CCFs, the semi-annual cost would be \$245.82, with an annual cost of \$491.65. E. Kelly made a motion to increase the User charge from \$5.33 to \$5.46; seconded by S. Bagwin.

There was no further discussion. **Vote 7-0-0**

Sub-Committee Reports (Cont.)

Technical Committee

E. Kelly reported the committee meeting was held on Wednesday, August 14, 2024, and the following was discussed:

- Reviewed Synagro service contract for operation and maintenance of the sludge drying facility
- Discussed changes to the SCADA system cyber security with ARCADIS
- Review and approval of the Bid Waiver for the purchase of replacement bulbs for the Trojan UV System
- Review and approval of Bid Waivers for Fleet Pump and Service Group to replace and install control panels at Soundview 1 and 2 pump stations
- S. Pietrzyk gave an update on the Collection System
- A. Brown provided an update on engineering studies, design, and construction projects, including specific details on the Perna Lane sewer extension

Workforce Development Committee

S. Bagwin reported the committee meeting was held on Wednesday, August 14, 2024, and the following was discussed:

- Position vacancies
- Anonymous email
- IUOE settlement payout

Financial Update

Receivables & Arrears

V. DeCausey reported for the month of July

- \$599k total Sewer Usage collection for the month of July
- \$6.4k sewer assessment & connection charges for the month of July
- \$605.9k total Sewer Usage & Assessment & Connection collection for FY' 2024-2025
- 2% of the budget revenues collected YTD
- 95.98% April billing collection rate
- 98.13% of the October 2023 bill collected
- Average collection rate is 99.38% vs 99.22% last month's

Financials

V. DeCausey shared the trial balance from Oracle, that provides a snapshot of July's transactions. She explained that pool cash began the month with \$10 million and decreased to \$8 million by the end of July. Additionally, she

highlighted the revenue collected and the expenditures made throughout the month. B. Barnes mentioned that he would work with V. DeCasey to provide reports his staff has come across that could be beneficial.

CompUtil Report

R. Roca explained that Computil has been busy making phone calls. She said that the April bill is just over 96%; that out of the 19,808 active accounts, 450 have liens; that Ackerly & Ward has 235 accounts, and that Darlene has 49 accounts. She mentioned that on August 21st the WPCA granted permission to place liens on the April 2024 bill. She stated that she's expecting to probably to do about 800 liens or less as of right now; that she's hopeful more payments will come in and; that she's excited to start testing for billing with the new rate. She went on to say that she's waiting to hear about the lien automation from KUBRA. She voiced that CompUtil have been going back and forth asking for specs on the programming and that is not confident that the program will be ready in time for the October billing but overall, we're in good shape.

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

T. McKirdy informed the Board that Pilicy Ryan & Ward has changed back to Ackerly & Ward.

- 237 active files
- 27 accounts with balances above (\$5,000) Foreclosure Threshold
- 1 account with payment plans that are not in foreclosure, but are over the threshold
- 1 stayed due to bankruptcy filing
- 19 active foreclosures
- 14 foreclosure files that are in payment plans
 - 13 are making payments
 - 6 are not in full compliance with the agreement
- 8 accounts foreclosure eligible
- 201 with no payment plan below Foreclosure Threshold
- 3 files referred
- 3 Files closed since last meeting
- Collected \$28,446.40 for July 2024 (an increase of \$6,259.57 from last meeting)
- Collected \$22,149.60 to date for August 2024
- Total collected for 2024 \$301,641.81

Executive Director's Top Ten

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

NOTE:

At 6:10 pm, Chairman, E. Kelly stated he would like to make a motion to allow a change in the agenda; that agenda items 11 and 12 should be allowed next because A. Brown has a time limit he'd like to take into consideration; seconded by J R McMullen. There was no further discussion. **Vote: 7-0-0.**

Discussion & Vote: Approval of Bid Waiver for the Purchase of Replacement Bulbs for the Trojan UV System in an amount not to exceed \$60,000

A. Brown explained that the bid waiver is for approval to purchase replacement lamps from Trojan for the UV. She further explained that Trojan is the manufacturer of the UV system, and by purchasing lamps directly from Trojan, the output is guaranteed to meet the required UV dosage. She clarified that the ultraviolet lamps are essential for UV disinfection and that a significant number of replacement lamps are needed. She also noted that during a technical committee meeting, she detailed the system's setup: there are three channels of effluent equipped with UV lamps, with each channel containing three banks of lamps. Each bank consists of 13 modules, and each module holds 8 lamps. In total, there are 936 lamps used intermittently throughout the UV process, and each lamp has a lifespan of approximately 10,000 hours.

After a brief discussion E. Kelly made a motion that we approve a bid waiver for the purchase Replacement Bulbs for the Trojan UV System in an amount not to exceed \$60,000, seconded by S. Bagwin. J.R. McMullin inquired if there was a generic brand that could be used, to which A. Brown stated that the WPCA is replacing the lamps "in kind" to standardize materials. There was no further discussion. **Vote 7-0-0**

Discussion & Vote: Approval of Bid Waivers for Fleet Pump and Service Group to Replace and Install the Control Panel including a Flygt Multismart SCADA System and Sensor Level Probe at Soundview 1 and Soundview 2 Pump Stations for an amount of \$55,919.00 and \$58,769.00, Respectively

A. Brown explained that this request is for the approval of a bid waiver to allow the WPCA to purchase a new control panel. She detailed that this panel is part of the new communication system being implemented at the pump stations. She further explained that in July 2023, the WPCA initiated a pilot program using the MultiSmart SCADA system at four pump stations with poor communication. The trial was successful, and now the WPCA wants to continue installing these systems at other stations.

During the discussion, B. Barnes emphasized that projects of this magnitude should go through the City's Request for Proposal (RFP) process, which would reduce the need for bid waivers. E. Kelly thanked B. Barnes for his input and mentioned that he would give more consideration to the bid waivers that come his way for signature.

E. Kelly then made the motion to approve the Bid Waivers for Fleet Pump & Service Group to replace and install the control panel including a Flygt Multismart SCADA System and Sensor Level Probe at Soundview 1 and Soundview 2 pump stations for an amount of \$55,919.00 and \$58,769.00, respectively; seconded by S. Bagwin. There was no further discussion. **Vote 7-0-0**

Discussion & Vote: Approval to transfer \$4 million from WPCA Pool Cash Account to US Bank Morgan Stanley Investment Account

V. DeCausey proposed transferring \$4 million from pool cash into the Morgan Stanley Investment account, which currently holds \$25 million. She mentioned her discussion with the Morgan Stanley representative, who advised that now is an opportune time to invest due to high interest rates. She said that his strategy involves capitalizing on the higher rate environment through reinvestment. V. DeCausey explained that the representative recommended purchasing three-year US Treasuries since the portfolio is nearing the 1.5-year target. She stated that the request is to withdraw the funds from pool cash, which has a current balance of \$7 million, and transfer them to Morgan Stanley Investments. R. Barocas made a motion to approve the transfer of \$4 million from WPCA Pool Cash Account to US Bank Morgan Stanley Investment Account, seconded by F. Salem. There was no further discussion. **Vote:7-0-0.**

Discussion & Vote: Service Contract for Operation and Maintenance of the Thermal Drying Facility with Synagro

B. Brink provided a detailed explanation of the proposed Synagro contract, saying that the old contract had expired on March 3, 2024. He explained that Synagro was chosen using the RFP process and that two firms responded, Synagro and Veolia Water Technologies. He stated that both firms were qualified but when asked to submit a proposal including the costs involved, using the framework of the current agreement with Synagro, only Synagro responded. After a lengthy discussion, E. Kelly made a motion to approve the Service Contract for Operation and Maintenance of the Thermal Drying Facility with Synagro, seconded by S. Bagwin. There was no further discussion. **Vote 6-0-1.** A. Goldberg abstained.

Old Business:

No old business discussed.

New Business:

No new business discussed.

At 6:50pm, E. Kelly made a motion to adjourn the August meeting; seconded by A. Goldberg. There was no further discussion. **Vote: 7-0-0.**

Stamford WPCA Top Issues (8/9/24)

No.	Issue	Action Description	Impact	Status	Schedule
1	The Plant Supervisor position is open. This position requires a Class IV Operator license to meet the Plant's permit.	Advertise and interview qualified candidates for Plant Supervisor and fill the position as soon as possible.	Regulatory and Operations	Interviewed a very qualified candidate who is interested in the position. Will require raising the compensation to grade 11 which the Board has previously approved. Needs HR and union approval.	If the candidate accepts we will fill the position in September.
2	Service Contract with Synagro to Operate and Maintain Sludge Dryer and Dispose of Sludge Solids was extended to September 3, 2024.	Evaluate options for operating the sludge dryer and sludge disposal.	Operations and Financial	Have been negotiating changes to the Service Contract requested by Synagro and negotiations are proceeding well so far.	Our existing contract with Synagro was extended to September 3, 2024. We plan to have a new contract for Board review at the August Board meeting.
3	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 is nearing completion of the installation of new equipment in Primary Clarifier No. 1. Also installing new sludge degritting equipment in the Sludge Degritting Building.	Construction is on schedule to be substantially completed by end of 2024.
4	Providing sanitary sewers to Perna Lane Area	Evaluate cost effective options for providing sanitary sewers to the Perna Lane Area.	Operations	Sanitary sewers have been installed in Perna Lane and are now being installed in Somerset Lane. Will soon start installing sewers in High Ridge Road at Turn of River Road proceeding north on High Ridge Road.	Grasso Construction has provided a schedule for sewer construction on each street and Ann Brown posts construction updates on our web site to inform the residents. Schedule calls for installation of the pump stations and sewers by the Fall of 2024 and project completion by the Spring of 2025.
5	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	National Water Main completing the sewer rehabilitation in Phase II subareas.	A proposal by CDM-Smith Engineers for the next phase of a sewer system evaluation survey (SSES) of those sewer subareas next on the priority list for I/I removal was submitted to CTDEEP for review and approval.

6	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 the harbor gate will be out of service. SWPCA needs to evaluate impact of a major storm event on the treatment plant without the protection of the gate.	The Army Corps of Engineers has advised that the schedule for repair of the Hurricane barrier gate depends on availability of federal funds for the project.
7	Personnel Safety	Comply with requirements for arc flash protection.	Operations	Siemens has been retained to perform the arc flash hazard analysis and label electrical switchgear for proper PPE.	Siemens has completed checking the field data that was previously collected. Arc flash hazard analysis will then take 20 days to model.
8	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	Hazen has finalized 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. Hazen and Sawyer advised a number of new facilities are starting up and we will monitor their progress.
9	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 is progressing on the final design of the Plant Water, RAS and WAS pumps and piping.	Gannett Fleming to complete final design by the fall of 2024.
10	Upgrade Alvord Lane, Commerce Drive and Saddle Rock Pump Stations	Pump Stations are aged and in need of upgrade or replacement	Operations	Tighe & Bond has submitted their design of the upgrade of the Saddle Rock Road Pump Station for WPCA staff to review.	The upgrade of the Saddle Rock Road Pump Station is expected to go to bid for construction in the fall. Design of Alvord Lane and Commerce Drive PS's to be done in FY25.