



## Stamford Water Pollution Control Authority Board Meeting

Monday, March 15, 2021

5:30 p.m.

Meeting held via teleconference

Full Meeting Minutes

### Attendees

Ed Kelly	Chairman, WPCA Board Member
Mark McGrath	WPCA Board Member/ Director of Operations
Sandra Dennies	WPCA Board Member / Director of Administration
Monica DiConstanzo (absent)	WPCA Board Member/Board of Reps
David Mannis	WPCA Board Member/Board of Finance
Merritt Nesin	WPCA Board Member / Tech Committee Chair
Robert Barocas	WPCA Board Member / Finance Committee Int. Chair
Adam Perlaky	WPCA Board Member
Steven Bagwin	WPCA Board Member
William Brink	Executive Director, WPCA
Rhudean Bull	Administration Manager, WPCA
Ann Brown	Supervising Engineer, WPCA
Robert Pudelka	Plant Supervisor
Mark Turndahl	Accountant, WPCA
Crystal Blair	Administrative Account Assistant, WPCA
David Yanik	City Comptroller
John Mastracchio	Collection Attorney (Ackerly & Ward)
Lynda Roca	CompUtil

### Call to Order, Pledge and Roll Call

E. Kelly, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 5:32pm with roll call; there was no pledge of allegiance. A quorum was present eight (8 Board Members).

### Public Participation

No members from the public were present.

### Minutes Approval of the Full Board Meeting of February 22, 2021

M. Nesin made a motion to approve the February 22, 2021 minutes; seconded by S. Bagwin. There was no discussion. **Vote: 8-0-0.**

### Safety Report

R. Pudelka reported that from July 1, 2020 thru March 1, 2021 there have been seven (7) injury claims at a cost of \$38,000 and that for the same period the prior year, there were seven (7) injury claims at a cost of \$462,000. He also reported that Confined Space Training will occur in April for new staff and a refresher for the existing staff. He concluded his report saying that there were no new COVID cases at the WPCA.

### Administrative/Budget Report

R. Bull reported the following:

- Two first reports of injury for minor mishaps that required no treatment and no loss time
- Update on Covid-19 vaccine for WPCA employee 55+ and the plan for 45+ age group
- February staff meeting and safety topic

- WPCA's Expense Budget deficit and projections, as well as available surplus to make up the Labor and Non-Labor account shortfalls.

### **Sub-Committee Reports**

#### **Finance Committee**

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

- SWPCA healthy finance outlook
- Receivables update
- Planned investment with Morgan Stanley
- Collection and Foreclosure Policy update
- Selection of Chairman for Finance Committee

R. Barocas went on to say that he is very pleased with the good work done by the WPCA staff

#### **Technical Committee**

M. Nesin stated the committee meeting was held on Wednesday, March 10, 2021 and reported the following:

- The Plant is running well
- Arcadis gave a presentation on Cyber Security; committee approved \$300 monthly for security service
- U.V. and blower issues are on-going
- There were no exceedances this month

He thanked R. Pudelka for his report to the committee stating that it was beneficial in helping them see how the Plant is running.

B. Brink mentioned that as a result the EPA issued a Cybersecurity memo, ARCADIS was asked to present security measures in addition to what is already in place. He reported there would be an initial set cost of \$1,000 and \$300 per month or a \$3,600 annual cost thereafter for the service. He stated ARCADIS would retain the service and would be reimbursed through their on-going contract with the WPCA; that no vote was required since the WPCA has a purchase order with them for similar services.

#### **Workforce Development Committee**

E. Kelly reported there was a committee meeting held before the Board Meeting and R. Bull had reported Workforce Development agenda items within her report; no further discussion needed. However, he explained the purpose for the committee stating that WPCA management and employees appear to have responded to the idea of consistently treating others with respect and dealing with each other in ways that are healthier.

### **Financial Update**

#### **CompUtil Report**

L. Roca provided an update to the Board reporting that there were currently 720 out of 120,000 accounts with liens and will be placing liens on between 800/825 accounts during for the October bill. She stated that despite the pandemic, money is coming in and that CompUtil is working closely with Ackerly & Ward on accounts. and making collection and reminder calls. Stamford closings still remain high with 193 closings in a month.

#### **Receivables & Arrears**

M. Turndahl reported for the month of February

- \$2.352 million received verses \$2.421 million previous year sewer use fees
- Oldest receivables by year was paid down by \$51k
- Cash collection \$661k ahead of last year
- October bill 96.75% collected
- 61% budgeted revenues collected for the budget year

#### **February 2021 Financial Update**

M. Turndahl reported the following:

- \$1.44 million net income for February, \$3.679 million above budget
- \$17 million available in Pool Cash, account down due to construction but it will go up next month
- \$8.7million in Capital Reserve Account

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

J. Mastracchio reported the following:

- 308 active files
- 69 accounts with balances above (\$5,000) Foreclosure Threshold
- 46 In Payment Plans, 2 stayed due to bankruptcy filings
- Thirteen (13) active foreclosures
- 205 with no payment plan below Foreclosure Threshold
- 31 referrals for the month of February
- 18 Files closed since last meeting
- Collected \$35,116.20 this month
- Total collected for 2021 \$134,845.69

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

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

### **Review & discussion: FY 2021 - 2022 Operating Expense and Revenue Budget**

B. Brink stated that the FY'22 Operating Expense and Revenue budget presented and voted on at the last meeting that included the debt service totaled \$27,491,587—an increase of \$81,381 or .3% from the prior year. He also stated that as the subordinated general obligation debt is paid down and new revenue bond senior debt is issued, the net revenues available for debt service needed to increase; that for FY 2022, the sewer use revenue budget was increased by \$616,500 to meet the senior debt service ratio coverage of 115%. He explained that the FY22 Operating Expense final budget changed as a result of receiving updated benefits numbers from OPM. B. Brink reported that due to the final updated benefits information, the FY'22 Operating Expense budget now totals \$27,247,638, which represents a decrease of (\$162,568) or -0.6% compared to the FY 2020/2021 adopted budget. And the total operating revenue budget required to meet a debt service coverage ratio of 1.15 for SWPCA's revenue bonds now totals \$27,864,138—an increase of \$149,332 or +0.5% compared to FY 2020-2021.

B. Brink stated that he, along with R. Bull met with the BOR fiscal committee to present the FY'22 Operating Expense and Revenue Budget. He said that the presentation was brief with no questions from the committee. He concluded saying that M. DiConstanzo, the committee chairperson and a member of the WPCA Board, commended the WPCA for its hard work, the wealth of knowledge and professionalism delivered by the WPCA staff and for producing a lean budget in an effort to keep sewer use cost at a minimum during the pandemic when many Stamford residents are experiencing difficulty.

S. Dennies questioned whether or not a new vote is required to which R. Bull stated that the Board approved the FY'22 Operating Expense and Revenue budget contingent upon new benefits updates from OPM and there is no need for a further vote.

### **Discussion & Vote: Appeal 847 Stillwater Road**

R. Bull explained to the Board that the WPCA received lots of calls including calls to the Mayor's office regarding an appeal for the October 2020 bill. WPCA requested and received documents explaining a broken pipe issue causing the bill to be extremely high. After review of the documents submitted by the plumber it was determined that the October bill should be paid by the customer and the April bill would be adjusted. The customer wrote an appeal letter dated February 22, 2021 to Board Chair E. Kelly requesting an interest free installment plan without late fees. Waving of interest and fees are not permitted per the WPCA's Collection Policy. S. Barocas motioned to approve the appeal decision for 847 Stillwater Road; seconded by M. McGrath.

There was no discussion. **Vote: 5-1-2.** D. Mannis opposed; S. Bagwin and S. Dennies abstained.

### **Discussion & Vote: Revision to SWPCA Collection Policy**

R. Bull provided the revised Collection and Foreclosure Policy after sending it to the collections attorney. Changes included an updated to sections a & b extending the initial demand letter sent by the collection attorney with account balances owing at least \$500 from 30 days to 180 days; the Collection attorney will send a 2<sup>nd</sup> demand notice providing the delinquent owner(s) an additional 30 days to submit a payment proposal or pay the delinquent balance in full. S. Dennies motioned to approve the revision to the SWPCA Collection Policy; seconded by R. Barocas. There was no discussion **Vote: 8-0-0.**

**Old Business:**

No Old business discussed.

**New Business:**

R. Barocas asked for the Board to review the WPCA bylaws, the Board agreed.

At 6:29 pm, R. Barocas made a motion to adjourn the March meeting; seconded by M. Nesin. There was no further discussion. **Vote: 8-0-0.**

### Stamford WPCA Top Issues (3/12/21)

No.	Issue	Action Description	Impact	Status	Schedule
1	COVID-19 Outbreak	Take action to reduce impact on SWPCA Operations and Finances	Operations and Financial	No positive COVID cases since last Board meeting. Staff age 55 and over have received first vaccine shot.	Following State's age based schedule for vaccinating staff younger than 55. Operators, mechanics and lab staff are all following normal work schedule. Admin staff working on site and home in staggered schedule.
2	42" Diameter Force Main from Raw Sewage Pumps Station to Primary Clarifiers developed a longitudinal crack and required repair.	Investigate force main condition to determine need for lining or replacement. Complete force main lining or replacement as soon as practicable.	Operations and Financial	Leaking section of force main has been replaced. Test results on pipe section indicate loss of pipe wall thickness from corrosion and erosion from grit.	Currently using 6 bypass pumps and 3 – 18" diameter HDPE pipes to pump from influent sewer to primary effluent channel, bypassing the Raw Sewage Pump Station and 42" force main. 2 – 24" diameter HDPE pipelines are being installed above grade to allow raw sewage pumps to pump to the primary clarifiers without using the 42" force main. 3 Existing raw sewage pumps will be available for use on March 15 <sup>th</sup> . The 2- 24" bypass pipelines to be completed by March 29 <sup>th</sup> .
3	UV System Performance and Permit Exceedances	Upgrade UV System adding 2 new UV channels for system redundancy during peak flow and replacing aged Wedeco UV equipment with Trojan.	Regulatory and Operations	Continue to have infrequent erratic water level readings in UV channels. Will consider use of radar level sensors in channels..	C H Nickerson is continuing work on the 3 <sup>rd</sup> UV channel with completion expected by May.
4	Extreme wet weather - high flow discharge and permit exceedance on 5/1/14	Perform an Infiltration and Inflow (I/I) Study to identify and remove extraneous flows caused by rainfall and high groundwater	Regulatory and Operations	Phase II SSES (CCTV, manhole inspections and smoke testing) have been completed.	Completion of Phase I (A) sewer rehabilitation by Kenyon Pipeline is suspended until the weather improves.
5	Reduce energy costs	Evaluate and implement energy conservation measures (ECM)	Operations and Financial	Received payment of Eversource cash incentive for LED lighting and UV system upgrade.	Eversource to provide \$469,695 cash incentive for energy efficiency measures used in Primary and Secondary Treatment Improvements

6	Personnel Safety	Comply with requirements for arc flash protection.	Operations		Siemens is continuing performing electrical preventive maintenance (EPM) on electrical switchgear at treatment plant and four (4) pump stations. Completed EPM of switchgear for sludge dryer.
7	Sludge dryer before explosion was 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	Had kick-off meeting with Hazen's project team and Technical Committee on February 1 <sup>st</sup> .	Will complete Task 1 and 2 of study by this summer with Task 3 and 4 to be done in FY22. Expect 16 months to complete the Sludge Management Plan (summer of 2022)..
8	WPCF evaluations and improvements	Study, design, and construct WPCF improvements to replace aged equipment and increase operations and energy efficiency.	Regulatory and Operations	Work inside aeration tanks is complete. Work is now focused on installing electrical power and control wiring for the new aeration blowers, and installing new mechanical screen and raw sewage pumps in Raw Sewage Pump Station (RSPS).	New aeration blowers scheduled for start-up in April. 5 new raw sewage pumps scheduled for start-up in July. Project to be substantially complete in October
9	Perna Lane Area is in need of sanitary sewers due to failing septic systems.	Evaluate cost effective options for providing sanitary sewers to the Perna Lane Area that avoid deep sewers (in rock) in High Ridge Road.	Operations	Most cost effective option will include a combination of gravity and low pressure sewers.	Project is currently on hold pending receipt of petition signed by 2/3 of property owners in favor of the sewer project.