



Stamford Water Pollution Control Authority Board Meeting
Wednesday, October 2, 2013 – 5:30 PM
Stamford Government Center
4th Floor Board of Finance Conference Room
888 Washington Blvd, Stamford, CT
Full Meeting Minutes
(The meeting was videotaped.)

Attendees

| | |
|---------------------------|------------------------------|
| Ernie Orgera | Chairman, WPCA Board |
| Michael Handler | WPCA Board Member |
| Tim Abbazia (absent) | WPCA Board Member |
| Cristina Andreana | WPCA Board Member |
| Daniel Capano | WPCA Board Member |
| Donald Huppert | WPCA Board Member |
| Mitchell Kaufman (absent) | WPCA Board Member |
| Dan Schwartz (absent) | WPCA Board Member |
| William Brink | Executive Director, WPCA |
| Rhudean Bull | Administration Manager, WPCA |
| Prakash Chakravarti | Supervising Engineer, WPCA |
| William Degnan | Plant Supervisor, WPCA |
| Marie Sabo | Laboratory Director, WPCA |
| Mark Turndahl | Accountant, WPCA |
| Daniel McCabe | WPCA Legal Counsel |

Call to Order, Pledge and Roll Call

Chairman, E. Orgera, called the meeting to order at 5:31 PM with Roll Call and the Pledge of Allegiance. A quorum was present (5 Board Members).

Public Participation

There were no members of the Public present.

Minutes Approval

M. Handler made a motion to approve the September 5, 2013 Voting and Full Board Meeting Minutes; seconded by D. Huppert. There was no discussion. **Vote:** 5-0-0.

Safety Update

M. Sabo reported:

- September Site Safety Team Meeting was held September 19; Monthly Employee Safety Training was held on September 25th; topics: safe driving, stretching exercises before driving and during the workday to help reduce injuries; WPCA continues to work on improvements in ARC Flash safety for applicable workers; New Hire Safety Orientation was conducted on September 23 for newly hired Utility Worker & additional training required to be covered throughout next month; FY13/14 Incident Statistics: 6 incidents for YTD (July 1-Oct 1) vs 3 for previous FY/same period; Next Site Safety Team Meeting to be held October 17; Next Employee Safety Training on October 23; topics TBD

Sub-Committee Reports

a. Finance Committee

C. Andreana reported that the Committee met on September 25th and discussed the SWPCA audit. M. Turndahl distributed an "open items list" for resolution; they reviewed the July and August collection reports and found a slight slowing in cash receipts, however, the cash flow on past due balances is still making good progress; B. Brink presented and discussed the calculations for sewer connection charges; the Committee reviewed the financials through June 30; Administrative Account Clerk positions were discussed; there are 102 applicants for 2 open positions; they are awaiting the test results; R. Bull added that there are many good applicants, some with advanced degrees, B.S. and M.S., even though the position only requires an A.S. degree.

b. Technical Committee

D. Capano reported that the Committee met on September 18th and provided odor control update stating that the Wright-Pierce report submitted explains the air flows in the sludge building as "out of whack" and suggested retaining an air balancing company; PO for work was issued in the amount of \$2700. He reported that the sheaves arrived and were installed at the headworks that day (Oct 2) and the chemical pump also arrived that day and would be installed by WPCA Staff within the next few weeks. He mentioned that there have been a couple of odor complaints; they seem to come from the same group of people but are being submitted hours/days/weeks after the fact; M. Handler interjected that he has instructed the IT Department to include odor complaints with the 311 Smartphone App to be launched within 30 days. D. Capano reported the Committee discussed running odor control through the winter and B. Brink stated that it would occur. He reported Malcolm Pirnie made a presentation on Asset Management to the Committee; that Pipe supports in Raw Sewage Pump Station (RSPS) was an issue; that the supports on the 48" pipes are rusted and some have fallen over; they were not on housekeeping pads; B. Brink explained that the pump station, installed in 1974, is 5 stories below grade and there is typically ~4" of standing water in the lowest level which caused the rusting condition. Staff immediately shored-up the pipes; Wright-Pierce has submitted a design for replacements; there is no indication that the pipes or the pumps sustained any damage; the cost for a proper fix is ~\$50,000. He mentioned that the Vac Truck will be discussed later in the meeting and that the next Committee Meeting will be October 17th and all are welcome to attend.

Billing Update

a. Receivables & Arrears

M. Turndahl discussed the Accounts Receivable Status Report reporting the balance as of September 30--\$ 3,389,685, Principal bal --\$ 2,151,116, bal over 120 days--\$3,325,226 and that the April 13 billing arrears amount totaled \$533,716.

b. September 2013 Cycle Billing Collection To Date and October 2014 Billing Update

M. Turndahl explained the billing collections to date report to the Board's satisfaction and R. Bull reported that the plan is to mail the October '13 cycle bills before the usual 3rd week of the month; that the scheduled billing date is the week of October 7.

c. Updated June & Preliminary July Financials

M. Turndahl reported that the net income before any audit adjustments is \$3.2 million and that allowance for bad debt was charged \$48,000 to reflect the settlement from a major commercial customer. **Note: this item was done out of order after T. Banas' A&W report.**

d. September Accounts Receivable

M. Turndahl reported that the outstanding receivables were \$3.4 million, \$2.2 million of which is principal and the balance being late interest and fees. He reported that the balance with A&W is \$3.2 million.

e. A&W Collections Update

T. Banas reported that Ackerly & Ward has taken on an additional 103 accounts in the range of \$500 to \$2,500 behind in payment and they are experiencing a larger turnaround in payments; reported \$135,000 taken in the last month and that A&W just crossed over the \$2 million threshold in collected

amount from January '12 to current. He reported that 103 accounts were approved for foreclosures, of which 36 have been paid in full, 17 in payment plans, 4 stayed due to bankruptcy and the other 46 are active foreclosures. He reported that there has been an increase in banks responding to the 2nd letter and suspected that the word has gotten around about the SWPCA collection activities; that a huge amount was recently received for ESD Laundry. D. Huppert inquired as to the status of the BLT account to which R. Bull replied BLT opted not to enter into mediation, therefore, litigation will proceed.

Discussion & Vote: Sewer Connection Charge Per Unit

B. Brink led the topic discussion on stating that the issue was presented and discussed at the Finance Committee Meeting and that last adjustment was done in February 2010; he explained the calculation for charges. C. Andreana stated that the Finance Committee reviewed the information and compared it to other cities and found that SWPCA is higher but that the Committee agrees with the proposed increase of \$4,250. However, she stated that the Committee recommend looking at current policy and consider changes to charge for a half unit instead of one unit which equates to two full bathroom additions. B. Brink proved history: 1990's was \$2,450/unit, increased to \$3,050 in 2006, increased to \$3,600 in 2010 and stated the proposed new rate would apply to COs (Certificates of Occupancy) issued after Dec 1.

C. Andreana motioned to increase the sewer connection charge to \$4,250 from prior rate of \$3,600 effective with CO's issued after December 1, 2013; seconded by D. Capano. There was no additional discussion.

Vote: 3-2-0 (affirmatives: C. Andreana, D. Huppert, D. Capano; nays: M. Handler, E. Orgera); the motion carried.

C. Andreana asked why M. Handler and E. Orgera voted against the motion. E. Orgera stated that he felt the increase was too high and M. Handler answered that he was not sure what the impact would be on new construction. C. Andreana stated for the record that she wished they had had that discussion before the vote as it might have changed the vote. There was some discussion as to the process for approving the proposed rate change after the Public Hearing; R. Bull clarified the process stating that the plan is to publish the proposed rate in the Sunday, October 6th Stamford Advocate, as it needs to be noticed a minimum of 2 weeks before the hearing; M. Handler suggested the hearing be held on the same date as the next Board Meeting.

Discussion & Vote: Proposed FY 2013 Connection Charge Program

P. Chakravarti provided a handout and led the discussion stating that there are ~120 properties in the list totaling \$2,434,795.44; program needs to be published for a Public Hearing and it was suggested to hold it on the same day as the other one, November 6; the charge may be paid in equal installments over 15 years with no interest charges; D. Huppert clarified that they can also pay the entire amount up-front, but with no discount as has been requested by some developers. D. Huppert motioned to approve, subject to the Public Hearing, the amount listed in the 2013 Booklet; seconded by C. Andreana. There was no additional discussion. **Vote:** 5-0-0.

R. Bull asked the Board if they would entertain offering a discount for up-front payments, a topic which has been on the table for some time. C. Andreana suggested that the Finance Committee could take this up. B. Brink stated that the discount would have to be offered to anyone with outstanding debt and D. Yanik said that comparisons to other municipalities should be made. P. Chakravarti commented that developers have stated it is advantageous to pay up-front, as it allows easier future sale of the property.

Bid Waiver Request: Purchase of Jet & Vacuum Truck

D. Capano stated that the WPCA needs to replace the 15 year old vac truck, also known by its trade name of "Camel", and that a demo unit with ~8,000 miles and 294 hours has been identified. B. Brink referred to handouts. It was noted that the vehicle has a single engine instead of a separate one to drive the pump and that the demo unit may be purchased at a significantly discounted price from a new truck; the warranty is equivalent and the vehicle has been inspected by WPCA Staff.

D. Capano motioned to approve purchase, on a bid waiver, of the Camel vac truck for \$299,913; seconded by D. Huppert. There was no additional discussion. **Vote:** 5-0-0.

M. Handler stated that he needed to leave the meeting shortly and requested a motion to go out of order. Motion made by D. Huppert; seconded by C. Andreana. There was no discussion. **Vote:** 5-0-0.

New Business

M. Handler stated that the bid period for the SWPCA Audit closes tomorrow (October 3) and that as of today (October 2) no bids have been received.

As this issued required a vote, M. Handler requested that agenda item #12 be taken next. D. Huppert motioned to go out of order; seconded by C. Andreana. There was no discussion. **Vote:** 5-0-0.

Approval: \$200,000 Capital Project Closeout of C20052 (Wedgemere Sewers) and Reallocation of Additional Appropriation for \$200,000 C22045 (Carriage Drive Sewers)

There was a brief discussion. Afterwards, M. Handler motioned to approve the item as stated; seconded by D. Huppert. There was no discussion. **Vote:** 5-0-0.

Note: At 6:41, M. Handler left the meeting. A quorum was no longer present (4 Board Members).

Executive Director's Top Issues Report

B. Brink presented a handout of the top issues and discussed each briefly. The report is attached as part of these minutes.

~~Discussion & Vote: Stamford Housing Authority Request Regarding Connection Fee Adjustment~~

D. McCabe stated that he met with the vice president of the Housing Authority to discuss their position and that this is a complex issue that will take some investigation on his part to resolve. He said that perhaps next month he would have a more detailed report. C. Andreana suggested that this topic be added to B. Brink's Top Issues in order to get this resolved.

Update and Discussion: Capital Projects

a. Pump Station: Dyke Lane

P. Chakravarti led the discussion stating that a 1250 kV generator would allow 2 large and 2 small pumps to run while a 1750 kV generator would handle all 5 pumps. He mentioned that Milone & McBroom and GEI think a 200 year storm would require all 5 pumps. B. Brink discussed the incremental cost between 1250 and 1750 and overall cost efficiency stating that the pump station would also be completely automated.

b. Sewer Projects: Carriage Drive, Perna Lane, Wedgemere, Sewer Evaluation Program

P. Chakravarti reported that the Carriage Drive residents are happy with the project; that the contractor paved Westhill and Greentree; that Clerk-of-the-Works, Felix Lemone, is at the site. R. Bull asked E. Orgera to assist in expediting the Clerk's contract as he is still being employed and paid as a vendor instead of a contract employee. P. Chakravarti reported that Perna Lane construction may start if project funding is approved; funding for Phase 1 is being requested in this Capital Budget; that the DEEP has scrapped the stream encroachment permitting requirement and; that the road and buildings in the various phases of the project were explained and it was noted that the lines from the Aquarion Water Company site and the Northeast School would be included. Chakravarti reported that for the Sewer Evaluation Program: ~70,000 linear feet along the Noroton River trunk line was done and the next day work would begin at Long Ridge Road; GIS mapping is being updated as well.

At 7:01 PM, E. Orgera declared the meeting over and stated that Agenda Item #14 would be added to the November Board Meeting Agenda.

Stamford WPCA Top Issues (10-2-13)

| No. | Issue | Action Description | Impact | Status | Schedule |
|-----|--|--|---------------------------|--|--|
| 1 | Odor Control | Place odor control scrubbers on line. Retain odor control consultant to evaluate odor control and provide guidance in optimizing operation of odor control scrubbers. | Minimize odors | Chemical odor control scrubbers for dryer building, dewatering building and primary clarifiers and thickeners on line and working. Carbon scrubber for dryer RTO bypass on line with temporary ductwork. | Place odor control scrubber for Raw Sewage Pump Station in service by 10/4. Perform air balance in Sludge Processing Building to optimize building ventilation and identify odor control for sludge blend tank and filtrate wet well, and install permanent ductwork to carbon scrubber by 11/1/13 |
| 2 | Sludge Drying and disposal | New service contract for Sludge Dryer Operation and Beneficial Use of Dried Sludge | Operations | Executed 6 month contract extension (to 3/30/14) to allow for negotiation of new 5 year contract with selected vendor (Synagro). | Met with Synagro on 9/5 to begin negotiation of new contract. |
| 3 | Internal Controls Over Financial Reporting | Address Auditor's comments on internal control deficiencies. | Financial | Ongoing. Established procedures and schedule for financial reporting by M. Turndahl and internal controls at WPCA. Responding to Auditor's data requests for FY 2013 Audit. | Filed 1 Administrative Account Clerk position (provisionally) to assist M. Turndahl in journal entries and financial reporting. Reviewing collection procedures for delinquent Sewer Assessment and Connection Charges. |
| 4 | Darien Agreement | Agreement expired 11/30/10. Execute new agreement | Financial | Met with Darien on 9/18 to resolve remaining issues | Present proposed agreement to SWPCA Board on 10/4 |
| 5 | WPCF evaluations and improvements | Engineering evaluations required in response to USEPA Admin Order. Study, design, and construct WPCF improvements to replace aged equipment and increase operations and energy efficiency. | Regulatory and Operations | Qualifications for Wastewater Engineering Services received on 9/26. | Select Consulting Engineer(s) to evaluate Plant Headworks (Task 1) and Flow Split to Final Clarifiers (Task 2) by December 1 st . |
| 6 | Sewer Connection Charge | Review Sewer Connection Charge Rate per Sewer Unit | Financial | Rate reviewed by Finance Committee on 9/25 | Review by SWPCA Board on 10/4 |

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| 7 | Separate storm water and flood protection from SWPCA budget | Charge city for SWPCA costs related to Stormwater Pump Stations and Hurricane Barrier | Financial and Regulatory | Will track road and storm sewer related costs in Carriage Drive for reimbursement by City. Tracking labor costs for storm water pumping stations and hurricane barrier. | Implementing CMMS to track labor costs for maintaining storm water pumping stations and hurricane barrier. |
| 8 | Personnel Safety | Implemented new hard hat policy. Wearing of hard hats required at all times except when in office areas, control rooms, plant laboratory, arriving and leaving plant site. Comply with requirements for arc flash protection. | Operations | New hard hat policy effective 9/1. Policy remains in place while being grieved by labor union. Perform arc flash assessments. | Meet with labor union to resolve hard hat grievance. Retain a consultant to develop a compliance program for arc flash protection by December 1 st . |