



**Stamford Water Pollution Control Authority Board Meeting
Wednesday, March 18, 2020**

5:30 p.m.

Meeting held via teleconference

Full Meeting Minutes

(The meeting was recorded.)

Attendees

Ed Kelly	Chairman, WPCA Board Member
Mark McGrath	WPCA Board Member/ Director of Operations
Sandy Dennies	WPCA Board Member / Interim Dir of Administration
Monica DiConstanzo	WPCA Board Member/Board of Reps
David Mannis	WPCA Board Member/Board of Finance
Merritt Nesin	WPCA Board Member
Robert Barocas	WPCA Board Member
William Brink	Executive Director, WPCA
Rhudean Bull	Administration Manager, WPCA
Ann Brown	Supervising Engineer, WPCA
Mark Turndahl	Accountant, WPCA
Crystal Blair	Administrative Account Assistant, WPCA
Robert Pudelka	Plant Supervisor
Steve Pietrzyk	Collections System Supervisor
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 5:35 pm with roll call and no pledge of allegiance. A quorum was present seven (7 Board Members).

Public Participation

No members from the public were present.

Minutes: Approval of the Full Board Meeting of February 24, 2020

Motion to approve the February 24, 2020 minutes was made by R. Boracas; seconded by M. Nesin. S. Dennies stated that she spoke to City Corporation Council, Kathryn Emmett, who stated she has the rights of a full voting member. There was no further discussion. **Vote: 6-0-1.** S. Dennies abstained.

Public Hearing for Minimum Bill Postponed to April Board Meeting

This agenda item tabled due to the pandemic. The WPCA will proceed with the April cycle billing without the minimum charge.

Safety Report

R. Pudelka stated he was unable to obtain an accounting of the injuries and the associated costs for FY 2019 and FY 2020 through March 1. He mentioned that two employees were out for surgery—a shoulder and knee. He stated that, unrelated to safety, the chemical suppliers of methanol and polymer have no issues supplying these chemical as a result of the pandemic thus far.

Administrative/Budget Report

R. Bull gave the highlights of the report stating that two OIT's were hired and that she is working with the HR

Department to post for the Assistant Plant Director. She also stated that applications are in for the Mechanic-In-Training positions however, the test date has not been set. R. Bull reported on Worker's Comp issues and on a vehicle accident; she stated that the SWPCA Workforce Mission Statement is complete and on the agenda for Board approval. She informed the Board that a work schedule has been completed and is attached for the workforce as a result of COVID19.

Sub-Committee Reports

Finance Committee

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

- Approved the January committee meeting minutes
- Discussed the FY21 Operating Budget and Revenue budget and noted that the total increase from the prior year is a little over one (1) percent
- Discussed SWPCA Bylaws stating that volunteers will be needed to take on the Bylaw's review and recommendation of changes, if needed, but that if there are no volunteers the Finance Committee will attempt the task.
- R. Boracas stated that he would continue to serve as Interim Chairman of the Finance Committee if there were no objections until the Board fills the Charter required Finance seat.

Technical Committee

M. Nesin reported the committee unofficial meeting on Wednesday, March 11th and the following occurred:

- Presentation by Huber Technology of "Sludge2Energy" system; M. Nesin stated he was disappointed with the presentation
- B. Brink went over how the Plant will be staffed as a result of COVID19
- Discussed and is recommending approval of Bid Waiver to BR Welding for \$42K for damaged steel
- Discussed Capital Projects for the Plant

Workforce Development Committee

R. Bull reported there was an unofficial meeting on Wednesday, March 11th and the following occurred:

- A discussion regarding the Mission Statement that is to be presented for approval.
 - a. **Discussion and vote: Workforce Development Committee Draft Mission Statement**

R. Bull presented the SWPCA Workforce Mission Statement to the Board for approval. M. Nesin made a motion to accept the SWPCA Workforce Mission Statement; seconded by E. Kelly. There was no discussion. **Vote: 6-0-1.** S. Dennies abstained.

Financial Update

CompUtil Report

L. Roca reported the following:

- CompUtil is preparing for the April cycle bill; plan is to send out bills beginning of April.
- CompUtil will send 1% of random cycle bills to R. Bull to review per the required contract language in a few days.
- Customer service calls are being made daily; money is coming in
- L. Roca reported that everyone on CompUtil's staff is able to work from home; receiving incoming customer calls from home as well and there will be no interruption of service. The Board had no questions of L. Roca.

Receivables & Arrears

M. Turndahl reported for the month of February

- \$2.4 million received verses \$2.858 million previous year
- Oldest receivables by year was paid down by \$ 18k during the month
- Average collection rate >99%; 14 cycle bills > 99% and 2 cycle bills > 98%
- Latest October bill over 96% collected
- Cash receipts at 55K for the month
- 115% ahead of budget due to one Sewer Connections payoff for the full amount instead of over the 15 year period; City paid off the assessment for a school bldg.

February 2020 Financial Update

M. Turndahl reported the following:

- \$3.453 million net income for February
- The financial overview shows \$8.268 million ahead of last year with an explanation for variance
- \$8.6 million in Capital Reserve Account
- Reported \$17.920 million available for Capital Projects expenses
- \$16 million available in Pool Cash; there are no issues with having enough cash

R. Boracas inquired about the business / collection being impacted by COVID19, to which M. Turndahl replied that it is too early to tell about problems with cash. He stated that for the last couple of months cash has been slow, therefore, it is hard to project. He reported that since businesses are closed, consumption may decrease.

A&W Collections Report & Update

W. Ward reported the following:

- 318 active files; 42 files referred for a total of 360 active files
- 19 files were closed since last month
- 77 accounts referred with balances above the (\$5,000) Foreclosure Threshold
- Demand letters sent February 15th
- Of the files, 52 are currently in Payment Plans, 8 stayed due to bankruptcy filings
- For foreclosures, seven (7) active foreclosures
- Collected \$39,020.52 this month
- Total collected for 2020 \$140,076.74

COVID-19 Continuity of Operation Plan for SWPCA

B. Brink stated that the SWPCA Continuity of Operations Plan was sent to the Board on Monday. He reported the biggest impact is that the operation is down to a skeleton crew with the intent of limiting as many staff as possible. He stated the office staff is on a rotating work schedule with some days working remotely from home since business needs to continue as best as possible; most management staff is working from home; the Lab staff is also on a rotating schedule as a result of having to meet Permit regulations; the Plant mechanic staff—three (3) available mechanics—are coming in as needed and the Collection System mechanics, of which there are four (4), is rotating two to a week.

He stated that collections will probably go down due to COVID19; that the collection rate, which is usually in the upper 90's, will more than likely not occur but, the SWPCA has plenty of cash in its reserve. He stated the SWPCA will eventually collect, as late bills will, in time, receive a lien for nonpayment. He stated everything with Synagro is good thus far; they are handling sludge as usual but a major concern is a shortage of disposal sites.

Executive Director's Top Ten

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

FY 2020-2021 Operating & Expense Budget

B. Brink opened the discussion of the FY 2020-2021 Operating and Expense Budget asking the Board to look at the presentation and budget documents previously emailed. He said that slide #9 of the presentation shows the FY 20/21 final budget at \$27, 712,972, a 1.2 percent increase over last year or \$326,711. He reported the staff changes to the Operating budget and the dollar impact of \$47,647. R. Bull explained the changes in detail. For the Revenue budget, he stated that the SWPCA is expecting over a million dollars in Nitrogen Credits but right now the actual number is unknown. He stated that the impact on the user charge will be minimal. After some further discussion, M. McGrath made the motion approve the FY 2020-2021 Operating Expense budget of \$27,712,972; seconded by R. Barocas. There was no discussion. **Vote: 6-0-1.** S. Dennies abstained.

Discussion and vote: Approval of a Bid Waiver for BR Welding Change Order No. 1 in the amount of \$42,012.00 for demolition of damaged steel, replacement of the top 7 feet of one equipment tower column, replacement of various tower beams and replacement of tower bracing elements.

A. Brown stated that BR Welding is the original vendor selected to demo and repair the damaged steel and that this would be a change order. M. Nesin made a motion to approve the BR Welding change order in the amount of \$42, 012 for the demolition of damaged steel, replacement of the top 7 feet of one equipment tower column, replacement of various tower beams and replacement of tower bracing elements; seconded by R. Barocas.

D. Mannis stated the BOF requests that labor changes must have merit and the request must be detailed. B. Brink explained the special circumstances for the request and that City legal and the Purchasing Agent were consulted. After a brief discussion, the vote was made. **Vote: 6-0-1.** S. Dennies abstained.

Discussion and vote: Bid Waiver for Human Resources services for consultant Greg Chartier, Ph.D. in the amount of \$54,000

B. Brink explained that M. Handler brought in an outside HR Consultant in light of the number of employee grievances / complaints and to determine what was happening at the WPCA site and how the Human Resources Department perception differed. After a lengthy discussion, D. Mannis approved the bid waiver for the Human Resources Consultant Greg Chartier, Ph.D. in the amount of \$54,000; seconded by M. DiConstanzo. There was no discussion. **Vote: 5-0-2.** S. Dennies and R. Boracas abstained

Old Business

No old business discussed.

New Business:

M. Nesin mentioned that the shed for the sludge trailers previously discussed by the Board and placed on hold should be reconsidered due to the smells that may occur this summer. He stated we do not need the complaints from the Plant's neighbors and this should be a topic at the next Technical Committee meeting.

E. Kelly inquired about electronic signatures for SWPCA documents to which S. Dennies stated that the City authorizes electronic signatures.

R. Boracas inquired about Board insurance to which E. Kelly replied that the Board members are indemnified by the City and that as long as there is no intentional malfeasance, the Board members are in good shape.

At 7:26 pm, M. McGrath made a motion to adjourn the March meeting; seconded by M. DiConstanzo. There was no further discussion. **Vote: 7-0-0.**

Stamford WPCA Top Issues (3-16-20)

No.	Issue	Action Description	Impact	Status	Schedule
1	COVID-19 Outbreak	Take action to reduce impact on SWPCA Operations and Finances	Operations and Financial	Have instructed staff on prevention. Have reduced staff to essential personnel needed to operate and maintain WPCF and Collection system. Admin staff working from home.	Will adjust based on response to pandemic and direction by Mayor
2	Sludge dryer had an explosion on 8/1/19 that resulted in damage to the dryer equipment and building. Currently hauling sludge cake at additional cost until dryer can be repaired and put back in service.	Need to replace damaged dryer equipment and building window, doors, skylights and masonry damaged by explosion.	Operations and Financial	Replacement of equipment damaged by explosion has been released for fabrication by Andritz . Issued PO for other equipment and repairs by Andritz totaling \$2.3 million.	Will receive bids from contractors for installation of dryer equipment and building repairs on March 31 st . Dryer repairs to be completed by September.
3	UV System Performance and Permit Exceedances	Install temporary liquid chlorine disinfection and dechlorination to provide effluent disinfection if the UV system malfunctions.	Regulatory and Operations	A loose connection that caused UV exceedance on 9/3/19 has been fixed. No exceedances since.	Construction of two (2) new UV channels to be completed by June 2020 as part of the Preliminary, Secondary and Disinfection Treatment Improvements.
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 I SSES (CCTV, smoke testing) and Pilot Area Sewer Rehabilitation have been completed. Met with CTDEEP on 1/21 to review I/I Removal Program and Phase II SSES Report.	CDM Smith has completing the design of sewer and MH rehabilitation identified by Phase I SSES. Phase 1A sewer rehabilitation to begin in March.
5	Reduce energy costs	Evaluate and implement energy conservation measures (ECM)	Operations and Financial	Eversource rebate for the LED Lighting, two (2) banana blade mixers, and UV System Upgrade will total \$283,658.	Energy Resources to install interior LED lighting in Administration, Operations, Sludge Processing and Chemical Building this spring.

6	Personnel Safety	Comply with requirements for arc flash protection.	Operations	Dyke Lane PS electrical upgrade project has been completed.	Interviewed all three (3) firms who submitted proposals for performing the electrical preventive maintenance (EPM). Have requested additional information from one of the respondents to enable interview panel to make a selection.
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	Six (6) firms submitted qualifications in response to the RFQ to prepare a Sludge Management Plan.	Technical Committee has short listed four (4) firms for an interview on May 11 th .
8	WPCF evaluations and improvements	Study, design, and construct WPCF improvements to replace aged equipment and increase operations and energy efficiency.	Regulatory and Operations	C H Nickerson continuing work on the two (2) new UV channels and is starting work on the new 2000 kW Generator.	Two (2) new UV channels to be completed by June 2020. Work on RSPS to begin in spring. Overall construction to be complete by June 2021.
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	Tighe & Bond has completed the evaluation of alternatives for sewerage the Perna Lane Area. Presented alternatives at public meeting on 12/11/19.	Sent survey to property owners. Responses due by end of March.
10	Have a number of open positions that are affecting adequate treatment plant staffing for 24/7 operation.	Fill open positions for Plant Supervisor and Shift Foremen (2).	Regulatory and Operations	Rob Pudelka promoted to Plant Supervisor. Promoted Operator III to fill one (1) Shift Foremen position.	Current open positions include Assistant Plant Supervisor, one (1) Shift Foremen, and two (2) Mechanics in Training.