



Stamford Water Pollution Control Authority Board Meeting

Monday, August 15, 2022

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 (Absent)	WPCA Board Member/ Director of Operations
Sandra Dennies	WPCA Board Member / Director of Administration
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
Adam Perlaky (Absent)	WPCA Board Member
Steven Bagwin	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
Abigail Logrono	Account Clerk II, 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 5:41 pm with roll call; there was no pledge of allegiance. A quorum was present six (6 Board Members).

Public Participation

No members of the public were present.

Minutes Approval of the Full Board Meeting of July 18, 2022

E. Kelly motioned to approve the July 18, 2022 minutes; seconded by J.R. McMullen. There was no further discussion. **Vote 6-0-0**

Safety Report

R. Pudelka reported that according to the City's Risk Management last year injury costs totaled 1,800k vs 172k, this time last year; 50% reduction in injuries. Four (4) OIT's and two (2) MIT were hired and scheduled for Confined Space training.

Administrative/Budget Report

R. Bull reported the following:

- Update on current vacancies, one (1) Master Mechanic will be retiring,
- New hires
- Open positions and testing dates
- Covid-19 update
- No vehicle accidents to report
- Expenditure 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 July 15, 2022 meeting minutes; monthly receivables
- Rate setting, which is the topic carried over for discussion at the full Board Meeting

Technical Committee

M. Nesin reported the committee meeting was held on Wednesday, August 10, 2022, and the following was discussed:

- Toured Plant site, no big construction going on, plant running well.
- Visited Pump Stations; Looking at bids for some upgrade
- Discussed the new building for Collection System Staff (bldg. 6A); looking at options to repair the leaky roof or moving the site to the animal shelter area after they've moved out
- Discussed adding a second pump station into the Perna Lane design; B. Brink and A. Brown are reviewing the possible areas
- Recommended approval of the Siemens bid waiver to the full board
- Update on Engineering Studies and Designs

Workforce Development Committee

S. Bagwin reported there was a committee meeting held on Wednesday, August 10, 2022 and that R. Bull had reported on what was discussed at the meeting in her Admin report.

Financial Update

CompUtil Report

L Roca reported that 2,270 Intent to Lien letter were sent on July 13 and as of now, liens will be placed on over 900 account. She stated that Closing have slowed down somewhat but, that Stamford still has a considerable amount of Closings per month. She stated that Liens are to be placed on August 18 and that referrals were made to A&W. She concluded saying the WPCA has worked the Unmatched Report uncovering many accounts that were not being billed. She concluded the report saying that the total number of active accounts is now at 19,810.

The Board agreed to discuss a topic on the Finance Committee agenda regarding a property owner asking for interest relief for the pandemic's effects on the business. L. Roca provided the diminishing consumption since the beginning of the COID shut down. After a brief discussion, S. Dennies suggested that the building owner contact the Department of Economic Development for information on Grants for such matters and on small business loans the State is offering due to business difficulty during the pandemic. R. Bull stated that the WPCA does not typically reduce the interest charged to accounts. The discussion concluded with the Board asking B. Brink to get a legal opinion on the matter for the Department of Legal Affairs.

Receivables & Arrears

M. Turndahl reported for the month of July

- \$2.829 received verses \$2.476 million previous year sewer use fees
- Oldest receivables by year was paid down by \$287,881
- Average collection rate 99.28% vs.98.85% last month's
- Cash collection thru July is at \$597K--\$52K over last year this time

June 2022 Financial Update

M. Turndahl reported the following:

- \$1.9 million net income for April
- \$7.7 million available in Pool Cash
- \$22.1 million in Capital Reserve Account
- \$14.66 million in Bond Proceeds

Executive Director's Top Ten

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

A&W Collections Report & Update

J. Mastracchio reported the following:

- 230 active files
- 54 accounts with balances above (\$5,000) Foreclosure Threshold
- 30 In Payment Plans, 2 stayed due to bankruptcy filings

- Fourteen (14) active foreclosures
- 150 with no payment plan below Foreclosure Threshold
- No referrals
- 6 Files closed since last meeting
- Collected \$17,921.69 this month
- Total collected for 2022 \$214,726.09

Discussion & Vote: FY22/23 Proposed User Charge Rate for Publication

B. Brink presented the rate setting model and said that the numbers are based on the FY '23 operating budget minus revenue from other sources. He explained that the initial increase was at \$5.36—a \$0.09 or 1.90 percent increase over last year with the collection rate at 97%. He explained that after a discussion at the Finance Committee meeting, their recommendation is to increase the collection rate to 97.5%, as history shows the WPCA collection rate at 99%. B. Brink explained that the history shows a high collection rate but that those rates include old debt collected over time, which gets reflected in the current collection rate numbers. He explained that although the collections rates are high now, it was not always so and that the Board needs to consider that factor. After a lengthy discussion, R. Barocas made a motion to approve the proposed FY'23 User Rate at \$5.33—a \$0.06 or 1.38 percent increase over last year; seconded by S. Bagwin. There was no further discussion. **Vote 6-0-0**

Discussion & Vote: Approval of Bid Waiver for Siemens Industry, Inc. for a one year HVAC Service Contract in an Amount not to Exceed \$61,356.00

A. Brown explained that the WPCA received a proposal from Siemens for the annual service contract in the amount of \$61,356.00. She explained that the contract covers the on-site emergency calls for the plant and pump station, as well as inspections and preventive maintenance services and that the contract includes the repair/replacement of moving parts. She reported that over the last year, Siemens was called to the plant over 20 times and the majority of the cost was covered under the contract. S. Dennies made a motion to approve the bid waiver for Siemens Industry, Inc. for a one year HVAC service contract in an amount not to exceed \$61,356.00; seconded by E. Kelly. There was no further discussion. **Vote 6-0-0**

Discussion & Vote: Date change for September Regular Board Meeting

R. Bull explained that to have sufficient time to post the proposed rate in the Advocate and for CompUtil to perform test runs for the October billing, the September meeting should be held earlier than the currently scheduled September 19th meeting date. After a brief discussion, S. Dennies made a motion to move the September 19th Regular Board meeting date to September 12th; seconded by E. Kelly. There was no further discussion. **Vote 6-0-0**

Discussion & Vote: Transfers from SWPCA labor accounts to true up end of FY22 salary deficits

R. Bull explained that the Board must approve transferring funds to those salary accounts with a deficit and that the funds transferred must come from a salary account with a surplus. She presented a spreadsheet with all WPCA Labor accounts depicting salary accounts deficits and surpluses. S. Dennies made a motion to approve the transfers from SWPCA Labor accounts to true up end of FY'22 salary deficits; seconded by S. Bagwin. There was no further discussion. **Vote 6-0-0.**

Old Business:

The Chairman asked for an update on charging fees to those property owners on sewer streets that are not connected to the sanitary sewer. J.R. McMullen reported that Assistant Corporation Counsel, Dana Lee's preliminary answer is that as far as the City Charter goes, there is no direct language that specifically addresses this matter. He went on to say that [he] will look at State Statute and the Ordinance again to help determine if the WPCA can impose this fee. He stated Dana Lee is on vacation and will review the matter upon his return. S. Dennies requested that Dana Lee attends the WPCA Board meeting with any findings and / or opinions on this matter.

R. Bull reported that the names of the Board member have been updated on the WPCA website and that the minutes have been placed under Board and Commissions for easier location on the site. S. Dennies suggested contacting the Mayor's office to get the WPCA meetings placed on the City's monthly meeting calendar.

New Business:

No New business discussed.

At 6:48 pm, E. Kelly made a motion to adjourn the August meeting; seconded by S. Dennies. There was no further discussion. **Vote: 6-0-0.**

Stamford WPCA Top Issues (8/15/22)

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. All have returned to work. 91% of staff is fully vaccinated.	Unvaccinated staff no longer required to be tested weekly by City contractor.
2	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.	Received only two bids on March 17 th , both approx. \$10 million. Bids were much higher than capital budget of \$5.6 million or Engineer's estimate of \$6.4 million.	Will rebid in September after including cost-saving measures in the design without sacrificing project quality. Plan to start construction early in 2023.
3	Providing sanitary sewers to Perna Lane Area	Evaluate cost effective options for providing sanitary sewers to the Perna Lane Area.	Operations	Over 2/3 of property owners in Phase I are in favor of the project. Phase I is moving forward to design and construction.	Tighe & Bond to complete preliminary design report by September. Finalize design in 2022 with gravity sewer in High Ridge Road and an additional pump station or low pressure sewers on Perna Lane. Bid project for start of construction in spring 2023.
4	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	Have completed rehabilitation of sewers in Pilot and Phase I sub areas. Have completed sewer system evaluation surveys (SSES) in Phase II subareas.	CDM-Smith has completed design of sewer rehabilitation in Phase II sewer subareas next on priority list for I/I removal. Will get bid date from City Purchasing. Also investigating high flows entering Saddle Rock PS for possible large source of I/I in Shippan service area.
5	BOR Resolution No. 4113 calls for planning for upgrading City drainage infrastructure and the WWTF to cope with extreme weather events.	Coordinate with City Engineering to evaluate impact of extreme weather events on the Hurricane Barrier and three (3) pump stations. Evaluate impact on SWPCA's pump stations and WWTF	Regulatory and Operations	Hazen completed a hydraulic evaluation of WPCF. Maximum raw sewage flow before overtopping mixed liquor channel to FST's is 69 mgd, consistent with design capacity of RSPS of 68 mgd.	Will coordinate with Matt Quinones, Director of Operations and City Engineering to develop short and long term action plans for SWPCA.

6	Personnel Safety	Comply with requirements for arc flash protection.	Operations	Siemens has completed electrical preventive maintenance (EPM) on the electrical switchgear at the treatment plant.	Data collected by Siemens from the EPM will be used by Tighe & Bond to complete the arc flash analyses and MCC panel labeling.
7	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 submitted its draft report on 6/16/22.	Technical Committee to visit treatment plants having sludge processing facilities similar to those being evaluated, especially new sludge gasification facilities in Linden, NJ and Schenectady, NY which are nearing completion.
8	WPCF evaluations and improvements	Study, design, and construct WPCF improvements to replace aged equipment and increase operations and energy efficiency.	Regulatory and Operations	The Raw Sewage Pump Station, Secondary Treatment and UV Disinfection Improvements are now complete with all new equipment in service.	Reseed areas disturbed by construction in September.
9	Facilities Building 6A which houses SWPCA Collection System, Electricians and Regulatory Compliance staff is deteriorated and has a leaking roof that cannot be fixed.	Evaluate options for relocating SWPCA staff that currently work in Building 6A	Operations	The Facilities Buildings, including Building 6A, was tested for mold and other contaminants that could adversely affect the health of building occupants. Tests were negative.	Evaluating cost of leasing a portable building similar to those used for portable classrooms measuring 60' by 24' and fitted for office space. Will issue a RFQ for an architect to develop a conceptual design for a new building to house SWPCA staff displaced from Building 6A.