



**Stamford Water Pollution Control Authority Board Meeting
Monday, October 16, 2023**

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
Benjamin Barnes	WPCA Board Member/ Director of Administration
Matthew Quinones (Absent)	WPCA Board Member/ Director of Operations
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
Steven Bagwin	WPCA Board Member
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	Administrative Account Assistant, WPCA
Robert Pudelka	Plant Supervisor
Steve Pietrzyk	Collections System Supervisor
David Yanik	City Comptroller
Tom McKirdy	Collection Attorney (Pilicy Ryan & Ward, P.C.)
Lynda Roca	CompUtil

Call to Order, Pledge and Roll Call

E. Kelly, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 5:31 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 September 18, 2023

S. Bagwin made a motion to approve the September 18, 2023, minutes; seconded by J.R. McMullen. There was no further discussion. **Vote 6-0-0.**

Note:

At 5:33pm, Board member R. Barocas joined the meeting. Seven (7) Board Members were present.

Administrative/Budget Report

R. Bull briefly reported the following:

- Staffing vacancies
- Staffing issues
- There were (2) minor injuries reported

- IUOE Retiree payout
- One (1) positive COVID19 case
- Quarterly Staff Meeting update
- Darien Invoice
- Budget Breakdown

Sub-Committee Reports

Finance Committee

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

- There was a quorum
- The prior two (2) monthly meeting minutes were approved
- Review of the financials. He stated that he's looking forward to the Oracle system being able to provide a complete financial picture in the next two months.
- No old business discussed; topics were carried forward for future discussion

Technical Committee

M. Nesin reported the committee meeting was held on Wednesday, October 11, 2023, and the following was discussed:

- Update on the September 29th storm event. He gave a special acknowledgement to S. Pietrzyk's for his management of the pumpstations
- He commended the supervisors and staff for not having any exceedances after 60 million gallons went through the Plant during the storm event

Workforce Development Committee

E. Kelly stated that there was a meeting held on Wednesday, October 11, 2023, but that R. Bull had reported on what would have been discussed at the meeting in her admin report.

Financial Update

CompUtil Report

L. Roca stated that they are very busy. They got almost 20,000 bills out in three (3) days. The bills are broken up to help with the process and the flow of phone calls. She said Tuesdays are usually their biggest days, that's when the most monies come in. A lot of the customers are paying through Kubra, the payment vendor and foreclosure payoffs are coming in as well. She reported that a lot of calls are coming in regarding the minimum bill. The bill went from \$30-\$50. The older population are questioning the higher bill, and the staff have been explaining the reasoning for the minimum bill increase. She also explained that adjustment requests are down due to the one-time adjustment policy. She also stated that Kubra has not delivered on their promise to offer autopay and e-billing, which is frustrating. She said that they continue to work through it, walking customers through the online payment process as opposed to sending them to the Customer Service Specialist, who is already inundated with calls.

She went on to say that out of the 19,809 active accounts, 3% have liens on them, but as payments come in, the liens will be released. She concluded with an update on the Oracle system information transition with the Tax department. She stated that they're at a standstill with some issues that they are working to get resolved. Currently, they're waiting to hear back with instructions on how to proceed. She wants to make sure they're doing exactly what the City needs them to do with the system before proceeding with the project.

Receivables & Arrears

V. DeCausey reported for the month of September

- \$167,904k sewer use & assessment fees collected
- \$1,194,228 million total collection for FY' 2023-2024
- 5% of the budget revenues collected YTD
- The October billing was \$11,452,111 million
- 3.81% October billing collection rate
- 96.46% of the April bill collected
- Average collection rate 95.22% vs. 99.33% last month's

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

T. McKirdy reported the following:

- 268 active files
- 52 accounts with balances above (\$5,000) Foreclosure Threshold
- 8 In Payment Plans, 1 stayed due to bankruptcy filing
- 41 active foreclosures
- 169 with no payment plan below Foreclosure Threshold
- 27 Files referred
- 16 Files closed since last meeting
- Collected \$30,252.27 for October as of today
- Total collected for 2023 \$572,469.41

Executive Director's Top Ten

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

Discussion: FY'23 Year End Report

R. Bull reported that the year-end report is incomplete as depreciation costs and other bookings remain outstanding. She explained that the depreciation must now be booked by the WPCA, which is different than how the information has been booked in the past. She further explained that the Finance Manager was recently granted access to this function in Oracle but she has not yet been trained. She stated that training for the WPCA Depreciation should occur over the next month.

B. Barnes explained that that his team is working to push out the training to the departments and the other bookings into the Oracle system will happen soon.

Old Business:

No old business discussed.

New Business:

No old business discussed.

At 6:15 pm, E. Kelly made a motion to adjourn the October meeting; seconded by R. Barocas. There was no further discussion. **Vote: 7-0-0.**

Stamford WPCA Top Issues (10/16/23)

No.	Issue	Action Description	Impact	Status	Schedule
1	Service Contract with Synagro to Operate and Maintain Sludge Dryer and Dispose of Sludge Solids expires on March 3, 2024	Evaluate options for operating the sludge dryer and sludge disposal.	Operations and Financial	Advertised a RFQ from firms interested in operating the sludge dryer on 10/11.	Will receive qualifications in November. Respondents will be evaluated to determine if they are qualified to respond to a Request for Proposal.
2	Primary sludge pumping and dewatering 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 dewatering 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 preparing a jacking pit for installing new primary sludge piping between primary settling tank No. 1 and the primary sludge pump building.	Will be replacing primary sludge piping this fall and installing primary settling tank No. 1 equipment in February. Construction expected to take up to 2 years.
3	Providing sanitary sewers to Perna Lane Area	Evaluate cost effective options for providing sanitary sewers to the Perna Lane Area.	Operations	Tighe & Bond has completed re-design of the sanitary sewers in Phase I and is finalizing plans for the two pump stations. Submitted response to CTDOT review comments for final approval.	Bid the project for construction this fall to begin construction in early 2024.
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	National Water Main performing sewer rehabilitation in Phase II subareas next on priority list for I/I removal.	National Water Main has cleaned the sewers in preparation for installing a sewer liner. Work to continue this fall.
5	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 it will be out of service.	Hurricane barrier gate is expected to be inoperable starting January 2025 for 3 to 6 months. SWPCA needs to evaluate impact of storm event on treatment plant without protection of the gate.

6	Personnel Safety	Comply with requirements for arc flash protection.	Operations	Need to complete the data collection on electrical switchgear by Siemens to complete the Arc Flash analysis.	Data collected by Siemens from the electrical preventive maintenance will be used to complete the arc flash analyses and MCC panel labeling. Have requested a proposal from Siemens to perform the Arc Flash analysis. Meeting with Siemens on 10/20.
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 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.
8	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	Scheduled kick-off meeting with Gannett Fleming Engineers for start of final design of RAS/WAS and plant water pumps on 10/19.	Gannett Fleming to complete final design by summer of 2024.
9	Facilities Building 6A which houses SWPCA Collection System, Electricians and Regulatory Compliance staff is deteriorated and has a leaking roof.	Evaluate options for relocating SWPCA staff that currently work in Building 6A	Operations	Collection System Staff have moved into their trailers.	City is planning to replace the roofs on the Facilities Buildings, including Building 6A, by the end of this year.
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 draft report on the proposed upgrades to the three (3) pump stations.	Tighe & Bond to finalize their recommendations for the pump stations upgrade/replacement after receiving SWPCA staff comments and will then prepare a proposal for design.