



**Stamford Water Pollution Control Authority Board Meeting**

**Monday, March 18, 2024**

**5:30 p.m.**

**Meeting held via teleconference**

**Full Meeting Minutes**

**Attendees**

Ed Kelly	Chairman, WPCA Board Member
Amiel Goldberg	Vice Chair, WPCA Board Member/Board of Reps
Benjamin Barnes	WPCA Board Member/ Director of Administration
Matthew Quinones	WPCA Board Member/ Director of Operations
J.R. McMullen	WPCA Board Member/Board of Finance
Robert Barocas	WPCA Board Member/Finance Committee Chair
Steven Bagwin	WPCA Board Member/ Workforce Development Chair
Merritt Nesin	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 (Absent)	Financial Manager, WPCA
Crystal Blair	Administrative Account Assistant, WPCA
Abigail Logrono	Procurement Coordinator, WPCA
Maria LoDolce	Seasonal, WPCA
Robert Pudelka (Absent)	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 5:30 pm with roll call; there was no pledge of allegiance. A quorum was present eight (8 Board Members).

**Public Participation**

No members of the public were present.

**Minutes Approval of the Full Board Meeting of February 26, 2024**

E. Kelly made a motion to approve the February 26, 2024, minutes; seconded by S. Bagwin. There was no further discussion. **Vote 8-0-0.**

**Note:**

At 5:33pm, Board member M. Quinones joined the meeting. Nine (9) Board members present.

**Update: Perna Lane Sewer Extension**

A. Brown explained that a letter of conditional award was given to Grasso Construction; that the contract duration is April 2024- August 2025. She explained that the contractor is in the submittal phase of the project and that they need to submit a COI, Bonds, Agreement, and material shop prints for approval. She stated that a pre-construction

meeting is being held in two weeks and that, as High Ridge Road is a state roadway, the CTDOT will be involved; this may determine the schedule of work for the contractor.

She went on to report that the Contractor has indicated that they want to start on High Ridge Road and Perna Lane with the gravity sewers and will work on the pump stations during the winter months. She said the homeowners will not be able to connect to the system until the entire system is completed, tested and accepted, which should be in August 2025 and that after all costs are known, the assessment will be calculated.

She explained that weekly updates have gone out to the Technical Committee and District Board of Reps and that the updates can be found on the WPCA website; that if any board members want an update sent to them directly, she would do so. After a brief discussion, the Board moved to the next agenda item.

#### **Administrative/Budget Report**

R. Bull briefly reported the following:

- Staffing vacancies
- Staffing issues
- One positive COVID19 case reported
- One injury reported today
- One grievance filed
- No vehicle accidents reported
- KUBRA update
- Next Quarterly Staff Meeting scheduled for May 9<sup>th</sup>
- FY'25 Budget is complete
- FY'23 Audit still ongoing

#### **Sub-Committee Reports**

##### **Finance Committee**

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

- February meeting minutes approved
- Received and discussed the Financial report
- Audit expected to be completed in the month of April
- Two business items have been tabled to the next month's meeting, with the expectation that the council will review the pending items before that time.

##### **Technical Committee**

E. Kelly reported the committee meeting was held on Thursday, March 14, 2024, and the following was discussed:

- Recommendation for the full Board to approve Tighe & Bond proposal for construction phase engineering for Perna Lane
- Recommendation for to the full Board to approval for Tighe & Bond's proposal for the design and bidding services for Saddle Rock Pump Station
- S. Pietrzyk updated the committee on the collection system
- B. Brink gave an update on Plant operations
- A. Brown updated the Committee on all engineering studies and designs as well as the construction projects
- P. Brown also gave an update on Grasso Construction being awarded the Perna Lane project

##### **Workforce Development Committee**

S. Bagwin stated that the Workforce Development Committee meeting was held on Thursday, March 14, 2024, and the following was discussed:

- R. Bull reported on all the topics discussed in her Administrative Report
- Open positions
- Strategies for filling positions
- IUOE contract settlement retro payout

#### **Financial Update**

##### **CompUtil Report**

L. Roca provided an update, confirming that they're ready to bill. She reported that R. Bull reviewed and approved the bills for distribution and that the bills will be sent out on the night of the second, third, fourth, and fifth. She

stated that CompUtil continues to make collection calls and receive payments and that regarding internal accounts, D. Day has fifty-nine (59) while Ackerly and Ward have two hundred seventy-six (276) in collections making payments, totaling 335 accounts. Sher reported that there are 683 accounts with liens, out of which 348 are regular accounts not in collections and that payments are prioritized by the oldest arrears being paid first. She concluded saying that overall, the collection rate is over 99% and that once \$11 million is billed in April, the collection rate will temporarily decrease before rising again.

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

T. McKirdy informed the Board that Pilicy Ryan & Ward has changed back to Ackerly & Ward.

- 235 active files
- 23 accounts with balances above (\$5,000) Foreclosure Threshold
- 2 accounts with payment plans that are not in foreclosure, but are over the threshold
- 0 stayed due to bankruptcy filing
- 18 active foreclosures
- 8 accounts foreclosure eligible
- 209 with no payment plan below Foreclosure Threshold
- 10 files referred for the month of February
- 8 Files closed since last meeting
- Collected \$15,302.97 for March
- Total collected for 2024 \$152,592.64

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

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

#### **Update: Final FY 2024-2025 Operating Expense and Revenue Budget**

R. Bull explained that the final FY '25 Operating and Expense budget increase remains at 2.1 percent compared to the FY'23-24 budget. She explained that the approved February 26, 2024, budget of \$28,919,027 increased by \$4,270 to the final amount to \$28,923,297 with the variance change of \$591,315 to \$595,585. In comparison, the Revenue budget changed or decreased by .1 percent to 1.8 percent due to the \$533,080 amount required for the debt ratio.

B. Brink briefly went over the revenue portion of the FY '25 budget explaining the various variances saying that the total revenue budget is \$29,552,956, to cover the debt ratio.

#### **Discussion and vote: Amendment No. 2 to our Agreement with Tighe & Bond for the Perna Lane Sewer Project for Construction Phase Engineering Services in an amount estimated not to exceed \$528,000**

A. Brown explained that this request is for amendment #2 with Tighe & Bond, which includes the cost of the administration portion to review the submittals that come in to ensure all the materials, the pumps, and the equipment meet specification, as well as any issues that could be encountered in the field. She explained that there will be a full-time inspector on site for the duration of the project to watch what is occurring and answer any questions; ensuring the contractor is working in accordance with specifications. She explained that the Technical Committee agreed to recommend approval of the proposal and Amendment #2 to the full board. E. Kelly questioned if the inspector is known to us, to which A. Brown replied that she spoke to her colleagues in Engineering, and they are aware of this inspector. E. Kelly made a motion to approve Amendment No. 2 to our Agreement with Tighe & Bond for the Perna Lane Sewer Project for Construction Phase Engineering Services in an amount estimated not to exceed \$528,000; seconded by B. Barnes. There was no further discussion. **Vote: 8-0-0.**

**Note:** J.R. McMullin was not available for the vote.

#### **Discussion and vote: Amendment No. 1 to our Agreement with Tighe & Bond for Wastewater Pump Station Upgrades for design and bidding of the Upgrade of the Rock Pump Station in an amount estimated not to exceed \$62,450**

A. Brown presented a proposal for final design and bidding phase services for Saddle Rock Pump Station. She explained that this proposal will be Amendment #1 to the agreement with Tighe & Bond for the Pump Station Upgrades of Saddle Rock, Commerce and Alvord Lane Pump Stations. She stated that the Saddle Rock Road pump station is in the worst shape of the three, and therefore, the design and construction of that station is the priority. E. Kelly reported that the Technical Committee agreed to recommended approval to the full board, and he made a motion to approve the Amendment No. 1 to our Agreement with Tighe & Bond for wastewater pump station

upgrades for design and bidding of the Upgrade of the Rock Pump Station in an amount estimated not to exceed \$62,450; seconded by

**Old Business:**

E. Kelly sought guidance on signing contracts in his capacity as Chairman of the WPCA Board. He elaborated on a recent issue concerning the contract for the Cumming Stormwater Pump Station, valued at \$95,000. Given his limited familiarity with City procedures, he expressed a need for assistance in navigating the process. B. Brink clarified that, in this specific case, the repair of two pumps at the station underwent a competitive bidding process open to the public, and contract approval did not necessitate Board consent. However, as the designated signatory, the Chairman's approval was required, prompting the contract to be presented for his signature. Following a brief discussion, the Chairman expressed gratitude for the clarification, acknowledging his lack of full comprehension of the rules and deeming it prudent to raise the issue during the meeting. He emphasized the Board's awareness that his signature signifies expenditure not necessarily addressed in meetings.

B. Barnes noted that typically, when such matters are brought to his attention, a stamp on the signature page bears the initial of a member of the law department, indicating the contract's review for compliance. He affirmed that these initials serve as authorization for signing, indicating the document's approval.

**New Business:**

No new business discussed.

At 6:18pm, E. Kelly made a motion to adjourn the March meeting; seconded by R. Barocas. There was no further discussion. **Vote: 8-0-0.**

### Stamford WPCA Top Issues (3/15/24)

No.	Issue	Action Description	Impact	Status	Schedule
1	The Plant Supervisor position will be open at the end of March. This position requires a Class IV Operator license to meet the Plant's permit..	Advertise and interview qualified candidates for Plant Supervisor and fill the position as soon as possible.	Regulatory and Operations	Shift foremen have Class III license and will direct the operation and maintenance of the plant.	Will request HR to expedite the hiring process.
2	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	Executed an amendment to our Service Contract with Synagro extending the Service Contract to September 3, 2024.	Sent RFP to two firms that responded to an RFQ and were determined to be qualified. Proposals are due 3/28/24.
3	Primary sludge pumping and degritting equipment are 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.	C H Nickerson completed the installation of the new primary sludge piping and scum line from primary clarifier (PC) No. 1 to the primary sludge pump building.	Complete installation of primary sludge piping and scum piping from PC No. 2 by end of March. Construction is on schedule for the project to be substantially completed by January 2025.
4	Providing sanitary sewers to Perna Lane Area	Evaluate cost effective options for providing sanitary sewers to the Perna Lane Area.	Operations	Construction contract has been awarded to Grasso Construction with the lowest bid of \$8,263,194.	Pre-construction meeting tentatively scheduled for March 27 <sup>th</sup> . Grasso expects to start construction in the spring and complete construction by the end summer 2025.
5	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. Have completed sewer lining portion of contract	National Water Main currently grouting sewer laterals in road ROW identified for repair..
6	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.

7	Personnel Safety	Comply with requirements for arc flash protection.	Operations	Siemens has been retained to perform the arc flash hazard analysis and label electrical switchgear for proper PPE.	Siemens is currently checking the field data that was previously collected. Arc flash hazard analysis will then take 20 days to model.
8	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.
9	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	Gannett Fleming has completed the basis of design report and started final design of the plant water, RAS and WAS pumps and piping.	Gannett Fleming to complete final design by summer of 2024.
10	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 has issued a contract to replace the roofs on the Facilities Buildings, including Building 6A, and remediate the building interior.
11	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 and presented their recommendations for the upgrades to the three (3) pump stations to the Technical Committee.	Amendment No. 1 to the Tighe & Bond Agreement for the final design and bidding of the upgrade of the Saddle Rock Road PS is on the agenda for the March Board meeting. Design of Alvord Lane and Commerce Drive PS's to be done in FY25.