

DRAFT MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF WATER COMMISSIONERS

The regular meeting of the Board of Water Commissioners was held on Thursday, April 9, 2009 at the Department Offices, 605 West Queen Street, Southington, CT. A recording of this meeting can be found on file tapes #544 and #545.

Present: President Stephen C. Pestillo, Vice President Thomas J. Murphy, Secretary and Treasurer John C. Dobbins, Commissioners Erik E. Semmel, Angelina Santa Maria, Superintendent Thomas R. West, Assistant Superintendent Frederick W. Rogers and stenographer Janice Eisenhauer.

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:00PM by President Stephen Pestillo.

2. Approval of Minutes of March 12th Meeting.

A motion was made by Commissioner Santa Maria to accept the minutes of the March 12, 2009 meeting as presented. Commissioner John Dobbins seconded the motion. A voice vote was in the affirmative.

3. Communications

a) Communications from the public

None

b) Communications from Administration

Superintendent West presented a note from Southington Community Services thanking the Water Board and the Water Department for our participation in the toy drive in December.

Superintendent West also shared some information from The Great American Rain Barrel Co. They partner with watershed associations, utilities and civic organizations to sell, promote and distribute rain barrels at an attractive price. The 60 gallon barrels are designed for attachment to downspouts and collect rain water to be used for watering gardens. This initiative would require publicity and promotion and a one-day distribution site. There is no financial benefit, or cost, to the Water Department. From a water conservation standpoint, this program would be good for public relations and a conservation enhancement to the water supply plan. All were in favor of further exploring this.

The Bradley Memorial Tournament is coming up. The Water Department has supported this in the past with a donation. There was some concern about the availability of funds this year.

c) Communications from Board Members

Commissioner Pestillo reported on a recent NECS meeting.

4. Financial Matters

a) Review of Water Billings & Outstanding Jobbing Bills

Superintendent West reported on a Stantec reimbursement that was somewhat offset by an outstanding Stantec bill. Revenue balances are up a bit and collections are good. Consumption appears to be steady. Commissioner Pestillo asked about some of the investment accounts and present rates of interest. Commissioner Santa Maria questioned the Constellation Energy invoices. Superintendent West and Assistant Superintendent Rogers explained to her satisfaction. There are four new outstanding jobbing bills, there are three RPD tests and one is a frozen water meter. Notices have been issued to the customers and shut offs will occur in the next week or two. Commissioner Pestillo asked about a bill for inspection on a subdivision job; a decision must be made about recourse. Several commissioners wonder why an American Express bill is not included. Assistant Superintendent Rogers investigated and found that the current bill has not been received yet. There was some discussion about an invoice for support of the computer system. Superintendent West explained. Assistant Superintendent Rogers pointed out and explained a complicated bill, with return reimbursement, for a \$1200 line item. Commissioner Santa Maria asked for clarification of the AT&T and Cox Communications bill. Superintendent West supplied the explanation. She also questioned whether the lien fees on arrears accounts would be recovered. They are collected at the time of payment of the lien.

A motion was made by Commissioner Dobbins to approve for payment the invoices as presented. Commissioner Murphy seconded his motion and it was passed on a voice vote.

5. Committee Reports

a) Executive Committee

Commissioner Pestillo reported that the Executive Committee did meet recently.

b) Infrastructure Committee

A meeting will be set up in the near future.

c) Wellhead Protection Phase 2

Superintendent West reported on the work being done. They have been working recently on the landscaping. The mechanical contractor has been working today. There is electrical work to be completed in the well. The well needs to be tied back into the distribution system. The generator is on site. There is an issue with Yankee Gas not being able to guarantee enough pressure to supply the generator at all times. There was some discussion about using a propane tank to insure emergency readiness. The security fence, part of the original contract, is near completion. Contract date for final completion is April 25, although Superintendent West doubts it will be completed on time.

A decision needs to be made about restoring some items originally cut from this project as the budget allows. This well needs to be operational before summer. Commissioner Murphy suggested that Yankee Gas be contacted about the pressure issue and wonders if a guarantee is mentioned in the contract. He is concerned about a school within 500' of that location, the fact that it is near the center of town, and Town Hall is approximately 1000' away, there are factories currently functioning in the general vicinity and he feels that it is imperative that this generator function safely and adequately. Superintendent West will look into this, but he is not secure about getting a different answer. There was a discussion about gas options: propane vs. natural gas. An underground propane tank is not an option near the well. Commissioner Murphy asked how much gas that generator will use in a 24-hour period. Superintendent West will research.

Commissioner Murphy asked about Bob Melstrom of Stantec and why he hasn't been present at the meetings of the Water Board. Superintendent West explained that Melstrom has a conflict with the new meeting time. Murphy feels that it is important for the company to offer a representative who can appear in a timely fashion. If they still want the business of the Water Board, he feels that it is necessary for a Stantec representative to appear at the meeting, hear complaints and provide instant information, in order to provide good service. Superintendent West will relay the message.

d) Technology Committee

There was some discussion about the web site. Superintendent West reports that he has been loading information, but his time will be limited for the next month or so. After budget time he expects to address this.

New meter reading equipment is still being explored, one offered by Neptune and one by I-Tron.

6. OLD BUSINESS

a) Update on Federal Grants, State Grants and SRF Loans

Stimulus information is still pending. A trip to Washington is being set up. No date is firm. A better price has been negotiated with the Ferguson Group for the coming year and the new rate will be retroactive to February. There are funds available from FY07.

b) Medication Return Program

Commissioner Dobbins reports that all is in place for Medication Return Day on April 25. The advertising committee has met with Dr. Erardi and Kelly Berkmoes. Commissioner Dobbins will speak at the Town Council meeting on Monday to bring the Council and the public, via cable TV, up to date. He presented the flyer that is being distributed. Commissioner Santa Maria volunteered to collate and deliver to the schools handouts for elementary school children, if Dr. Erardi approves. Volunteers

are in place for April 25 to assure sufficient oversight. Signs are being placed around town. The notice is being placed on the DEP website. Commissioner Pestillo complimented Commissioner Dobbins on his exemplary organization of this event.

c) Cost Savings Initiative

Superintendent West noted that the net savings on legal fees due to environmental issues has decreased substantially. Commissioner Santa Maria offered a suggestion about improving the meter reading method. Superintendent West, acknowledging that her idea is viable, feels that the best solution to meter reading cost is to invest in a new technology radio system.

d) Safety Valve

Paul Roberts of Safety Valve addressed the Board. The contract expires on April 15. He proposed for the next year an additional \$5000 coverage (\$10,000 total) for an additional minimal annual premium. He outlined the scope of Safety Valve's service. Commissioner Santa Maria recapped his presentation and had a few questions about renewal of coverage. Mr. Roberts assured her that they "never call the customer." Customers are reminded to renew by mail and he explained at some length the reinstatement of lapsed coverage.

Commissioner Dobbins made a motion to renew Safety Valve's contract for a one-year plan effective April 15, 2009, to include the increased coverage from \$5000 to \$10000 and the revenue share. Commissioner Murphy seconded his motion and it passed on a voice vote.

e) Constellation Energy Contract

To be discussed at Executive Session.

f) "Red Flag" Rule

Information on the federally mandated program for Identity Theft Prevention is included in the packet for the review of the Commissioners. Superintendent West explained the information briefly to the Board and announced that this will be discussed at the next meeting. It is noted, following a query by Commissioner Santa Maria, that the Southington Water Department does not collect or record the social security numbers of customers. Commissioner Dobbins asked if the attorney has reviewed this paperwork. Superintendent West will have it reviewed when the Board has completed revision. It may become necessary to have a unique identification number for each customer and Commissioner Murphy suggested that the customer number already in place could be used.

7. NEW BUSINESS

a) 2009-2010 Contract with Fergusion Group

To be discussed at Executive Session.

b) Mariondale Filter Plant Water Tank Project

To be discussed at Executive Session.

c) Interconnection Projects

To be discussed at Executive Session.

d) Report on Advanced Asset Management Class

Superintendent West reported that he had been invited to attend a class on Advanced Asset Management and he found the information vital. They presented ample material on the management of older assets in utilities, inventorying, and ideas relating to paying for it over time. He expressed the benefits of sharing the information with the Board, the primary goal being to update procedures surrounding maintenance, the replacement of infrastructure, and the realistic management of consumer rates adequate to support the system.

8. Executive Session Anticipated for Personnel and Negotiation

Commissioner Dobbins made a motion to enter into executive session, barring public and press, at 7:25PM. Commissioner Murphy seconded his motion and it passed on a voice vote.

The Board entered Executive Session at 8:13 PM.

The Board exited Executive Session at 9:37 PM.

Commissioner Dobbins made a motion to restore items removed from the Well 1A project under change order #1 for \$166,475. Commissioner Murphy Seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Commissioner Dobbins made a motion to approve the change in the contract with Constellation Energy, with a \$10,000 credit to the Water Department and reduction in rate to \$0.11665/ KWH. Commissioner Semmel Seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Commissioner Santa Maria made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Semmel Seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 9:38 PM.

Attest:

John C. Dobbins, Secretary & Treasurer