

DRAFT MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF WATER COMMISSIONERS

The regular meeting of the Board of Water Commissioners was held on Thursday March 12, 2009 at the Department Offices, 605 West Queen Street, Southington, CT. A recording of this meeting can be found on file tapes #542 and #543.

Present: President Stephen C. Pestillo, Vice President Thomas J. Murphy, Secretary and Treasurer John C. Dobbins, Commissioners Erik E. Semmel, Robert M. Berkmoes, 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 6:03PM by President Stephen Pestillo.

2. Approval of Minutes of February 5th meeting.

A motion was made by Commissioner Berkmoes to accept the minutes of the February 5, 2009 meeting as presented. Treasurer John Dobbins seconded his motion. The motion passed on a voice vote.

3. Communications

a) Communications from the public

None

b) Communications from Administration

None

c) Communications from Board Members

None

4. Financial Matters

Review of Water Billings, Outstanding Jobbing Bills & Invoices

Superintendent West reported on the Billings and Invoices and noted that collections have improved over last month and ~~last~~ year which was due to the rate increase. Questions from the Commissioners were answered. The outstanding jobbing bills were discussed. There is one new outstanding jobbing bill that the Superintendent noted was difficult to collect in the past. Commissioner Murphy questioned a bill for maintenance at one of the wells and Superintendent West answered his question. Well maintenance was discussed at some length. Commissioner Santa Maria had some questions about bank charges and accounting practices. There was a discussion about a travel bill presented by the Ferguson Group, which has not been presented and Superintendent West is holding the bill for clarification. The revised Moffitt bill was discussed. Truck maintenance was discussed at some length and policy for maintenance of trucks and equipment was explained to the Board. A motion was made by Commissioner Murphy to pay the invoices presented. This motion

was seconded by Commissioner Berkmoes. The motion passed on a voice vote.

5. Committee Reports

a) Executive Committee

None

b) Infrastructure Committee

There has been no meeting of this committee. Commissioner Berkmoes asked about the Welch Rd. project. Superintendent West explained that this has been held up due to proximity of the wetlands and the costs involved. Permitting will take 6-8 weeks and there will be an engineering expense. Plans must be drawn up before it can be presented to Planning and Zoning and the Wetlands Commission. The design must include erosion control details and the approach. There was some discussion about this project. Commissioner Murphy suggests that perhaps it would be a good idea to do pre-project engineering. Superintendent West will get started on this. He noted that permits, once secured, are good for a few years. Also discussed were the possibilities of emergency interconnections with Bristol and Regional Water. Bristol might be interested in sharing the cost. Commissioner Pestillo asked about the feasibility of giving up New Britain well. Superintendent West explained that his present water supply plan includes New Britain well. He is concerned about water availability for the future without that well. Emergency interconnect can only be used in the case of an emergency declared by the Commissioner of Public Health. Permits necessary and engineering required to set up the interconnections was discussed.

c) Wellhead Protection Phase 2

There is not a lot to report. Superintendent West will be surprised if it is completed within the agreed upon time. Commissioner Murphy asked about renegotiating the time frame part of the contract. Superintendent West reminded the Board that the final report from GZA to the state is coming up soon. There will be a fee due.

d) Technology Committee

Superintendent West and Mandy-Jo Rodrigues (Clerical 1) have trained on the use and updating of the web site. It is up and running but still under construction. Superintendent West discussed with the Board information that they would like to see posted. Ideas were offered: flushing schedules, permits and applications, rules and regs, consumer confidence report, rates and fees and frequently asked questions with answers. Treasurer Dobbins asked about securing email addresses for customers to allow for flushing alerts and the quick dissemination of other urgent information. There was also a discussion about paying bills on line and the use of credit cards in the future. There is a place in the software to insert email addresses on customers' accounts.

Asst. Superintendent Rogers reported on the vehicle maintenance and the GPS system presently used. It is now an out of state operation and more difficult to deal with. NECS supports a program which he recently explored. He explained NECS offered the new software at the same cost the Department is paying currently. Another demonstration and price point discussion has been scheduled. Board members were invited to join the group. He is impressed with the proposed service. Board members were comfortable with making the transition, assuming the cost is equal.

Superintendent West reported on his investigation of new radio technology meters. The Neptune system has amazing capabilities but the cost is high. He explained the system in great detail. An Itron system through AMCO was discussed as well and perhaps would be a better fit because it would not be necessary to change over the whole town at once. Commissioner Murphy asked that a full report on capabilities and cost comparison be provided before any decision will be made. New technology would diminish meter reading employee hours substantially. The current schedule for changing meters was discussed, explained and reported upon.

6. OLD BUSINESS

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

Superintendent West spoke about the status of the stimulus money and federal grants. Plans are being made for a delegation to travel to Washington D.C. with hopes of speaking with Congressional Representatives and Senators from Connecticut about grant opportunities for FY2010. The clear goal for this trip is to secure grant money for 2010, specifically iron and manganese treatment at Well 2, 7 and 8, and the Mariondale tank replacement. There is no current notification about STAG money. Nothing is expected from FY09 funding. In the WRDA stimulus package there is a "no new starts" provision which apparently means that nothing will be forthcoming for Southington Water Department. DWSRF is rolling out the money from a list of projects now submitted. They rate them and rank them and approvals are awarded in that manner. There is a shovel-ready designation, but it will be loans and not grants. The Town has applied for some stimulus money for roadwork. That is a program for roads and bridges and doesn't apply to water. The "no new starts" provision makes it difficult to get into the line for grants, so it is important to apply and hope to get something, allowing for future requests to be granted.

b) Medication Return Program

Treasurer Dobbins distributed handouts for the Medication Disposal Program to be held on April 25 in coordination with Bristol Water Department. Plans are being finalized. Volunteers and personnel have been lined up to help. Signs were discussed and will be placed around town in public buildings, schools, the YMCA, and announcements will appear in

several publications. A vendor who will do the actual disposal of the medication will be decided on soon. A survey about the discarded medication has been formulated for participants to complete. Data collection from this project will be helpful to other agencies. No medical waste will be accepted. Safety Valve will provide shopping bags to be given out. The Board and the staff complimented Commissioner Dobbins on his organizational skills allowing the Southington Water Department to offer this program.

c) Cost Savings Initiative

The Commissioners discussed some cost savings ideas. Commissioner Santa Maria asked about the charges from Culligan Water Conditioning. Superintendent West explained that the water softening system allows for greatly decreased maintenance of the fluoridation equipment and preserves the life of the equipment. Commissioner Santa Maria spoke about the employee poster compliance charge. CompuMail was discussed and Superintendent West spoke in favor of their service. Commissioner Santa Maria asked about the procedure for cash payments in the office and how they are entered into the computer. After some discussion, Superintendent West agreed to explore the cost of the module to allow these payments to be entered directly into the computer, saving a step in the posting procedure. There was some discussion about stockpiling pipe. There are some safety problems with this and the price is presently stable.

d) Safety Valve

Paul Roberts from Safety Valve made a presentation on the past performance of his company for the Board. The contract for this service expires on April 15 and he requests renewal. There were some questions from the Board and Commissioner Santa Maria requested that he explain how his service works from the vantage point of the water customer. The process was explained in detail. The value of this service to the Water Co. was discussed as well.

7. NEW BUSINESS

a) Proposed 1½" water service for a 13,470 s.f. industrial building located at 125 West Queen Street by High Ridge Industries.

Asst. Superintendent Rogers presented the documents for the 125 West Queen Street project. The project meets current regulations. He pointed out the positions of fire hydrants. Commissioner Murphy had several questions about the placement of the hydrants in relation to the property frontage. He suggested that in the future when vacant land is developed as commercial or industrial property rather than farmland, the hydrants should be more closely placed. Although this request meets present regulations, he feels that hydrants should be placed per recommendation of AWWA and NFPA. He thinks it would be good

policy to periodically add a hydrant in developing commercial areas. A motion was made by Commissioner Berkmoes to accept the proposed service as presented. This was seconded by Commissioner Dobbins. The motion was passed on a voice vote.

b) New Britain Well Lease 2009-2010

Superintendent West advised the renewal of the lease on the New Britain well. There is no increase in cost. On the recommendation of the superintendent, Commissioner Murphy made a motion to renew the lease. The motion was seconded by Treasurer Dobbins. A voice vote was unanimously in favor.

8. EXECUTIVE SESSION ANTICIPATED FOR PERSONNEL AND NEGOTIATION MATTERS

Commissioner Dobbins called for adjournment to executive session at 8:13PM. Commissioner SantaMaria seconded the motion and it was passed on voice vote.

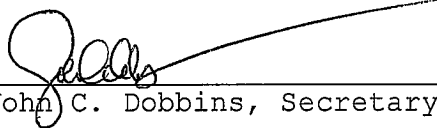
The Board entered Executive Session at 8:13 PM.

The Board exited Executive Session at 10:25 PM.

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

The meeting adjourned at 10:25 PM.

Attest:



John C. Dobbins, Secretary & Treasurer