

DEC - 8 2011

10:50 AM

By Leslie H. Cotton
Town Clerk

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF WATER COMMISSIONERS MEETING

Thursday, November 10, 2011

The regular meeting of the Board of Water Commissioners was held on Thursday, November 10, 2011 at the department offices, 605 West Queen Street, Southington, CT. A recording of this meeting can be found on file tape #579.

PRESENT: Commissioners Thomas Murphy, Erik Semmel, Michael Domian, Cheryl Lounsbury, and Superintendent Thomas West, Assistant Superintendent Frederick Rogers. Commissioner Angelina Santa Maria arrived late.

- 1. CALL TO ORDER** The meeting was called to order by Past President Thomas Murphy at 6:00 p.m. A quorum is determined.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS There was a short recess called to allow the commissioners to caucus, after which the meeting was reconvened. Superintendent Thomas West served as moderator for the election of officers. West called the meeting back to order at 6:09 p.m. He thanked everyone who has served on the commission for the last two years and those who have served for a number of years. He expressed his pleasure in working with everyone. He honored their help, input and guidance required to run "this rather large operation." West looked forward to another two years of progress.

Superintendent West opened nominations for President. Commissioner Murphy made a motion to nominate Commissioner Eric Semmel for President. Commissioner Domian seconded his motion. There were no further nominations. Nominations for President were closed. There was no discussion. The motion for election passed unanimously on a voice vote.

President Erik Semmel assumes the Chair:

President Semmel opened nominations for Vice President. Commissioner Lounsbury made a motion to nominate Commissioner Robert Berkmoes for Vice President. Commissioner Domian seconded her motion. There were no further nominations for Vice President and nominations for Vice President were closed. Commissioner Berkmoes was elected unanimously on a voice vote.

President Semmel opened nominations for Secretary/Treasurer. Commissioner Lounsbury made a motion to nominate Michael Domian for Secretary/Treasurer. Her motion was seconded by Commissioner Murphy. There were no further nominations for Secretary/Treasurer and nominations were closed. The motion for election of Michael Domian for Secretary/Treasurer passed unanimously on a voice vote.

Past President Thomas Murphy addressed the Board. He thanked the commissioners for their complete cooperation during the last two years. He appreciated the help he received, professionally and personally, that allowed the successful completion of the many strategic projects undertaken by the Water Board in the interests of serving the citizens of Southington. He spoke of the integrity and

dedication of the people on this Board and his great sense of privilege to serve at the helm for the last two years. The commissioners joined in expressing their individual and collective appreciation of Murphy's service.

- 2. Approval of the Minutes of the October 6, 2011 Meeting** Commissioner Murphy made a motion to approve the minutes of the October 6, 2011 meeting as presented. Secretary/Treasurer Domian seconded his motion. President Semmel called for a voice vote. The motion was approved, with the abstention of Commissioner Lounsbury.

3. Communications

a.) Communications from the Public

None

b.) Communications from Administration

Assistant Superintendent Rogers suggested that the Board authorize funds to purchase food and beverage for the staff Christmas party. Commissioner Domian made a motion to approve the expenditure of a maximum of \$500 for the office holiday party. Commissioner Lounsbury seconded the motion and it passed on a voice vote.

c.) Communications from Board Members

Commissioner Lounsbury announced that due to her election to the Town Council she must submit her resignation from this Board. She does so regretfully, but acknowledged that it is in the best interests of the town, no one should serve on more than one board simultaneously. She expressed her pleasure with the unique and refreshing non-partisan atmosphere of the Board of Water Commissioners, and announced herself available, should an occasion arise in which she could support the Board in the future.

4. Financial Matters

a.) Review of Water Billings & Outstanding Jobbing Bills & Approval of Invoices

Superintendent West spoke about the pattern of cash flow and its relationship to recent wet weather. Commissioner Murphy had some questions about interest charges and Superintendent West explained. Commissioner Murphy commented on the policy of shutting off water service after 90 days for non-payment in single residences, while those living in a condo setting are not shut off. He thinks that this policy is unfair to certain ratepayers and the Board needs to correct this injustice. Superintendent West stated that the Rules and Regs have not been reviewed for 5-6 years and noted Murphy's comments as well taken. He suggests that a complete review of ratepayer policy is in order. There was some discussion about service to private residences vs multi-unit condos fed by a meter when the association is responsible for the bill.

Superintendent West added that Committee assignments, and chairs, should probably be looked at again, as well.

Commissioner Lounsbury made a motion to accept the water billings and outstanding jobbing bills and to approve for payment the invoices as presented. Commissioner Murphy seconded her motion. There was no discussion. The motion passed on a voice vote.

b.) Water Service Line Protection Plan

The plan continues to grow, at a diminished pace. New brochures have been ordered to be placed in water bills for ratepayers' consideration. Commissioner Murphy reported that he received a competing offer at home. Commissioner Lounsbury asked about a motion a few months back to donate a part of these funds to community services. She reports that she has been volunteering there and the need is overwhelming and urgent now. Commissioner Murphy suggested that this be incorporated in all renewals.

5. Committee Reports

a.) Executive Committee

No report

b.) Infrastructure Committee

Superintendent West reported that there is a meeting planned soon.

c.) Technology Committee

No report

6. OLD BUSINESS

a.) Update on DEEP "Stream Flow" Regulations.

There is no update available at this time. The Regulations are in committee.

b.) Water Mains Projects.

Assistant Superintendent Rogers reports. West Center St was milled and paved yesterday. There were some drainage issues. Rogers met with the Highway Department and the project was temporarily completed to get through the winter months. Spring Lake is done and a temporary hot pave will be applied to get through the winter months. On Linwood the water main is done and it is being pressure tested. Next week it will be completed. That will also be temporarily hot paved. Commissioner Murphy commented on the excellent work done on the many small projects completed this year.

There was an adjunct discussion about employee probationary periods and a brief infrastructure discussion.

c.) Mariondale Storage Tank Replacement Project

Superintendent West reported, with a representative from Tighe & Bond. The project has progressed quickly. All wall panels are poured and are ready to be erected. The floor was poured on Tuesday. Commissioner Murphy had some questions which were answered. Pictures of the construction in progress, were presented to the Board for perusal. Superintendent West is following this project closely personally.

Superintendent West broached the issue of Tighe & Bond's time and materials contract, previously discussed by the board. It has come to light that Tighe & Bond must be present on site more hours than had originally been projected at the time the contract was signed 3 1/2 years ago. It increases the time that the structural engineer must be present, an additional 20 days, resulting in a proposed additional charge of as much as \$18,000. The special inspection is a requirement of the town's building department. Commissioner Murphy asked if the town's regulations have changed between the date of

the contract signing three years ago and the present. The building code was explained to him. Individual building inspectors can deem any project critical and in need of closer supervision, as is the case at Mariondale. There was some discussion among the commissioners. Commissioner Murphy felt that someone at Tighe & Bond made a mistake on the job specifications, resulting in an attractive bid and now the firm is looking for a "secondary hit." He expressed his displeasure. President Semmel summed up: the Board's frustration is that it was Tighe & Bond's responsibility to check the town's building regulations and to submit a realistic bid for this job. The Board is concerned about other errors surfacing before this huge project is complete. Mike from Tighe & Bond defended their position. Commissioner Murphy asked about a drainage ditch that may need to be added to the project. He wonders, how much will they be charged for that? Murphy recalls that he asked about the perimeter drainage when he looked at the original plans. Now there is an unforeseen water problem. Superintendent West explained that there are always contingency problems in a large construction endeavors. More issues may arise before this project is complete. Murphy is concerned about the well next door. This was discussed at some length. President Semmel interjected that the issue before the Board today was not unforeseen. The additional charge is due to the fact that some responsible person at Tighe & Bond preparing the bid, missed an existing regulation of the Southington Building Department, requiring intense engineering oversight of critical concrete work on this project. Semmel asked Tighe & Bond directly to reduce the additional charge, in light of the negligent factor—the regulation existed and it must be abided. Commissioner Domian reminded all that it is the Board's responsibility to protect the ratepayers. Commissioner Santa Maria wondered if there was a contingency fund written into the contract. Commissioner Lounsbury suggested that the Tighe & Bond representative return to the company and ask that they reconsider their upcharge in light of the Board's position. With discussion ended, this issue will continue to be researched.

d.) West Queen Street Pump Station Generator

Superintendent West reports. The standby generator at the West Queen Street Pump Station did not survive Irene and it was necessary to secure a trailer-mount backup generator for the recent storm emergency. Bids have been secured to repair the standby generator and they came in at \$22,000-\$24,000. One replacement bid was received recently and this came in at \$40,000. Other bids will be solicited. There was a discussion about repair or replacement. West recommends replacement of this generator. Discussion with the insurance company about this claim remains pending. Commissioner Murphy summed up: "This is a safety item and a necessity. We have to buy it so let's buy it, but let's not buy cheap. Let's buy something that will be serviceable and durable." There was a discussion about the bidding process and the need to address this in a timely manner. Commissioner Domian made a motion to allow the Superintendent to expend up to \$40,000 for a new generator for the West Queen Street Pump Station after securing three bids. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Murphy. The motion passed on a voice vote.

e.) Water main extension on Meriden-Waterbury Turnpike

Brian Campbell of SEA Engineers addressed the Board. He explained the past difficulties and discussions about this service. This water main crosses Judd Brook on route #322 and the purpose of the bridge crossing was to front a rear parcel and to allow the town that infrastructure for future plans. He explained the present difficulties in some detail to the board, including conversations with water department staff, and CL&P staff. Commissioner Murphy offered specific questions about the heat trace required across the bridge and the costs to maintain that heat. Campbell presented a visual view of the project for the Board at the request of Commissioner Santa Maria. Water Department staff approves of the project as presented. Commissioner Murphy made a motion to approve the project alterations as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Domian. Commissioner Santa

Maria had some questions and they were answered. The motion passed on a voice vote. Mr. Campbell had a question about the client's contract with the town. Superintendent West answered his questions.

7. NEW BUSINESS

a.) Meeting schedule for 2012

Superintendent West presented the proposed meeting schedule. Meetings will be held the first Thursday of each month, other than July when the meeting will fall on the second Thursday. Commissioner Domian made a motion to accept the 2012 meeting schedule as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Santa Maria. The motion passed on a voice vote.

b.) Winter Storm Recovery

Superintendent West reported and chronicled the activities of the staff at the Southington Water Department during and following the storm last week, resulting in massive power outages affecting well operations. There was some discussion about equipment failures during the power outage, future needs and potential costs. Superintendent West will be working with Garry Brumbach, the Town Manager on recovering costs from federal/state funds. Commissioner Santa Maria spoke for the record. "This was a natural disaster. Someone who works for CL&P stated that they didn't create the problem, they solved the problem." Wells were slow to be placed back on line. Water pressure was not lost anywhere in town during the power outage, but West reported on some "nail-biting moments." The department staff jumped in where they were most needed and did a great job. Commissioner Murphy felt that when people do a wonderful job during at-risk conditions such as this, they should be commended. He recommends a personal thank you from the department/board, a copy to be placed in their personnel file.

c.) Water Main Extension for St. John Place

Assistant Superintendent Rogers presents the site plan to the Board. This is a proposed 2-lot subdivision. The plan meets the requirements of the water department. A hydrant is planned and Rogers pointed that out. The hydrant will be installed by the contractor and the valve will be placed at the end of the easement at the property line. Commissioner Domian made a motion to approve the project at St. John's Place with considerations—that the contractor will install the fire hydrant on the 8" line, with the valve installed at the end of the property line in the easement. Commissioner Murphy seconded the motion and it passed on a voice vote.

8. Executive Session Anticipated for Personnel and Negotiation Matters.

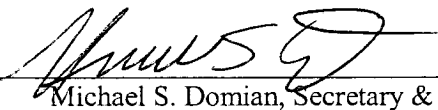
Commissioner Murphy made a motion at 8:07 p.m. to go to Executive Session, barring the public and press, but to include the Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent. Commissioner Lounsbury seconded the motion and it passed on a voice vote.

A real estate matter was discussed

Executive Session ended and the meeting reconvened at 8:17 p.m.

Commissioner Lounsbury made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Domian Seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at

Attest:



Michael S. Domian, Secretary & Treasurer