

**. Minutes of the January 14, 2019 Water Authority Meeting
Southeastern Connecticut Water Authority
1649 Route 12, Gales Ferry, CT**

Present

Authority: Chairman Edward Monahan, Vice-Chairman Harry Watson, Treasurer Paul Eccard, Barbara Lee Franciosi, Peter Balestracci, Nicholas Mullane and Claudia Koerting.

Authority Staff: General Manager Josh Cansler

Call to Order

Chairman Monahan called the meeting to order at 5:16 p.m.

Public Comment on any Item on the Agenda – None

Approval of Prior Minutes

On a motion of Mr. Eccard, seconded by Mr. Balestracci, the Authority approved the minutes of the December 10, 2018 Water Authority Meeting, by a unanimous vote of all members present.

Correspondence – None

General Manager's Report

1. Emergency Interconnections with Ledyard/Groton Utilities

In 2017 SCWA signed an agreement with Groton Utilities and Ledyard to install emergency water main interconnections between all five SCWA Ledyard divisions, and the Ledyard WPCA system. These projects are to be fully funded by Groton Utilities in conjunction with a \$15 million DPH DWSRF (Drinking Water State Revolving Fund) funding package they received to assist with financing the upgrade of the Groton Water Purification Plant.

Groton Utilities began construction of the interconnections in October 2018. The Tower/Ferry View and Ledyard Center interconnections were completed in November, and the Barrett Division interconnection was completed in early December. General Manager Cansler stated that that the Ledyard Division to Gray Farms connection will be completed in the spring. He also mentioned that SCWA staff monitored the interconnection construction on a daily basis.

2. Tower Division - Well #3

This past summer it was discovered that Tower Division Well #3, which is located inside the pumphouse, was failing. SCWA tried to obtain approval from the State Department of Public Health (DPH) for approval to replace the well a few feet away, just outside the pumphouse. Unfortunately after several submissions and resubmissions, DPH would only approve a well location about 100 feet from the pumphouse, due to wetlands constraints established after Well #3 was originally installed.

SCWA has reached out to two different well drilling companies regarding installation of a well at the alternate location. Mr. Cansler stated that both companies have yet to commit to a date for installing the well due to the weather and other commitments. In the meantime, SCWA is continuing to work

with Attorney Nick Kepple on easements required from the Town of Ledyard, and Avalonia Land Conservancy, for the approved well site. The State requires a 200 foot buffer zone around all wells over a certain capacity.

3. Thames Aquatic Center –Ledyard

SCWA continues to work with the Town of Ledyard regarding support of the proposed Thames Aquatic Center project, as well as the proposed extension of Fairway Drive in Ledyard; both of which are in the SCWA Exclusive Service Area. Although SCWA proposed alternatives to provide water from our Ledyard Center system, DPH granted approval of a well for the Aquatic Center, with the stipulation that they connect to the water main on Fairway Drive extension once it is installed, and that the Aquatic Center use SCWA for all required testing and monitoring of the well.

Sitework and excavation began earlier in summer, and in August the well was drilled. In October DPH sent a letter to the Thames Aquatic Center developers stating they would not approve the new well because it did not provide sufficient capacity for their expected system demands. Over the next few weeks SCWA was included (cc'd) on a series of letters and emails that went back and forth between DPH and Anne Vitale, representing the developers for the Thames Aquatic Center. Ultimately, DPH agreed to afford Ms. Vitale the opportunity to work with her well professionals regarding a solution to satisfy all requirements for the water system, per State and EPA standards.

SCWA chose not to intervene in the discussions between DPH and the Aquatic Center, other than to reiterate that SCWA is willing to provide water from our Ledyard system. General Manager Cansler stated that he has not heard anything new regarding the well situation, and that there has been very little construction at the Thames Aquatic site over the past few months.

4. Four-log Applications

At the November meeting the Authority approved a request by the General Manager to expend no more than \$10,000 to have Lenard Engineering prepare all the calculations and EPA/DPH documentation required for 4-log permits for all eligible SCWA divisions that qualify. The decision to apply for 4-log certification was based on the fact that over the past few years several SCWA wells have tested positive for E-Coli during routine sampling. If SCWA can get the chlorine treated systems 4-log certified we will be able to reduce our sampling/testing requirements, and SCWA will not have to conduct a public notification for positive e-coli results, from samples taken before treatment.

To obtain a 4-log certification the utility must apply for a permit from DPH for each system. The 4-log application, which must be completed by a certified engineer, requires specific calculations demonstrating treatment technology that reliably achieves a 99.99 percent (4-log) inactivation of potential contamination.

Only the divisions which use chlorine treatment are eligible for 4-log approval. Currently 11 of our 14 systems use chlorine treatment. General Manager Cansler stated that Lenard Engineering determined that 9 of the 11 chlorinated systems qualify for 4-log certification, and they have completed the required calculations, and prepared the applications. The Tower and Cedar Ridge Divisions did not qualify for 4-log certification, because of a lack of storage.

Presently the North Stonington system does not use chlorine treatment, but based on the fact that e-coli has been discovered in the North Stonington wells in the past, SCWA intends to start chlorine treatment at that system as well. Mr. Cansler said that the application to start chlorination at North Stonington was submitted to DPH in November 2018.

5. Claim by Raspberry Junction Holding, LLC vs SCWA

In 2016, Raspberry Junction LLC, owners of the Bellissimo Grande Hotel in North Stonington, filed a legal claim against SCWA for losses incurred during the water outage that resulted from the rupture of a pressure tank in 2015. This claim was forwarded to our insurance company at the time, Gladfelter Insurance. They hired Attorney Stephanie Berry, of the law firm of Tang & Maravelis, in New London, to handle the case. Although Gladfelter, working with SCWA, has proposed settlements on two occasions, Raspberry Junction has not agreed to either proposal.

After a series of hearings at the lower courts the case was forwarded to the Connecticut Supreme Court in September 2017. In January 2018 the Authority approved a motion to hire Attorney Lloyd Langhammer, a specialist in appellate law, to provide legal representation for SCWA, and assist Attorney Berry with preparation of the case vs Raspberry Junction. The Connecticut Supreme Court heard the case on November 13, 2018. Attorney Berry felt that the case went well for our side, but stated the Justices could still reverse the lower court's decision. She said it may take 4-6 months for a decision.

6. Future DWSRF Projects

The Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) program provides low-interest loans, with the potential for up to 25% subsidization, for eligible projects in the form of principal forgiveness. SCWA had two projects that were eligible. In November General Manager Cansler informed DPH that SCWA was holding off on moving forward with either DWSRF project until after the cost of replacing Tower Division Well #3 has been determined.

7. Fiscal Year 2018 Annual Audit

Sandra Welwood conducted her on-site audit visit on August 7, 2018. Mr. Cansler stated that Ms. Welwood will present the draft audit to the RAB Finance Committee immediately after this meeting; and that she had also committed to presenting her audit findings to the entire Representative Advisory Board at the upcoming quarterly RAB meeting on Thursday (January 17, 2019).

8. Town of North Stonington School Upgrade Project

SCWA has been working with the engineers and contractors, as needed, on the project to renovate existing facilities, and construct some additions, to the Town of North Stonington Elementary School and Middle/High School. Over the past several months SCWA staff have been working closely with the construction contractor during the installation of the new water distribution system and fire suppression systems for the new additions to the schools.

9. Regional Considerations

a) **State Water Plan:** On November 28, 2018 The Water Planning Council (WPC) formally re-submitted the Draft Connecticut State Water Plan (Plan) to the Energy and Technology, Environment, Planning and Development and Public Health Committees for consideration and approval. The plan, which was ordered by the General Assembly through Public Act 14-163, was developed by the WPC to balance the needs of public water supply, economic development, recreation, and ecological health. The State Water Plan was heard during the 2018 legislature cycle, but no action was taken. On June 14, 2018, Governor Malloy signed an executive order directing the state's Water Planning Council (WPC) to immediately implement the State Water Plan that was submitted to the Connecticut General Assembly in January 2018. Mr. Cansler stated that the WPC had submitted the same version of the State water Plan that they had submitted last year; the version that contained new language regarding water as a "Public Trust". Many public utilities in the state have argued about the addition of this language in the State Water Plan.

b) Water Utility Coordinating Committee (WUCC): The Eastern Water Utility Coordinating Committee (WUCC) met on November 14, 2018 at the Southeastern Connecticut Council of Governments (SCCOG) office. The date of the next meeting is to be determined, most likely in February of 2019. These meetings are open to the public.

c) SCWA Interaction with SCCOG: SCWA and the SCCOG continue to interact cooperatively. To this end, Chairman Monahan often attends the regular monthly SCCOG meetings, and the SCCOG Regional Water Committee meetings as well. The General Manager participates on the SCCOG Regional Water Committee's Technical Advisory Subcommittee (TAS).

d) SCWA Interaction with AWWA and CWWA: The General Manager represents SCWA as a member of the Connecticut Water Planning Council Advisory Group (WPCAG), which meets monthly. Mr. Cansler is currently Chair of the WPCAG Nominating Committee, which prepares the annual membership slate for appointment/reappointment of members to the WPCAG.

Mr. Cansler is also a member of the Connecticut Water Works Association (CWWA) Legislative Affairs Committee, which meets monthly between November and June.

Other Business – None

Report from Chairman - None

Report from Authority Members

Mr. Watson mentioned that the Town of Groton had replaced Dean Antipas as one of their two Representative Advisory Board members. Mr. Watson asked if there was anything in the bylaws or SWCA enabling legislation regarding minority party affiliation. Some of the Authority members agreed that there might be a clause regarding representation from both majority and minority parties within municipalities within the SCWA area. General Manager Cansler stated that he was not certain, but that he would check the RAB bylaws and enabling legislation. Mr. Watson stated that he wanted to bring up this issue at the upcoming RAB meeting.

Public Comment – None

Adjourn

On motion of Mr. Eccard, seconded by Ms. Franciosi, the Authority voted to adjourn the meeting at approximately 5:51 p.m.

It was noted the next Authority meeting is scheduled to occur on February 11, 2019, 5:15 pm at 1649 Rt. 12, Gales Ferry, CT.

Josh Cansler
Secretary