

Draft Minutes of the December 12, 2022, Water Authority Meeting
Southeastern Connecticut Water Authority
1649 Route 12, Gales Ferry, CT

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic this meeting was held virtually using public meeting guidelines established by the Governor to limit the spread and impact of the virus.

Present

Authority: Chairman Edward Monahan, Vice-Chair Harry Watson, Treasurer Paul Eccard, Alex Masse, Nicholas Mullane, and Claudia Koerting.

Authority Staff: General Manager Josh Cansler

Call to Order

Chairman Monahan called the meeting to order at 5:15 p.m.

Public Comment on any Item on the Agenda – None

Approval of Prior Minutes

On a motion of Mr. Eccard, seconded by Mr. Watson, the Authority approved the minutes of the November 14, 2022 Authority Meeting, by a unanimous vote of all members present.

Correspondence – None

General Manager's Report

1. Proposal from Regional Water Authority (RWA) to partner in Pipesafe Program

In March 2022 the Authority signed an agreement with the South Central Regional Water Authority (RWA) to enter into a partnership in their service line protection program, which is called PipeSafe. This partnership will allow RWA to enroll SCWA customers in the PipeSafe program, and in exchange SCWA will receive a percentage of the monthly fees charged our customers. General Manager Cansler stated the implementation date for RWA accepting SCWA customers into the program was originally planned for November 14, 2022, however that had not happened. Mr. Cansler said that during a meeting the previous week RWA stated the implementation had been held up for a variety of reasons, including a roll-out of new rates in November, and delays inputting the SCWA customer base into the PipeSafe potential customer base. He said RWA intends to start mailing PipeSafe brochures on December 23rd, and that should be completed by the middle of January. Mr. Eccard asked if the PipeSafe monthly fees had gone up significantly. Mr. Cansler stated the increases had been relatively small. Chairman Monahan stated that he has seen several advertisements on TV recently touting the PipeSafe program.

2. Capital Projects Update

a) Seven Oaks/Montville Interconnection Project

This project will complete the interconnection between Seven Oaks and Montville divisions. This past July the owners of the property (100 Waterfall LLC) agreed to an easement for the proposed water main interconnection across their property. They plan on constructing a housing development on this property in the next few years. The proposed water main connection route and grading design was completed by Lenard Engineering in August.

General Manager Cansler stated that Lenard Engineering is currently working on the engineering design/specs, easement maps, and wetlands permits. He said that there had been a delay mapping the wetlands area, but the area has now been sufficiently cleared to survey the wetlands area. He expects the request for a wetlands permit to go to the Town of Montville Wetlands Commission next month. Mr. Cansler said SCWA hopes to receive project approval by next spring, and award the project next summer.

b) Upgrades at the Ledyard Pump Station and Spicer Hill Booster Station

This project includes installation of variable frequency pumps (VFDs) at the Ledyard Pump Station and the Spicer Hill Booster Station, which is part of the Ledyard distribution system. This project also includes the elimination of the hydropneumatic pressure tanks at both stations, which is a top priority for DPH. General Manager Cansler stated that SCWA intended to request bids in August, but unfortunately the pump manufacturer stated there was now a 6-month lead time for delivery of the VFD packages, which has delayed the project until next spring. He said since the last meeting SCWA received final quotes for the pre-assembled VFD pump packages, and the prices were much higher than expected. He said SCWA priced all of the VFD pumps and accessories separately and the price was much less. Based on the cost savings SCWA plans to purchase all the equipment separately and install it using in-house labor, with the assistance of a certified plumber and electrician.

c). Tower Division Upgrades

Over the past year SCWA crews installed new valves and a backup water main leading from the Tower Division pump stations to the main distribution located on East Drive in Gales Ferry. General Manager Cansler stated that the second phase of this project, replacement of the original water mains, started on December 5th, and is scheduled to be completed by December 16th. He said this phase of the project had been delayed for almost a year due to supply chain issues. Chairman Monahan mentioned that State Senator Osten had once again mentioned a \$2 million appropriation for SCWA at a recent event. Mr. Cansler stated that he had reached out several times to Senator Osten's office telephonically, and through email, and never received a response regarding this possible appropriation. Mr. Watson said he could reach out through State Senator Sommers office to see if she knew anything about the \$2 million.

3. Proposed New Well at Ledyard Division

At the September meeting the Authority authorized the General Manager to contract with Lenard Engineering to complete survey, engineering/design, wetlands reviews, permit applications, and field inspections for a new well at the Ledyard Division. A new well is needed because the Ledyard pump station is averaging between 30 to 40 thousand gallons/day, which is the maximum yield of the two existing wells at Ledyard Division. DPH approved the new well in November. General Manager Cansler said that SCWA is now working with the Town of Ledyard to obtain an easement because the State requires that SCWA control a 150-foot radius around each well.

4. Green Village

In 2020 SCWA signed an agreement to take over as the owner/operator of the pumphouse and water distribution system at the new Green Village development in Salem once it is completed. Green Village is a 55 and over community with 48 townhouse units, each unit with individual meters. After multiple delays involving water quality and quantity in the wells, DPH finally granted approval of the system on November 1, 2022. Final approval was contingent on installation of a treatment system, which has been completed. Mr. Cansler said that currently there are 14 units occupied, although the developer had claimed he would have all 48 units occupied by the end of the year.

5. Construction of Millwood Subdivision (part of Hillcrest Division) in Montville

Sun Communities, Inc. is continuing construction of the new Millwood development, adjacent to their Hillcrest subdivision in Montville. The roads and infrastructure were completed in 2019 before Jensen Communities was sold to Sun Communities. The proposed Millwood development will have 46 modular homes for people aged 55+ and will tie into the existing Hillcrest water distribution system. The first fourteen homes have been sold, and several more homes are nearing completion.

6. Tower-Ferry View Division OCCT (Optimal Corrosion Control Treatment) Report

In 2021 SCWA had four copper samples, out of 35 samples analyzed from the Tower-Ferry View Division, which exceeded the maximum contaminant level (MCL). As a result, SCWA was required to take more samples in 2022. None of the samples analyzed in 2022 exceeded the MCL. In addition, SCWA is required to prepare an optimal corrosion control treatment (OCCT) report. The primary purpose of this report is to address changes that can be made to the treatment process to preclude further copper MCL exceedances. At DPH's recommendation SCWA worked with an EPA consultant (CADMUS) to complete the OCCT; which was submitted to DPH on October 20th. General Manager Cansler stated that SCWA has not heard anything further regarding the OCCT.

7. Fiscal Year 2021 Annual Audit

Mr. Cansler said Hoyt, Filippetti & Malaghan, LLC conducted their initial audit visit of SCWA in mid-September, and their final visit on November 1st. He said that the auditors had also reached out to Chairman Monahan and Treasurer Eccard with a series of questions. Both Mr. Monahan and Mr. Eccard stated they had responded to the auditors' questions. The Auditors will present their audit findings to the Representative Advisory Board (RAB) Finance Committee and the Authority prior to the January 2023 RAB meeting. They will have a representative available to answer questions during the Finance Committee's presentation and to the rest of the RAB that same evening.

8. PFAS (Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances)

SCWA continues to monitor new guidelines and regulations pertaining to PFAS (Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances). The State DPH has still not established Maximum Contaminant Levels (MCL) for PFAS in drinking water, but they are encouraging all public water systems to test for PFAS. In August the EPA officially designated two PFAS substances, perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) and perfluorooctanesulfonic acid (PFOS), as hazardous substances under Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA).

General Manager Cansler stated that on December 8th he attended a virtual meeting hosted by the Connecticut Interagency PFAS Task Force. He said that the EPA draft rules for PFAS are due out at the end of December, or early January. He added that the sampling procedures for collecting samples for PFAS analysis was more complex due to the risk of contaminating the sample simply by wearing the wrong clothing.

9. Mystic Village Apartments - Dieldrin

General Manager Cansler stated that Mystic Village Apartments (MVA) are one of SCWA's Contract Operations, which are water systems not owned by SCWA. For these systems the owners are responsible for all maintenance, upgrade costs, and sampling fees, and SCWA is paid to serve as their certified operator. Mr. Cansler said recently the chemical Dieldrin, which was used to treat termites until the 80s, was detected in the water samples taken at MVA. The company that owns MVA is responsible for installing a treatment system for Dieldrin.

Mr. Cansler said company that owns MVA hired a company to design a treatment system for Dieldrin. SCWA heard that the estimated cost for this treatment system is roughly \$25,000. SCWA is recommending that the owner re-activate another well on the property and test that well for Dieldrin first. If both wells test positive, then installation of the treatment system will be the only option.

10. Regional Considerations

a) Water Utility Coordinating Committee (WUCC): Mr. Cansler stated that the Eastern Connecticut Water Utility Coordinating Committee (WUCC) met on November 16th, and the Statewide WUCC met immediately after; both meetings were held virtually. He said currently the Statewide WUCC is trying to address several topics involving interconnections/regionalization, non-community water systems design requirements, conservation/drought, and the process requiring non-community systems to connect to existing community water systems.

b) SCWA Interaction with SCCOG: SCWA and the SCCOG continue to interact cooperatively. To this end, SCWA attends the monthly SCCOG meetings if there are items relating to water on the agenda, and the SCCOG Regional Water Committee, which meets only as needed.

c) SCWA Interaction with the WPC, CWWA, and AWWA: The General Manager represents SCWA as a member of the Connecticut Water Planning Council Advisory Group (WPCAG), which meets monthly. Mr. Cansler is also a member of the Connecticut Water Works Association (CWWA) Legislative Affairs Committee, which generally meets monthly between November and June.

Other Business

General Manager Cansler stated that he received a phone call the previous week from Attorney Eric Parker representing the Oakdale Heights subdivision Home Owners Association (HOA). Oakdale Heights is a 219-home subdivision in Montville that has been operating its own water system since the subdivision was developed in the mid-1960's. Due to the pending retirement of their certified operator, and several active HOA board members, the HOA is interested in either selling or turning over full-time operation to another certified operator or utility. Mr. Cansler said he felt that this was an opportunity worth exploring further. He suggested that he and the SCWA Foreman/Chief Certified Operator conduct an on-site visit of their system and report back to the Authority at the January meeting. The Authority agreed with this suggestion.

Report from Chairman – None

Report from Authority Members – None

Public Comment – None

Adjourn

On motion of Mr. Eccard, seconded by Mr. Mullane, the Authority voted to adjourn the meeting at approximately 5:45 p.m.

It was noted the next Authority meeting is scheduled to occur on January 9, 2023, at 5:15 pm, either virtually, or at 1649 Rt. 12, Gales Ferry, CT.

Josh Cansler
Secretary