

# MINUTES

**Joint Meeting of the Representative Advisory Board to the Southeastern Connecticut  
Water Authority and the and the Southeastern Connecticut Water Authority  
Montville Public Safety Building  
July 15, 2021**

The joint meeting of the Representative Advisory Board to the Southeastern Connecticut Water Authority and the Southeastern Connecticut Water Authority was called to order at 7:05 p.m. by Advisory Board Secretary Hugh McKenney, in the absence of Chairman Barry Weiner and Vice-Chairman Jack Malone. It was determined by SCWA General Manager Josh Cansler that the requisite number of members needed for a quorum was not present. Secretary McKenney concurred.

Advisory Board members in attendance were: Secretary Hugh McKenney, Salem; Jim Bonanno, Bozrah; Carol Russell, East Lyme; Mary Lou Smith, Groton; Mike Cherry, Ledyard; Anthony Siragusa, Montville; Robert Boissevain, North Stonington.

SWCA Board members in attendance were: Authority Chairman Edward Monahan; Vice Chairman Harry Watson, Treasurer Paul Eccard, Peter Balestracci, and Nicholas Mullane.

Secretary Hugh McKenney offered a period for public comment. There were no customers or citizens in the meeting wishing to speak.

Because there was not a quorum present, Secretary McKenney tabled a vote on approval of the minutes of the April 15, 2021 meeting until the next meeting.

SCWA Authority Chairman Monahan gave his report (attachment 1) to the RAB, and noted the continuing and safe operations of the Authority during the current COVID pandemic. During his discussion on Operational Activities, he gave an update on proposed project to interconnect the Montville Division and Seven Oaks Division; replacement of the Tower Division main; and the Robin Division Treatment Study.

Mr. Cherry asked for more information about the interconnection project between Seven Oaks and Montville Divisions. Mr. Cansler gave a brief history on the first phase of the interconnection, completed in 2007, and the need to complete the interconnection, primarily to reduce the demand at the Montville Pump Station which is close to its demand capacity, especially in the summer months. He noted that twice in the past five years, SCWA has implemented voluntary water conservation measures.

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Under the Administrative section of his report Chairman Monahan discussed the Fiscal Year 2022 Budget, the ongoing legal matter between Raspberry Junction Holding, LLC and SCWA, this year's Consumer Confidence reports, and the annual Election of Officers for the Authority.

Addressing SCWA Planning Activities, Chairman Monahan provided an update on the construction of the Green Village II housing complex in Salem; construction of the Millwood Subdivision in Montville; and an update on PFAS related legislation that could potentially affect SCWA once implemented.

Mr. McKenney asked for more details about the potential impact to SCWA and possible liability to the Authority if PFAS is found in any of our sources, once testing begins. Mr. Cansler replied that he did not believe there was much of a likelihood of high PFAS levels in any of the SCWA wells, but if PFAS is discovered the impact would be significant because SCWA would have to purchase and install PFAS treatment systems, or take the affected wells offline. He added that the guidelines and allowable levels had not been established yet, and that the State Budget for FY 2022 and 2023 allocated funding for the State Interagency PFAS Task Force to establish testing procedures and minimum allowable limits. He also noted that the EPA was also working on PFAS regulations.

In his Chairman's report, Dr. Monahan also noted that SCWA continues its participation with the Water Utility Coordinating Committee (WUCC), the Southeastern Connecticut Council of Governments (SCCOG), the Water Planning Council (WPC), and the Connecticut Water Works Association (CWWA).

Secretary McKenney stated that he did not have a report on behalf of the Chairman of the Representative Advisory Board at this time.

There were no other member reports. There was also no New Business.

A motion was made by Ms. Smith, and seconded by Mr. Cherry, to adjourn the meeting at 7:55 p.m. The motion carried unanimously. The next meeting is scheduled for October 21, 2021, at 7:00 p.m., with location to be determined.

Respectfully submitted,  
Josh Cansler  
SCWA General Manager

# **Attachment 1 to Minutes of the July 15, 2021 RAB Meeting:**

## **Southeastern Connecticut Water Authority Chairman's Report to the Representative Advisory Board**

**July 15, 2021**

### **I. Operational Activities**

#### **A. Montville Division Upgrade and Interconnection Project**

In March 2021, DPH approved SCWA's Preliminary Engineering Report requesting approval of a project to upgrade the Montville pump station and complete the interconnection between Seven Oaks and Montville divisions. The first phase of the interconnection was completed in 2007. Completion of this interconnection will greatly relieve pressure on the Montville system and make it easier to work on the tanks in the Montville system, which are in need of minor repairs. If approved for Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) program this interconnection project will be eligible for a 50% subsidy with a 50% loan.

In May SCWA reached out to the current owners of the parcel between the end of the 2007 water main extension in Montville and the existing Seven Oaks distribution system requesting a meeting to discuss an easement across their parcel. The attorney for the owners responded by asking for time to develop concept drawings for a proposed housing development, which they plan to build in the future. In June they indicated they would be ready to meet by the end of July.

As part of the initial upgrades to the Montville pump station, SCWA used Mass Tanks, LLC to clean-out and power wash the raw water concrete storage tank at the Montville Division in May. The tank was then sealed by SCWA crews and coated with a special concrete paint. This was a requirement of the last DPH sanitary survey inspection conducted at the Montville pump station.

#### **B. Tower Division – Main Replacement**

In November SCWA crews installed new valves in the existing water mains leading from the Tower Division pump stations to the main distribution located on East Drive in Gales Ferry. Over the past few years there have been several breaks in this water main, each resulting in system wide outages. The second phase of this project, installation of a new water main from the two Tower pumphouses to East Drive has been rescheduled multiple times due to weather, material shortages, and most recently, diversion of assets due to water main breaks. The second phase should not include a system wide water outage.

In May SCWA installed a cellular monitoring system at the Tower Division. This system alerts SCWA crews of the status of low pressure, utility power, generator power, and changes to the chemical feed systems. In early July the General Manager and Foreman met with the owner of Arrow Fencing to discuss upgrades and expansion to the perimeter fencing.

#### **C. Robin Division Water**

At the April meeting the Authority approved a motion authorizing the General Manager to contract with Lenard Engineering to conduct a manganese treatment study, and chemical feed modification design, for Robin Division in Montville. Over the past few years SCWA has received an increasing number of calls regarding discoloration, and occasional sediment in the water, from residents of Robin Division. SCWA is still awaiting the results of the engineering study.

## **II. Administrative Activities**

### **A. Budget**

On June 14, 2021, the Authority adopted an operating budget for Fiscal Year 2022 of \$1,752,260, a 2.5% increase over the FY 2021 budget. The approved budget does not include a rate increase for 2022.

Projected revenues for FY 2021 were \$15,000 more than budgeted, and over \$100,000 more than the previous year. The primary reasons for this increase were a very dry summer last year, and the 5% increase for water usage fees in FY 2021. This rate increase impacted water usage fees, but left other standard fees (basic minimum fee, service fees, connection fee) the same. Residential revenues also increased slightly because many workers and school age children stayed home as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Conversely, commercial (school, business, industry) revenues went down slightly in response to pandemic-related closures. Projected expenses for FY 2021 were roughly \$7,000 more than budgeted. The cost of purchased water was up significantly due to the dry summer and more people staying at home during the pandemic, however the expected increases in chemicals, testing/analysis, and electricity, were not as significant as expected.

The proposed budget for FY 2022 estimates a \$9,000 increase in revenue over last year's budgeted amount. Although we cannot plan for an added boost in revenues resulting from another dry summer, we do expect an increase in revenues based on additional customers once the Green Village complex opens in Salem, and as houses are slowly added in the Millwood sub-division in Montville. Total expenditures are expected to increase \$44,000, primarily due to an anticipated increase in the cost of chemicals, additional security enhancements at some of the pump stations, and a percentage increase charged by the State for retirement benefits.

### **B. Election of Officers**

At their June 2021 meeting, the Authority re-elected Harry Watson as Vice-Chair, Paul Eccard as Treasurer, and Josh Cansler as Secretary. Those three offices are all one-year terms. The Authority Chairman's position is a three-year term, expiring in June 2022.

### **C. 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. After a series of hearings at the lower courts, the case was forwarded to the Connecticut Supreme Court, which issued a ruling in 2019 sending the case back to the trial court for consideration of the summary judgment argument. A pre-trial oral argument was held before the Connecticut Trial Court on January 15, 2021. SCWA was informed by the attorney for Gladfelter Insurance that the argument went well, and that a decision should be rendered by mid-summer.

### **D. Consumer Confidence Reports**

In June, SCWA distributed Consumer Confidence Reports, also referred to as "Annual Water Quality Reports", to each of our approximately 2800 customers. Because of the nature of SCWA's water service operations, sixteen separate reports were prepared and distributed. These reports were researched, written, and copied completely in-house. As in the past, processing the reports for mailing, via the U.S. Postal service, was carried out by Viability, Inc. (formerly Community Enterprises), SCWA's co-tenant at 1649 Rt. 12, Gales Ferry.

### **III. Planning Activities**

#### **A. Green Village – Salem**

In November 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 will be a 55 and over community with 48 townhouse units, each unit with individual meters. The developer plans to complete the complex in 2021. To date the site has been cleared and installation of most sub-grade infrastructure has been completed. In addition, the structural framing and roofing has been completed for most of the townhouse units.

#### **B. 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 homes are expected to be sold this year. SCWA staff have been working with Millwood contractors installing the water distribution lines and meter pits for each unit.

#### **C. PFAS (Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances)**

The State Budget, signed last month by Governor Lamont, included \$408,000 in FY 2022, and \$420,000 in FY 2023, to support the Department of Public Health (DPH) in implementing certain recommendations of the Connecticut Interagency PFAS Task Force. This will include additional staffing for toxicological expertise, permitting of more Connecticut laboratories to do PFAS testing, support testing of public water systems, and a PFAS education program. In addition the State legislature approved bills that prohibit using firefighting foam with PFAS substance, and as well as banning the use of food packaging made using PFAS materials. Congress has also introduced a bill which would require the EPA to set a national drinking water standard for PFAS within two years, and the President's initial infrastructure program included funding to support cleanup of rural and small water systems.

#### **D. Regional Considerations**

- 1) Water Utility Coordinating Committee (WUCC):** The Eastern Connecticut Water Utility Coordinating Committee (WUCC) last met in May 2020. A meeting scheduled for June 2021 was cancelled and has not been rescheduled. A Statewide WUCC meeting held in May included an update from the WUCC workgroups to address: Interconnections/Regionalization; Non-Community Water Systems Design Requirements; Updating Process requiring Non-Community Systems to Connect to an Existing Community Water Systems, Conservation/Drought. General Manager Cansler is serving on the Interconnections and Regionalization Workgroup.
- 2) SCWA Interaction with Southeastern Connecticut Council of Governments (SCCOG):** SCWA and the SCCOG continue to interact cooperatively. To this end, Chairman Monahan frequently attends the SCCOG Regional Water Committee meetings. The General Manager participates on the SCCOG Regional Water Committee's Technical Advisory Subcommittee (TAS).
- 3) SCWA Interaction with the WPC and CWWA:** The General Manager is co-chair of the Connecticut Water Planning Council Advisory Group (WPCAG), and represents SCWA as a member of the Connecticut Water Works Association (CWWA) Legislative Affairs Committee.

Edward C. Monahan, Chairman  
Southeastern Connecticut Water Authority