

**Minutes of the August 13, 2018 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 5:15 p.m.

**Public Comment on any Item on the Agenda** – None

**Approval of Prior Minutes**

On a motion of Mr. Eccard, seconded by Mr. Mullane, the Authority approved the minutes of the July 9, 2018 Water Authority Meeting, by a vote of 7-0.

**Correspondence** – None

**General Manager's Report**

**1. 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.

In January 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. Both attorneys have provided recent updates on the status of the case. General Manager Cansler stated that it is expected that the case may go before the court again in mid-September of this year.

**2. Tower Division Well #3**

A few weeks ago SCWA started having problems with the Tower Division Well #3, the largest well in any of our systems. SCWA hired Laframboise Drilling and Welling to pull the pump and run a camera down the well, which revealed that the screen in the well had failed, and was full of sediment. Their recommendation was to drill a replacement well nearby. In the meantime Tower Division is operating from the remaining three wells on-site.

In June SCWA submitted an application to DPH for a replacement well a few feet from Well #3. In July DPH visited the Tower Division site and informed us that they could not support the proposed location near the old well, because of wetlands constraints, so SCWA immediately submitted an application for an alternate well site. The new proposed well location, about 100' from the old well, will meet the current wetlands requirements.

The new site will require easements from the Town of Ledyard, and Avalonia Land Conservancy. The State requires a 200 foot buffer zone around all wells over a certain capacity. General Manager Cansler is working with SCWA Attorney Nick Kepple on the easements. A meeting with Avalonia Conservancy is scheduled for August 16<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Cansler stated that he still has not heard back from the State regarding approval of the well.

### **3. Emergency Interconnections with Ledyard/Groton Utilities**

In October 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 will 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. SCWA is working with Groton Utilities on the design and engineering of the emergency interconnections, which is expected to be completed later this summer.

General Manager Cansler met with Groton Utilities on July 20, 2018 to go over the plans for the interconnections. SCWA sent a copy of the plans to Lenard Engineering for review. In early August Groton Utilities received approval from DPH to start the interconnections. Mr. Cansler stated that Groton Utilities planned to begin construction within a few weeks, and that DPH had requested they start first with the Tower/Ferry View Division.

### **4. Replace Montville Manor Distribution System**

On July 17, 2018 General Manager Cansler and Brandon Belair met with the Montville Director of Public Works, Don Bourdeau, along with representatives of their engineering firm, CLA Engineers. They requested the meeting to discuss the feasibility of replacing the Montville Manor distribution system, which has numerous leaks each year. The Town of Montville plans to repave Montville Manor in the next few years and they are concerned that frequent leaks will result in numerous patches in their new pavement. We explained that the best time to replace the distribution system would be as part of the repaving project, and that most likely the costs would be well beyond SCWA's fiscal ability to fund. Mr. Cansler said that the best solution would be to get a grant, which Montville said they would consider as part of their budgeting process.

Mr. Cansler stated he had requested a rough estimate on the cost from Lenard Engineering. They provided a rough estimate of \$ 5,383,000 to replace the mains and service lines, as part of a larger repaving project.

### **5. Cedar Ridge Expansion**

Over the past few weeks SCWA has been contacted several times regarding a possible connection of the Cedar Ridge Division to the adjacent mobile home park, called Northstone Gardens. Apparently the wells at Northstone Gardens can no longer provide adequate drinking water for the 25-35 trailers in the park. Representatives of both DPH and Northstone Gardens have both reached out to SCWA regarding the feasibility of connecting to the Cedar Ridge system.

Unfortunately because Northstone is at a higher elevation, a booster station would be required. In addition, because there is very limited storage at Cedar Ridge, an atmospheric tank would have to be installed as well. The total water main required would be about 1000 feet, depending on the route, which is dependent on several easements. Based on a rough internal estimate, SCWA informed both Northstone and DPH that the cost to connect to the Cedar Ridge system would be \$300-400K.

Another option that SCWA suggested was running a main down Rocky Hollow Road and connecting both Cedar Ridge and Northstone Gardens to the North Stonington system. This would cost roughly \$450-550K. This option would allow SCWA to close the Cedar Ridge pump station, which doesn't have enough storage capacity, and is in need of renovation.

#### **6. 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. In March SCWA received a copy of the reissued approval for the well from DPH, which is valid until September 2, 2018. Mr. Cansler stated that recently there has been clearing of the Aquatic Center site, and the previous week a well drilling company was seen operating on the site. He mentioned that there were also renewed signs of construction at the property across from the Ledyard pump station.

#### **7. Town of North Stonington School Upgrade Project**

SCWA has been working with the construction 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. In July, and again in August, SCWA met with the construction firms installing the new water distribution system and fire suppression systems for the new additions to the schools.

General Manager Cansler said that the previous Thursday (August 9<sup>th</sup>) SCWA staff shut down the water serving the schools and library so that the school upgrade contractor could install two new valves. He said that unfortunately, one of the valves failed the following day, which left the Town of North Stonington without water for an hour or two. Once the location of the break was identified, SCWA field crews were able to isolate the library and schools, and return water back to the rest of the Town on Friday evening. The school contractor repaired the break at the new valve on Saturday, and water was returned to the schools and library the same day.

#### **8. Future DWSRF Projects**

In December 2017 DPH informed SCWA that several proposed SCWA projects were eligible for funding through the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF). This program provides low-interest loans, with the potential for up to 25% subsidization, for eligible projects in the form of principal forgiveness. In January General Manager Cansler submitted Part 1 of the required Financial Assistance Application for two projects; Replacement of Tower Division Pump Station, and Interconnection of Montville and Seven Oaks Divisions. In June General Manager Cansler made a formal request to DPH to carryover the Seven Oaks-Montville Interconnection project from the FY18 DWSRF funding list to the FY19 list.

## **9. Fiscal Year 2018 Annual Audit**

Sandra Welwood conducted her on-site audit visit on August 7, 2018. She hopes to have the draft audit completed prior to the October 15<sup>th</sup> Authority meeting, however completion of the audit is dependent on information from the State, which she says has been hard to obtain in the past. If she can complete the audit before the October meeting, she can present the audit findings to the RAB in October.

## **10. Regional Considerations**

**a) State Water Plan:** 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. 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 proposed State Water Plan had passed through this year's legislature cycle without being voted on, primarily because of language added at the last minute regarding water as a "Public Trust". General Manager Cansler stated that he is currently serving on the Water Planning Council's Organizational Committee to determine the organization and leadership of a State Water Plan Implementation Workgroup.

**b) Water Utility Coordinating Committee (WUCC):** The Eastern Water Utility Coordinating Committee (WUCC), which convened in June 2016, concluded regular monthly meetings at the end of May. The next meeting will be on November 14, 2018 at the Southeastern Connecticut Council of Governments (SCCOG) office. This meeting is 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 frequently 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.

## **Executive Session**

At approximately 5:46 pm, Mr. Eccard made a motion to enter into Executive Session pursuant to General Statutes 1-200(6)(D). His motion was seconded by Mr. Mullane. Chairman Monahan called the motion to vote, which passed unanimously. At approximately 5:53 pm, the Authority concluded the Executive Session and resumed the regular meeting. Chairman Monahan noted that no motions or votes were made during the Executive Session.

After the Executive Session, Mr. Watson made a motion for all the members of the Authority to sign a letter of response to an outside company declining their request to discuss the possible sale of SCWA assets. His motion, seconded by Ms. Franciosi, was unanimously approved by the Authority.

**Other Business** – Mr. Watson asked if there had been any change in the official drought status this summer. General Manager Cansler stated that he had not received anything from the State regarding changes to drought status over the summer. He said that the State DPH was very good about sending out updates regarding drought status.

**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 5:59 p.m.

It was noted the next Authority meeting is scheduled to occur on September 10, 2018, 5:15 pm at 1649 Rt. 12, Gales Ferry, CT.

Josh Cansler  
Secretary

