

**Draft Minutes of the April 11, 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-Chairman Harry Watson, Treasurer Paul Eccard, Nicholas Mullane, Claudia Koerting.

**Authority Staff:** General Manager Josh Cansler

**Call to Order**

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

Chairman Monahan asked for a moment of silence for Authority Member Barbara Franciosi, who passed away on April 8, 2022.

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

**Approval of Prior Minutes**

On a motion of Mr. Eccard, seconded by Ms. Koerting, the Authority approved the minutes of the March 21, 2022, Authority Meeting, by a vote of 3-0, with two abstentions (Mr. Mullane and Ms. Koerting).

**Correspondence** - None

**General Manager's Report**

**1. COVID-19/Coronavirus Pandemic Update**

General Manager Cansler noted that only one staff member has been infected by the COVID-19 virus, and that SCWA operations have not been affected by the pandemic. The Authority continues to meet virtually until further notice.

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

At the March meeting the Authority authorized the Chairman to sign 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. Mr. Cansler stated that the signed agreement was forwarded to RWA on March 22<sup>nd</sup>, and the initial kick-off meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, May 3, 2022. This meeting will be virtual.

### **3. Capital Projects Update**

#### **a) Seven Oaks/Montville Interconnection Project**

Last year SCWA began the planning and engineering of a project to complete the interconnection between Seven Oaks and Montville divisions. Last April SCWA reached out to the current owners of the parcel (100 Waterfall LLC) between the end of the Montville water main extension and the existing Seven Oaks distribution system requesting consideration of an easement across their parcel. In their response, received in November, the owners stated they were willing to grant an easement for a water main that follows the street plan for their future proposed development, which is about 1900 feet longer than the SCWA proposed route.

In December General Manager Cansler sent a letter to the parcel owners, through their Attorney (Harry Heller), stating that their proposed longer route will result in a significant project cost increase, and that there are other routes available that do not cross their property, and may be more economically feasible. SCWA has not received a response to our December letter. General Manager Cansler stated that he submitted a Project Rollover Application to the Department of Health (DPH) in early April requesting that this project stay on the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) list of projects for FY 2023.

#### **b) Spicer Hill Booster Station**

Last fall the Authority approved a proposal from Lenard Engineering to complete the engineering, design, and specifications for replacement of the hydropneumatic tank at the Spicer Hill Booster Station, which is part of the Ledyard Division. This project includes replacement of the existing pressure tank with a small booster pump package, installation of new piping to reroute distribution through the new pumps, and the elimination of the pressure tank from the system.

After reviewing the initial plans and specifications SCWA realized, based on the engineering analysis, the only way to eliminate the hydropneumatic pressure tank at Spicer Hill would be to install variable frequency pumps (VFDs) at the main pump station in Ledyard. Installation of VFDs at Ledyard will allow SCWA to eliminate the pressure tank there as well, which is a top priority of the State Department of Health (DPH). General Manager Cansler stated that he had received an updated design to install VFDs at Ledyard just before this meeting.

#### **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. The second phase of this project will be replacement of the original water mains. This project has been delayed because there is currently a 16-week lead time of piping and some valves.

General Manager Cansler stated that in anticipation of possible grants resulting from last year's federal infrastructure bill, he had submitted a Project Eligibility Application to the State in March requesting DWSRF funds to upgrade the Tower Division Pump Station, and add a 200,000 gallon water tank. The estimated cost of this project, including engineering is \$1.2 million.

**d). North Stonington SCWA Consolidation Project**

General Manager Cansler said that in March he had also submitted a Project Eligibility Application to the State requesting DWSRF funds to install an interconnection between the North Stonington Division, and the Cedar Ridge Division. This would allow SCWA to close the Cedar Ridge Pump Station, which is served by a single shallow well, and is in need of a significant equipment upgrades. The proposed interconnection would provide water from the North Stonington Division, which has excess capacity. In addition, North Stone Village, a mobile home park adjacent to Cedar Ridge, which has an outdated water system with water availability and quality issues, could be served by this interconnection. The proposed project will require approximately 7000 LF of new 8" water main installed along Rocky Hollow Road, and construction of a 300,000 gallon elevated water tank. This tank would also provide a significant benefit to the existing NST division customers, by providing redundancy of supply, and a tank to balance pressures throughout the system. The estimated cost of this project is \$5.1 million.

**4. Auditor**

In mid-February SCWA was informed by Sandra Welwood that her firm will no longer be doing audits, and therefore would not be conducting our annual audit as expected. SCWA is required to provide the name of the Audit Firm conducting our annual audit by May 31<sup>st</sup>, so a new Auditor will have to be approved by the SCWA Representative Advisory Board (RAB) in April.

General Manager Cansler said he sent Requests for Proposal (RFP) to six firms that conduct utility/municipal auditing services (listed below), and he had received two audit proposals back. After reviewing the two proposals, the Authority agreed that both proposals met the needs of the Authority and the annual audit requirements. Since both proposals met all requirements, the Authority decided to go with the lowest bid. Mr. Watson made a motion to recommend Hoyt, Filippetti & Malaghan, LLC, of Groton to the RAB for approval to serve as the annual auditor for the next three years. His motion, seconded by Mr. Eccard, was approved unanimously by all members present.

**5. Green Villages I and II (Salem and East Haddam)**

November 2020 the Authority authorized the General Manager to sign a New Water System Agreement between SCWA and Green Village II, a 48-unit, 55+ Community complex being constructed in Salem. Once completed SCWA will take over as the owner/operator of the Green Village pumphouse and water distribution system. This complex is nearing completion and the developer, Colchester Construction, plans to start leasing units in 2022. SCWA has also been in discussions with Colchester Construction about taking over an almost identical development in East Haddam.

Mr. Cansler stated that in late March DPH rejected the Green Village II Application for Approval of Wells 1 & 2 because the safe yield tests were not done properly, the safe yield did not meet the expected demands, and several water quality parameters did not meet State standards. He said that the developer plans to install a third well several hundred yards away.

**6. 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. General Manager Cansler stated that the first twelve homes have been sold, and several more homes are nearing completion.

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

SCWA continues to monitor new guidelines and regulations pertaining to PFAS (Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances). The 2022 and 2023 Connecticut State Budgets included funding for 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 September the EPA released their “Strategic Roadmap to confront PFAS contamination nationwide”. This roadmap established a list of goals and milestones for the EPA moving forward.

## **8. Appointment/Re-appointment of New Authority Member**

General Manager Cansler stated with the recent passing of Ms. Franciosi the Authority now has two vacancies. At their January 2022 meeting the Representative Advisory Board (RAB) had requested nominations to backfill the vacancy on the Authority created when Mr. Balestracci passed away, and that appointment of a new Authority member was already on the agenda for discussion at next weeks RAB meeting. At the February and March meetings the Authority had discussed different possibilities for backfilling this vacancy.

## **9. Regional Considerations**

### **a) FY 2023 State Legislative Cycle- Potential Bills Impacting SCWA and other Water Utilities:**

General Manager Cansler stated that there are several proposed bills under consideration by the State Legislature that could impact water utilities if passed. He addressed the following bills:

**SB-155 – An Act Authorizing Bonds of The State to The Southeastern Connecticut Water Authority to Upgrade a Pump Station, including by Adding a Storage Tank, and Extension an Emergency Connection Line into The Town of Ledyard.** This bill was introduced by Senator Osten and is currently awaiting action by the Finance Committee.

### **HB-5203 - An Act Concerning Utility Company Cost-Sharing Mechanisms**

One section of this bill would prohibit a public service company from recovering, through rates, any cost associated with membership, dues or contributions to a business or industry trade association, for example AWWA or CWWA. This bill was referred to Office of Legislative Research and Office of Fiscal Analysis on March 31<sup>st</sup>.

### **HB-5269 - An Act Concerning Remote Meetings Under the Freedom of Information Act**

Would authorize municipal boards and commissions and other public agencies to hold remote or hybrid remote/in-person meetings beyond April 30, 2022. This bill is currently before the House for approval. Mr. Eccard asked if there was any leeway in the bill to allow virtual meetings if the COVID-19 virus surged again, or in cases of inclement weather. Mr. Watson asked if there were any provisions for hybrid meetings. He stated that he has attended hybrid meetings in Groton. Mr. Cansler said that he was not sure, and would have to review the bill in more detail.

**b) Water Utility Coordinating Committee (WUCC):** The Eastern Connecticut Water Utility Coordinating Committee (WUCC) met for the first time in two years on February 9, 2022, and that the Statewide WUCC met on February 16<sup>th</sup>. 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.

**c) SCWA Interaction with SCCOG:** SCWA and the SCCOG continue to interact cooperatively. To this end, Chairman Monahan attends the monthly SCCOG meetings if there are items relating to water on the agenda. He also attends meetings of the SCCOG Regional Water Committee, which meets only as needed. The General Manager participates on the SCCOG Regional Water Committee's Technical Advisory Subcommittee (TAS).

**d) 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 Nov. and June.

### **10. Meetings**

General Manager Cansler mentioned that he had received an email from the Ash Water Company, LLC, about possibly taking over a water system they own that serves 36 condominiums on Ash Drive in Gales Ferry, CT. He said that he and the Foreman visited the condos and pumphouse on April 8, 2022. Mr. Cansler stated that the pumphouse was in good condition, but he wasn't sure about the distribution system. He said he planned on running the numbers to determine the feasibility of taking on the Ash Drive Condos.

**Other Business** - None

**Report from Chairman** - None

### **Report from Authority Members**

Mr. Eccard asked if SCWA was planning to send a donation on behalf of Barbara Franciosi similar to the one sent to Mr. Balestracci's desired charity after he passed away. The rest of the Authority agreed with that idea, so Mr. Eccard made a motion authorizing the General Manager to submit a donation, on behalf of SCWA, to Ms. Franciosi's favorite charity. His motion, seconded by Mr. Watson, was approved by a vote of 5-0.

**Public Comment** – None

### **Adjourn**

On motion of Mr. Eccard, seconded by Mr. Mullane, the Authority voted to adjourn the meeting at approximately 5:55 p.m.

It was noted the next Authority meeting is scheduled to occur on May 9, 2022, at 5:15 pm, either virtually, or at 1649 Rt. 12, Gales Ferry, CT.

Josh Cansler  
Secretary