

**Draft Minutes of the November 8, 2021 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, Peter Balestracci, Claudia Koerting, and Nick Mullane.

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 October 18, 2021 Authority Meeting, by a unanimous vote of all members present.

Correspondence - None

General Manager's Report

1. COVID-19/Coronavirus Pandemic Update

Although COVID-19 cases surged recently in New London County, so far none of the staff at SCWA have been infected, and operations at SCWA have not been affected. The Authority continues to meet virtually until further notice.

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

At the October meeting the Authority discussed a letter from Larry Bingaman, President and Chief Executive Officer of the South Central Regional Connecticut Water Authority (RWA). The purpose of the letter was to offer SCWA customers a service line protection program via a partnership with RWA. RWA currently offers this service line protection program through a program they call PipeSafe.

On November 4th RWA presented their proposal to Chairman Monahan and General Manager Cansler, virtually, via Zoom. In turn, Chairman Monahan and Mr. Cansler presented the suggested concepts of the proposed agreement back to the rest of the Authority at this meeting. Mr. Eccard asked about possible financial penalties or liabilities if SCWA chose to partner with RWA in this program. Mr. Mullane queried about the costs to the customers. After some discussion Mr. Watson made a motion to invite RWA to present their proposal to the entire Authority at the next meeting. His motion, seconded by Mr. Eccard, was approved by a unanimous vote of all members present. Mr. Cansler said he would coordinate with RWA for their presentation at the December 2012 Authority meeting.

3. Capital Projects Update

a) 2021 Bond Anticipation Note (BAN)

The 2021 BAN (Bond Anticipation Note) was finalized in October. In addition to absorbing the interest and principal from the 2020 BAN, the latest BAN included new funding for the replacement of three pumphouse roofs, and an upgrade of our meter reading software and SCWA office computers.

b) Montville Division Tank and 7 Oaks/Montville Interconnection Project

Since April SCWA has been trying to coordinate a meeting with the owner/developer of the parcel between the end of the Montville water main extension and the existing Seven Oaks distribution system, to discuss an easement across their property. This easement will be required for SCWA to move forward on 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.

Initially the attorney representing the owner/developer (100 Waterfall LLC) stated that his clients needed time to develop concept drawings for a proposed housing development, which they plan to build in the future. General Manager Cansler stated that despite repeated attempts we have still not been able to coordinate a meeting to discuss the proposed easement.

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. A test of the new back-up water main was conducted in September using SCWA's mobile pump station. The second phase of this project will be replacement of the original water mains. This year SCWA also installed a new perimeter fence and three new gates around the Tower pump station, and a cellular monitoring system which enhances the ability for field staff to react to changes in the system, such as power outages, low water pressure, and fluctuations to the chemical feed systems.

d) Spicer Hill Booster Station

At the September meeting 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. General Manager Cansler said that they expect the design to be completed by early 2022.

4. 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. After reviewing the design and cost estimate for the proposed phosphate injection system the General Manager and Foreman decided to first try modifying the pump systems at Robin Division to flush out the initial inflow to the system. If this doesn't work, then SCWA will submit a request and design to DPH for approval of a change to the treatment process at Robin.

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

November 2020 the Authority authorized the General Manager to sign the New Water System Agreement between SCWA and Green Village II, on behalf of SCWA. Green Village II is a 48-unit, 55+ Community complex being constructed in Salem. The complex will have townhouses with individual garages per unit. Each unit will have individual meters. 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 early 2022.

In September the developer asked if SCWA would be interested in also taking over Green Village I, an almost identical development which they opened last year. After legal review the Authority authorized the General Manager to move forward with the process of acquiring the water system at Green Village I in East Haddam. The General Manager stated that he had a meeting with the developer in early November and that they are working on a draft agreement.

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. The first three homes were sold in September, and several more homes are nearing completion.

7. Sanitary Surveys

Sanitary Surveys are conducted at each community public water system (PWS) by the DPH Drinking Water Section every 3 years, and at each non-community PWS every 5 years. In 2021 Sanitary Survey inspections were conducted by DPH at SCWA's North Stonington, Barrett, Chriswood, Mohegan, Robin Hill, and Birchwood Divisions. In addition Sanitary Surveys were conducted at the Preston Town Hall and Preston Library, both of which are contract operations for SCWA. General Manager Cansler stated that the inspection results for all the Sanitary Surveys have been received, and SCWA has submitted the required Sanitary Survey Response Forms, which DPH formally acknowledged. He said that all the significant deficiencies listed on the inspections have all been corrected by SCWA staff, well within the required 120-day deadlines.

8. 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.

9. 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 five years of winding all the way to the Connecticut Supreme Court a decision was finally rendered on August 23, 2021, affirming the trial court's granting of their motion for summary judgment in favor of SCWA. Unless the Plaintiff appeals this decision to the U.S. Court of Appeals within 90 days this matter is resolved.

10. Fiscal Year 2021 Annual Audit

General Manager Cansler stated that Sandra Welwood conducted her annual audit visit of SCWA in August and September. She intends to present her audit findings to the Representative Advisory Board (RAB) Finance Committee and the Authority prior to the January 2022 RAB meeting. Based on the ongoing pandemic her presentation will be virtual. Ms. Welwood will be available to answer questions during the Finance Committee's presentation to the rest of the RAB that same evening.

11. Public Notice – Discharge of Treated Effluent in North Stonington Correspondence

At the October meeting the Authority discussed a Public Notice from October 6, 2021, edition of *The Day* newspaper that was forwarded by Chairman Monahan. This Public Notice referred to a request for issuance of a State Permit for the discharge of treated sewage effluent in the Town of North Stonington. SCWA has two groundwater wells and a treatment facility within a mile of the proposed discharge site (Bellissimo Grande Hotel, owned by R.J. Properties). After discussion about the potential impact to the SCWA's groundwater watershed the Authority requested the General Manager contact DEEP for more information regarding the request, and authorized the Chairman to provide a public comment, on behalf of the Authority, if he felt a public comment was warranted.

General Manager Cansler stated that he reached out to the point of contact at DEEP and discovered that this Public Notice is for a request to renew the existing discharge permit, with no increase in discharge flow. In addition, Mr. Mullane discussed the Public Notice with the Town of North Stonington and ascertained they were not concerned with the renewal request. Based on these findings the Chairman and General Manager determined that a public comment by SCWA was not necessary.

12. Regional Considerations

a) Planning for Future Water Demands North Stonington: Last fall the General Manager discussed long-term water needs in North Stonington, specifically the area near the Rt.187/Rt. 2 traffic circle, with Attorney, Ken Labbe, who is representing the Town. Mr. Labbe indicated that they are trying to involve all the regional utilities. Mr. Mullane mentioned that he had heard that Mr. Labbe was not representing the Town, and that he was working completely on his own, possibly as a consultant for a private developer.

b) Water Utility Coordinating Committee (WUCC): The Eastern Connecticut Water Utility Coordinating Committee (WUCC) last met in May 2020. A Statewide WUCC meeting was held virtually in September and the next Statewide WUCC meeting is scheduled for November 17, 2021. 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 Water Planning Council (WPC): The General Manager, representing SCWA, is co-chair of the CT Water Planning Council Advisory Group (WPCAG), which meets monthly. His term as co-chair ends January 1, 2022. All meetings are currently conducted virtually via Zoom.

e) SCWA Interaction with AWWA and CWWA: General Manager Cansler is also a member of the Connecticut Water Works Association (CWWA) Legislative Affairs Committee, which generally meets monthly between Nov. and June.

Other Business – None

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 6:05 p.m.

It was noted the next Authority meeting is scheduled to occur on December 13, 2021, at 5:15 pm, either virtually, or at 1649 Rt. 12, Gales Ferry, CT.

Josh Cansler
Secretary