

MINUTES
Representative Advisory Board of the Southeastern Connecticut Water Authority
to the Southeastern Connecticut Water Authority
Waterford Public Library
July 18, 2019

At 7:00 p.m., George Jackson, Chairman of the Representative Advisory Board, opened the public hearing on Southeastern Connecticut Water Authority's (SCWA) proposed 5% increase for water service rates and fees, with a projected implementation date of September 1, 2019. The following Representative Advisory Board members and Authority members were present:

Representative Advisory Board (RAB) Members: Jim Bonanno, Bozrah; Carol Russell, East Lyme; Thomas Seidel, Franklin; Martin Artale Jr., Groton (City); Mary Lou Smith and Conrad Heede, Groton Town; Anthony Siragusa, Montville; George Jackson and James Fogarty, Salem; Jeffrey Callahan, Stonington Borough.

Authority Members: Edward Monahan, Harry Watson, Paul Eccard, Peter Balestracci, Barbara Lee Franciosi, Claudia Koerting, Nicholas Mullane.

Authority Staff: General Manager Josh Cansler

Chairman Jackson stated that copies of the rate increase packet had been provided to everyone attending the Public Hearing. This packet included copies of the June 20, 2019 letter to the RAB Chairman from Authority Chairman Monahan formally notifying the RAB of the proposed rate increase, and request for public hearing. Also included with the letter was the Fiscal Year 2020 Projections, proposed new Rate Schedule, history of SCWA residential rates from 1977, and a list of SCWA service areas.

Chairman Jackson stated that information regarding the proposed rate increase public hearing was sent to the region's municipal clerks and chief elected officials in the municipalities served by SCWA. This public hearing was also noticed in the July 10, 2019 edition of The Day newspaper. Mr. Jackson requested that everyone present review the information provided regarding the rate increase and that everyone present, including the public, was free to make comments at this time.

RAB member Ms. Russell asked about the 5% discount and whether this would affect the 5% rate increase. General Manager Cansler explained the 5% discount was to encourage customers to pay within 30 days, and that it was unlikely to impact the increased revenue from the rate increase because number of customers taking advantage of the 5% always stayed pretty much the same.

There were no comments from the public.

At 7:13 pm Chairman Jackson closed the public hearing.

Mr. Fogarty made a motion that the RAB found the proposed 5% rate increase appropriate, and that the RAB recommend to the Authority adoption of the proposed rate increase. This motion, seconded by Mr. Siragusa, was approved unanimously.

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The regular quarterly meeting of the Representative Advisory Board (RAB) of the Southeastern Connecticut Water Authority, and the Southeastern Connecticut Water Authority, was called to order at 7:14 p.m. by Advisory Board Chairman Jackson. It was determined by Mr. Cansler that the requisite number of members present constituted a quorum. Chairman Jackson concurred. In the absence of RAB Secretary, Jack Malone, SCWA General Manager Josh Cansler recorded the minutes of this meeting.

A motion was made by Mr. Siragusa, seconded by Mr. Fogarty, to accept the minutes of the April 18, 2019 RAB meeting. The motion carried unanimously.

Chairman Jackson announced the opportunity for public comment before the RAB and there was none presented.

Report from the SCWA Chairman

Southeastern Connecticut Water Authority Chairman Edward Monahan delivered his quarterly report to the Advisory Board. A copy of his report is attached.

His report addressed the following Operational Activities topics:

- A. Tower Division - Well #3: Chairman Monahan added that DPH was somewhat sympathetic to our circumstances based on the existing constraints.
- B. Thames Aquatic Center –Ledyard: Mr. Cansler stated that he had reached out to DPH regarding final approval of the well. He said he has not heard back from DPH yet.
- C. Emergency Interconnections with Ledyard/Groton Utilities: Ms. Russell asked about funding for the interconnection projects. Mr. Cansler stated that it was being funded entirely by Groton Utilities through a grant they received from DPH that was earmarked for interconnection projects.

Chairman Monahan's report also addressed the following Administrative Activities topics:

- A. Ledyard Center Easement: Chairman Monahan stated that he had attended a hearing in Ledyard regarding the sale of the school property, and the plans displayed specified the SCWA easement.
- B. Claim by Raspberry Junction Holding, LLC vs SCWA: Chairman Monahan stated that the outcome of this case could affect other utilities. RAB Chairman Jackson asked if all of SCWA's costs were covered by insurance. Mr. Eccard stated that the only costs not covered by the insurance company were for Attorney Langhammer, who was hired last year by SCWA to specifically address our concerns regarding precedent. After some discussion about a settlement and SCWA responsibilities in this case, Chairman Monahan pointed out that this was our insurance company's case to handle at this point.
- C. Fiscal Year 2020 Budget
- D. Election of Officers
- E. Consumer Confidence Reports

Further Chairman Monahan's report also addressed the following Planning Activities topics:

- A. Vulnerability Assessments for Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS): Ms. Russell asked if the PFAS assessments had indicted any possibility of PFAS sources near our wells. Mr. Cansler stated that there were only two locations which were near possible PFAS sources, both near fire stations. He said it was likely DPH would ask us to sample those locations in the future.

- B. Updated Asset Management Plan
- C. Four-log Applications and North Stonington Chlorine Treatment Application
- D. Regional Considerations
 - 1. State Water Plan: Mr. Fogarty asked if the approved version of the Plan included language on Public Trust. Mr. Cansler stated that it did.
 - 2. SCWA Interaction with SCCOG, CWWA, and WPC

After Chairman Monahan finished his report Mr. Siragusa said he would like to see discussion in the Chairman's Report about issues in Montville Manor regarding needed distribution line replacement. General Manager Cansler said he would make sure that was included in the upcoming Chairman's Report.

Report of RAB Chairman

Chairman Jackson stated that he had nothing new, other than the proposed bylaw changes (next item).

Proposed RAB Bylaw changes

There were two proposed changes to the RAB bylaws, which were noticed to all members the week before with the RAB Agenda that was sent out for this meeting.

The first proposed change was a motion by Mr. Callahan to change the number of members on the RAB Nominating Committee, in Article V (Officers), Section B (Method of Selection), from five members to three members. His motion, seconded by Mr. Fogarty passed unanimously.

The second motion, by Mr. Bonanno, was to add the following paragraph to Article IV (Meetings of the Board):

During the public comment period of a meeting of the Representative Advisory Board of the Southeastern Connecticut Water Authority; Any member of the Advisory Board that wishes to express their personal opinion pertaining to any matter before the Board will do so at this time, that Representative shall notify the chairperson that they will be speaking on their own behalf and not as a Representative to the Advisory Board. Stated notification to the chairperson shall become part of the meeting minutes.

After Mr. Bonanno's motion was seconded by Mr. Siragusa, Chairman Jackson asked for discussion. Mr. Fogarty stated that he did not think the change was necessary, and would not support it. Chairman Jackson stated that he thought the motion was the result of the passion expressed by a member on a subject over a series of prior RAB meetings. Mr. Bonanno stated that he had submitted the motion because he felt that the RAB was subject to state mandates regarding water, and he felt it was important that member comments representing a personal opinion should be made during the public comment period, and identified as such in the minutes. Several members stated that everyone on the RAB was present to advise and comment with their personal opinion on all subjects brought to the Board. Two or three members stated that a more important factor regarding member comments during the meeting was enforcement of the 5-minute rule. After more discussion, the Chairman brought the proposed change to a vote. The change was rejected by a vote of 1 aye, 9 nays.

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Reports from RAB members

There were no reports from RAB members.

Chairman Jackson noted there was no new business to come before the Advisory Board.

The RAB meeting was adjourned at 8:38 p.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, October 17, 2019 at the Montville Public safety Building.

Respectfully submitted,

Josh Cansler
Secretary Pro-tem
RAB