

**Draft Minutes of the March 11, 2024, Water Authority Meeting
Southeastern Connecticut Water Authority
1649 Route 12, Gales Ferry, CT**

This meeting was held virtually per Public Act No. 22-3, which permanently established the requirements for virtual public meetings in Connecticut.

Present

Authority: Chairman Edward Monahan, Vice-Chair Harry Watson, Treasurer Paul Eccard, Nicholas 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 February 12, 2024, Authority Meeting, by a unanimous vote of all members present.

Correspondence - None

General Manager's Report

1. Oakdale Heights Subdivision (Montville)

At the request of the Oakdale Heights Association, which represents the 219-home Oakdale Heights subdivision in Montville, a formal agreement for SCWA to take over ownership and operation of the Oakdale Heights water system was signed by SCWA and the Oakdale Heights Association in July 2023. The signed agreement was submitted along with a formal Request for Transfer of Water Lands Application to the State Department of Public Health (DPH) in early August.

General Manager Cansler stated that DPH finally responded to the transfer application request in February 2024. In addition to acknowledging receipt of the application, the letter from DPH states that the transfer is subject to the consent of the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority (PURA), and that a public hearing will be required. Mr. Cansler added that he was originally told by DPH staff, approximately one year ago, that this transfer was subject to PURA review/approval and would not require a public hearing. He said that SCWA is currently trying to determine what the requirements are for the public hearing, and when it may be scheduled.

2. Capital Projects Update

a) Seven Oaks/Montville Interconnection Project

This project will complete the interconnection between Seven Oaks and Montville divisions. A request for proposals was publicly announced last November and bids were opened on December 15, 2023. SCWA received a total of 3 proposals for this project ranging between \$780,000 and \$1,191,750. After the bid opening, our consulting engineer on this project, Haley Ward, reviewed each bid for compliance with the contract requirements, and checked references on the bidders.

At the January meeting the Authority approved a motion to award a contract for the project titled "SCWA Seven Oaks Water Main Interconnection", pending approval by the State DPH DWSRF section, to the low bidder, Roma Construction of Griswold, CT, for a bid price of \$780,000, provided they submit the required bid award documents and references. As part of the same motion, if the low bidder does not provide the required documents or references in a timely manner, then SCWA will accept the second lowest bidder, B & W Paving and Landscaping of Oakdale, CT, for a bid price of \$1,045,250.

General Manager Cansler stated that unfortunately neither the low bidder or the second low bidder were able to provide adequate references regarding previous experience in the construction of a water pumping station. He said on February 16, 2024, Haley-Ward sent a letter recommending that SCWA award this contract to the next low bidder, Richards Corporation, for a bid price of \$1,191,750. In their letter, Haley-Ward engineers stated that Richards Corporation had provided positive references regarding construction of multiple successful water pump station projects in the past.

Mr. Cansler said that on February 28, 2024, SCWA and Haley-Ward met with the assigned DPH DWSRF project engineer to discuss the bids, the references, and the recommendation to award the project to the third low bidder based on qualifications and experience. He added that SCWA is still hoping to award this project in the spring of 2024, with anticipated completion in the mid to late summer of this year.

After some discussion Mr. Eccard made a motion, that based on the recommendation of our consulting engineer, Haley-Ward, the Authority authorize the General Manager to award a contract for the project titled "SCWA Seven Oaks Water Main Interconnection", pending approval by the State DPH DWSRF section, to the third low bidder, Richards Corporation of Terryville, CT, for a bid price of \$1,191,750. Mr. Eccard's motion, seconded by Mr. Watson, was approved by a unanimous vote of all members present.

b) Grant-in-Aid for Upgrades at the Tower Pump Station (Ledyard)

General Manager Cansler stated that in November 2023 the State approved a public act that included a \$3 million grant-in-aid for the Tower Division to upgrade the pump station, add storage tanks, and upgrade security. He said this grant also includes extension of the emergency connection up Christy Hill Road. He added that this request for the grant was sponsored by State Senator Kathy Osten. Mr. Cansler said that in late February SCWA met with the State Department of Health (DPH) to discuss the requirements for the grant-in-aid funding.

c) Upgrades at the Spicer Hill Booster Station

This project includes installation of variable frequency pumps (VFDs) at the Spicer Hill Booster Station, which is part of the Ledyard distribution system. This project also includes the elimination of the hydropneumatic pressure tanks at the station, which is a top priority for DPH. The original plan for this project was to install most of the new system using in-house technicians, with the assistance of a plumbing contractor with experience installing VFDs.

General Manger Cansler stated that unfortunately, the experienced plumbers we have used in the past are not interested and/or are too busy to assist with this project in the near future, so SCWA is considering requesting bids for the project instead.

3. Proposed New Development - Salem

This past summer SCWA participated in a meeting with DPH and CLA Engineers to discuss a proposed new 24-unit condominium development in Salem, which is in the SCWA exclusive service area (ESA). This development is currently still in the design and engineering phase. The developer hopes to begin construction in mid-2024 with the goal of selling the units in early 2025. This development will be located just off Route 85/Hartford-New London Turnpike, approximately one mile south of the traffic circle.

4. Green Village (Salem) and Millwood (Montville)

Green Village is a 55 and over community with 48 townhouse units in Salem which opened in August 2022. Currently there are 47 units occupied.

Millwood is part of the adjacent SCWA Hillcrest subdivision in Montville. Construction of this 55 and over community started in 2021 and so far, twenty homes have been constructed and sold. Forty-six individual modular homes are proposed for this development.

5. Lead Service Line Inventory

The National Primary Drinking Water Regulations for Lead and Copper, which went into effect in 2021, requires all public water systems to develop a lead service line (LSL) inventory that identifies all materials used to construct or repair all service lines connected to a public water distribution system. Last fall the EPA released their guidance for developing the LSL inventory. This LSL inventory must be completed and submitted by October 16, 2024. General Manager Cansler said that DPH sent the final inventory template out in August 2023, and that SCWA staff are currently researching and inputting data into the LSL Inventory spreadsheet.

6. PFAS (Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances)

In March 2023 the EPA announced their draft regulations regarding PFAS (Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances), which included draft maximum contaminant levels (MCLs) for 6 different PFAS in drinking water. The review and comment period for these draft PFAS regulations ended May 30, 2023. General Manager Cansler said the final EPA regulations had been expected to be announced early this year.

7. Regional Considerations

- a) **Water Utility Coordinating Committee (WUCC):** The Eastern Connecticut Water Utility Coordinating Committee (WUCC) and the Statewide WUCC both last met in November 2022.

- b) **SCWA Interaction with SCCOG:** SCWA and the SCCOG continue to interact cooperatively. To this end, SCWA attends the monthly SCCOG meetings if there are items relating to water on the agenda, and the SCCOG Regional Water Committee, which meets only as needed.

- b) **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 October 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 5:40 p.m. It was noted that the next Authority meeting is scheduled to occur on April 8, 2024, at 5:15 pm.

Josh Cansler
Secretary