

**Draft Minutes of the January 9, 2023, 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-Chair Harry Watson, Treasurer Paul Eccard, Alex Masse, Claudia Koerting.

Authority Staff: General Manager Josh Cansler

Call to Order

Chairman Monahan called the meeting to order at 5:16 p.m.

Public Comment on any Item on the Agenda – None

Approval of Prior Minutes

On a motion of Mr. Eccard, seconded by Mr. Masse, the Authority approved the minutes of the December 12, 2022 Authority Meeting, by a unanimous vote of all members present.

Correspondence – None

General Manager's Report

1. Oakdale Heights Subdivision (Montville)

Oakdale Heights is a 219-home subdivision in Montville that has been operating its own water system since the subdivision was developed in the mid-1960's. Due to the pending retirement of their certified operator, and several active HOA board members, the Oakdale Heights subdivision Homeowners Association (HOA) has expressed interest in either selling or turning over full-time operation to another certified operator or utility. At the December Authority Meeting SCWA General Manager Cansler recommended exploring this opportunity further, and the Authority agreed.

On December 22, 2022, Mr. Cansler and SCWA Foreman/Chief Certified Operator Brandon Belair conducted an on-site visit of the Oakdale Heights water system with Mr. Alan Macht, who has been involved with the water system since 1979, primarily serving on the HOA water committee. The system consists of two fully operational pump houses, each with an atmospheric storage tank, and hydropneumatic pressure tank. There are 5 wells, and 2.5 miles of distribution main. There is one emergency generator that can run both pump stations if needed. General Manager Cansler stated that during the on-site meeting he informed Mr. Macht that the Authority probably does not have any interest in purchasing the system, but might be interested in taking over and running the system, as SCWA has done at other subdivisions over the years.

After much discussion regarding the benefit and risks of taking over the Oakdale Heights water system the Authority agreed that this opportunity was worth exploring. Based on the Authority's discussion, Mr. Eccard made a motion to authorize the general manager to open discussions with the Oakdale Heights HOA, and to reach out to legal counsel for assistance and guidance. His motion, seconded by Mr. Watson, was approved by a unanimous vote of all members present.

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

In March 2022 the Authority signed 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 allows RWA to enroll SCWA customers in the PipeSafe program, and in exchange SCWA receives a percentage of the monthly fees charged our customers. General Manager Cansler stated that although the original implementation was scheduled for mid-November, RWA did not begin mailing PipeSafe brochures to our customers until late December due to a delay rolling-out of new rates and problems inputting the SCWA customer base into the PipeSafe potential customer base. He said the initial brochures sent out by RWA had a noticeable typo in the header, which RWA has now corrected. Mr. Cansler said the distribution of the PipeSafe brochures should be completed by the middle of January. He added that the next RWA/SCWA implementation meeting is scheduled for the next day.

3. Capital Projects Update

a) Seven Oaks/Montville Interconnection Project

This project will complete the interconnection between Seven Oaks and Montville divisions. This past July the owners of the property (100 Waterfall LLC) agreed to an easement for the proposed water main interconnection across their property. They plan on constructing a housing development on this property in the next few years. The proposed water main connection route and grading design was completed by Lenard Engineering in August. Currently Lenard Engineering is working on the engineering design/specs, easement maps, and wetlands permits. General Manager Cansler stated they are currently trying to schedule another meeting with 100 Waterfall LLC and their engineer to discuss the final layout of the interconnection and booster station. He said SCWA hopes to receive project approval this spring and award the project this summer.

b) Upgrades at the Ledyard Pump Station and Spicer Hill Booster Station

This project includes installation of variable frequency pumps (VFDs) at the Ledyard Pump Station and 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 both stations, which is a top priority for DPH. SCWA intended to request bids in August, but unfortunately, the pump manufacturer stated there is now a 6-month lead time for delivery of the VFD packages. Based on long-lead times for delivery, and escalating prices for the VFDs, SCWA plans to install the pumps using in-house labor in the spring, with the assistance of a certified plumber and electrician.

c). Tower Division Upgrades

1) General Manager Cansler stated that the project to replace the original water main leading from the Tower Division pump stations to the main distribution located on East Drive was finally completed on December 16, 2022. Throughout the two-week project water was provided through the backup water main completed last year using the SCWA trailer-mounted mobile pump station.

2) Mr. Cansler also brought up the May article in *The Day* newspaper, which referenced a grant-in-aid the State Bond Commission was providing the Town of Ledyard for bridge and dam upgrades. The article said the grant also included upgrading pump stations, adding a storage tank, and extending an emergency connection. At that time the General Manager reached out to Ledyard Mayor Fred Allyn who responded: *"The language in the bonding commission agenda was odd as the funding was specifically to rebuild three colonial era dams on Long Pond as well as the bridge over Whitford Brook. I really don't understand the other items contained in the motion. I've spoken to Senator Osten as well about this, but she affirmed the monies are for the dams and the bridge. It has nothing to do with SCWA or an emergency interconnect."*

Chairman Monahan brought up a fundraiser event last August during which State Senator Cathy Osten mentioned a \$2M appropriation by the Connecticut General Assembly that was possibly intended for an upgrade of the Tower Division. At her request, Chairman Monahan followed up with an email requesting more information regarding this appropriation; however he never received a response. General Manager Cansler stated that he had reached out to Senator Osten's office via email and telephone in September, and again in October, requesting more information and/or a response to Chairman Monahan's August email request. He said he never received a response to any of his inquiries.

Vice-Chairman Watson said that he reached out in December to State Senator Heather Sommers to see if she could provide more information. Her response was: *"It looks like the town of Ledyard is using \$1.2 million of town ARPA money for a sewer line extension project and using a DECD matching grant. There is no mention of state designated ARPA funding being used."*

After some discussion the Authority decided to hold-off pursuing these funds until further information becomes available.

4. Proposed New Well at Ledyard Division

At the September meeting the Authority authorized the General Manager to contract with Lenard Engineering to complete survey, engineering/design, wetlands reviews, permit applications, and field inspections for a new well at the Ledyard Division. A new well is needed because the Ledyard pump station is averaging between 30 to 40 thousand gallons/day, which is the maximum yield of the two existing wells at Ledyard Division. DPH approved the new well in November. General Manager Cansler said that SCWA is now working with the Town of Ledyard to obtain an easement because the State requires that SCWA control a 150-foot radius around each well.

5. Green Village

In 2020 SCWA signed an agreement to take over as the owner/operator of the pumphouse and water distribution system at the new Green Village development in Salem once it is completed. Green Village is a 55 and over community with 48 townhouse units, each unit with individual meters. After multiple delays involving water quality and quantity in the wells, DPH finally granted approval of the system on November 1, 2022. Final approval was contingent on installation of a treatment system, which has been completed. Mr. Cansler said that currently there are 14 units occupied.

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 fourteen homes have been sold, and several more homes are nearing completion.

7. Fiscal Year 2021 Annual Audit

Hoyt, Filippetti & Malaghan, LLC conducted their initial audit visit of SCWA in mid-September, and their final visit on November 1st. They will present their audit findings to the Representative Advisory Board (RAB) Finance Committee and the Authority prior to the January 2023 RAB meeting. They will have a representative available to answer questions during the Finance Committee's presentation.

8. PFAS (Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances)

SCWA continues to monitor new guidelines and regulations pertaining to PFAS (Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances). The State DPH has still not established Maximum Contaminant Levels (MCL) for PFAS in drinking water, but they are encouraging all public water systems to test for PFAS. In August the EPA officially designated two PFAS substances, perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) and perfluorooctanesulfonic acid (PFOS), as hazardous substances under Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA).

9. Mystic Village Apartments - Dieldrin

General Manager Cansler stated that Mystic Village Apartments (MVA) are one of SCWA's Contract Operations, which are water systems not owned by SCWA. For these systems the owners are responsible for all maintenance, upgrade costs, and sampling fees, and SCWA is paid to serve as their certified operator. Mr. Cansler said recently the chemical Dieldrin, which was used to treat termites until the 80s, was detected in the water samples taken at MVA.

The property owner of MVA hired a company to design a treatment system for Dieldrin; the estimated cost is roughly \$25,000. SCWA recommended that the owner re-activate another well on the property and test that well for Dieldrin first. If both wells test positive, then installation of the treatment system will be the only option. Mr. Cansler added that SCWA sampled for Dieldrin again in December, however SCWA has not received the results back yet.

10. Regional Considerations

a) Water Utility Coordinating Committee (WUCC): Mr. Cansler stated that the Eastern Connecticut Water Utility Coordinating Committee (WUCC) met on November 16th, and the Statewide WUCC met immediately after; both meetings were held virtually. He said 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.

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.

c) 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 November and June.

Other Business

Mr. Cansler stated that he had removed the item on the Tower-Ferry View Division OCCT (Optimal Corrosion Control Treatment) Report from the General Manager's report because he thought it was complete. SCWA, working with an EPA consultant (Cadmus), submitted the OCCT report back in October and not heard anything back. However, a few days ago DPH finally responded with a list of additional questions and requirements. Mr. Cansler said he was working with Cadmus on the additional requirements and questions.

Mr. Cansler also mentioned that the Noank Fire District, which runs the Noank Water Department, was looking for a new superintendent for their water department. He said it might be worth reaching out to see if they might be interested in having SCWA run their water system. The Authority agreed this was worth exploring.

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 6:10 p.m.

It was noted the next Authority meeting is scheduled to occur on February 13, 2023, at 5:15 pm, either virtually, or at 1649 Rt. 12, Gales Ferry, CT.

Josh Cansler
Secretary