

MINUTES

Quarterly Meeting

Representative Advisory Board to the Southeastern Connecticut Water Authority

Electronic Virtual Meeting

July 16, 2020

The quarterly meeting of the Representative Advisory Board to the Southeastern Connecticut Water Authority was called to order at 7:01 p.m. by Advisory Board Vice Chairman Barry Weiner. It was determined by Mr. Cansler that the requisite number of members present constituted a quorum. Mr. Vice Chairman Weiner concurred.

Those Advisory Board members in attendance were: Thomas Seidel, Franklin; Mary Lou Smith, Groton Town; Mike Cherry, Ledyard; Anthony Siragusa, Montville; Barry Weiner, New London; Robert Boissevain and Mike Macina, North Stonington; Jeffrey Callahan, Stonington Borough; and Jack Malone, Sprague.

Those SWCA Board members in attendance were:

Chairman Dr. Edward C. Monahan; Mr. Paul Eccard, Harry Watson, Barbara Franciosi, Peter Balestracci, and Mr. Nicholas Mullane

Mr. Vice Chairman Weiner opened a public hearing on a proposed rate increase. There were no customers or citizens in the meeting wishing to speak. There was dialogue by Advisory Board members and SCWA Board members.

Mr. Cansler provided an explanation on the rationale for an increase in the rate. He said that while expenses remained static, revenues were down approximately \$40,000 in Fiscal Year 2020. He indicated there had been a 5% usage increase. He said all customer fees would remain the same. Mr. Paul Eccard of the SCWA Board said he would not want to raise fees on an operating cost loss and indicated he viewed it as irresponsible to do so. SCWA Chairman Dr. Edward C. Monahan indicated his favor towards an increase in order to keep the Authority on an even keel.

Mr. Mike Cherry indicated the Authority had been good stewards and the town membership had been notified of the public hearing. Mr. Anthony Siragusa expressed an interest in knowing the time the Board held the line on a rate until it was increased.

Chairman Monahan noted there was seldom public input on previous rate increases and reported he only ever recalled two customers ever appeared.

Mr. Weiner said he thought the issue presented a precarious public relations situation for the Board and indicated his objection to an increase at this time.

Mr. Eccard again pointed to the need to meet operating expenses, comply with state and federal requirements and to do so safely. Board member Mr. Nicholas Mullane noted there had been no increase in growth although there were prospects for growth in the near future.

Mr. Vice Chairman Weiner closed the public hearing at 7:30 p.m. and convened the regular meeting at 7:31 p.m.. He noted the requisite quorum was still in place.

A motion was made by Mr. Callahan and seconded by Ms. Mary Lou Smith to approve the minutes of the January 16, 2020 RAB meeting. The motion carried unanimously.

There were no citizens wishing to be heard during the public comment period.

SWCA Chairman Dr. Monahan gave his regular report to the Representative Advisory Board. He provided updates on SWCA business that included the operational activities that continued during the current public health situation. He reported that the awaited pressure reduction valve would be installed this month between the Ledyard Division and the Gray Farms Division. He indicated the Administrative Order from the CT Department of Public Health, required to address damage done to the Tower Division pump was appealed and DPH granted a stay to the order. A hearing will be scheduled to determine the schedule for a course of corrective actions.

Dr. Monahan reported the plans for replacing Well #3 at the Tower Division is still in place. A higher than anticipated well replacement cost has delayed the schedule for drilling.

Chairman Monahan said the CodeRed, emergency notification system in place for the Authority and its customers, was working as expected and as needed, having been employed as recent as the first of the month.

He reported that the SCWA FY 2021 budget was adopted in June, called for a \$3.5% increase over the FY2020 budget. For that reason the Authority would be seeking a 5% increase in water usage fees for FY2021.

The election of those SCWA officers holding one-year terms on the Authority was held in June according to Chairman Monahan. Elected were Harry Watson, Vice-Chairman, Paul Eccard Treasurer and Josh Cansler as Secretary.

Chairman Monahan also gave brief updates on regularly reported and on-going activities such as the Raspberry Junction Holding litigation; Consumer Confidence Reports; an update on the regional drought status; per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances as well as regional considerations and participations.

Under the business of the Nomination Committee of the RAB Mr. Callahan reported on the resignation of Chairman George Jackson who is moving out of the state. A motion was made by Mr. Callahan and seconded by Mr. Malone to appoint Mr. Weiner to the RAB Chairmanship position. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Weiner did not provide a Chairman's Report but thanked the Advisory Board for their support and diligence in their work. He urged all members to stay healthy and stay safe.

There was no New Business to come before the RAB

A motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:54 p.m. was made by Mr. Callahan and seconded by Ms. Smith. The motion carried unanimously.

The next meeting of the RAB is scheduled for October 15, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. and will be conducted electronically.

Respectfully submitted,

Jack Malone
Secretary