

**Draft Minutes of the March 21, 2022, 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, Barbara Lee Franciosi.

**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. Watson, the Authority approved the minutes of the February 14, 2022, Authority Meeting, by a unanimous vote of all members present.

**Correspondence** - None

**General Manager's Report**

**1. COVID-19/Coronavirus Pandemic Update**

General Manager Cansler noted that SCWA had its first staff member test positive for COVID-19 in January. SCWA operations were not affected. The Authority continues to meet virtually until further notice.

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

In October 2021 the Authority received a letter from the South Central Regional Connecticut Water Authority (RWA), proposing a partnership with SCWA in their service line protection program, which is called PipeSafe. RWA's proposed partnership would allow RWA to enroll SCWA customers in their PipeSafe program, and in exchange SCWA would receive a percentage of the monthly fees charged our customers.

After reviewing the initial draft agreement at the January meeting, the Authority agreed to forward the draft agreement to SCWA Legal Counsel, Mr. Nick Kepple, for review. At the February meeting the Authority voted to accept the modifications proposed by Attorney Kepple in his legal review, and to forward the modified proposed agreement to RWA for their review. General Manager Cansler stated that RWA had accepted all of SCWA's proposed changes, and forwarded a final proposed agreement for discussion at this meeting. Mr. Eccard made a motion to enter into a partnership with RWA in their Pipesafe program, and to authorize the Chairman to sign the agreement. His motion, seconded by Mr. Watson was approved by a vote of three in favor, none against, and one abstention (Mrs. Franciosi). Mr. Eccard stated that based on Roberts Rules of Order this measure was passed.

### **3. Capital Projects Update**

#### **a) Seven Oaks/Montville Interconnection Project**

Last year SCWA began the planning and engineering of a project to complete the interconnection between Seven Oaks and Montville divisions. The first phase of the interconnection was completed in 2007. Completion of the second phase will require an easement across property owned by 100 Waterfall LLC. This parcel lies between the end of the Montville water main extension and the existing Seven Oaks distribution system, which was originally developed by the same owners. SCWA reached out to the attorney representing 100 Waterfall LLC last spring, and eventually received a response back in November 2021.

In their response the owners stated they were willing to grant an easement for a water main that follows the street plan for their future proposed development. Their proposed route is about 1900 feet longer than the SCWA proposed route. The SCWA route follows a more direct route to interconnect with the water main completed in 2007. In December General Manager Cansler sent a letter to the parcel owners, through Attorney Heller, stating that their proposed longer route will result in a significant project cost increase, and that there are other routes available that do not cross their property, and may be more economically feasible. General Manager Cansler stated that as of today SCWA has not received a response to our December letter.

#### **b) 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.

After reviewing the initial plans and specifications SCWA realized, based on the engineering analysis, the only way to eliminate the hydropneumatic pressure tank at Spicer Hill would be to install variable frequency pumps (VFDs) at the main pump station in Ledyard. Installation of VFDs at Ledyard will allow SCWA to eliminate the pressure tank there as well, which is a top priority of the State Department of Health. Mr. Cansler said that he requested a cost estimate and updated design to install VFDs at Ledyard last month, but had not received the estimate or design yet.

#### **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. The second phase of this project will be replacement of the original water mains. General Manager Cansler stated that replacement of the water mains has been delayed by supply chain issues. He said there is currently a 16-week lead time of piping and some valves.

### **4. Auditor**

General Manager Cansler stated that in mid-February SCWA was informed by Sandra Welwood that her firm will no longer be doing audits, and therefore would not be conducting our annual audit as expected. SCWA has to provide the name of the Audit Firm conducting our annual audit by May 31<sup>st</sup>. He said a new Auditor will have to be approved by the SCWA Representative Advisory Board (RAB) in April. Mr. Cansler said he sent Requests for Proposal (RFP) to five firms that conduct utility/municipal auditing services. The RFP requested proposals no later April 1, 2022. He said so far, he had received one proposal back, and he was hoping to receive a couple more by the deadline.

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

November 2020 the Authority authorized the General Manager to sign a New Water System Agreement between SCWA and Green Village II, a 48-unit, 55+ Community complex being constructed in Salem. 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. Last fall Colchester Construction approached SCWA about taking over an almost identical development which opened in East Haddam in 2020. 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.

**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. General Manager Cansler stated that the first six homes have been sold, and several more homes are nearing completion.

**7. 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. General Manager Cansler said that he was surprised that there was not any new PFAS legislation proposed so far during the current Connecticut Legislative session, which runs from February to May.

**8. Appointment/Re-appointment of New Authority Member**

General Manager Cansler stated that at their January 2022 meeting the Representative Advisory Board (RAB) requested nominations to backfill the vacancy on the Authority created when Mr. Balestracci passed away in January. At the February meeting the Authority discussed different possibilities for backfilling this vacancy. After that meeting Mr. Eccard reached out to a former Authority Chair to see if he knew of any potential candidates, but the former Chair did not. Mr. Watson agreed to reach out to a long-time member of the RAB to gauge their interest.

**9. Regional Considerations**

**a) FY 2023 State Legislative Cycle- Potential Bills Impacting SCWA and other Water Utilities:**

General Manager Cansler stated that there are several proposed bills under consideration by the State Legislature that could impact water utilities if passed. He addressed the following bills:

**SB-155 – An Act Authorizing Bonds of The State to The Southeastern Connecticut Water Authority to Upgrade a Pump Station, including by Adding a Storage Tank, and Extension an Emergency Connection Line into The Town of Ledyard.**

This bill was introduced by Senator Osten and is currently awaiting action by the Finance Committee. The text of the bill is as follows:

*That the State Bond Commission be empowered to authorize the issuance of bonds of the state in accordance with section 3-20 of the general statutes, in principal amounts not exceeding in the aggregate three million dollars, the proceeds of which shall be used by the Department of Public Health for the purpose of providing a grant-in-aid to the Southeastern Connecticut Water Authority to upgrade a pump station, including by adding a storage tank, and extend an emergency connection line into the Town of Ledyard by way of Christy Hill Road.*

**HB-5203 – An Act Concerning Utility Company Cost-Sharing Mechanisms**

Gives PURA greater discretion to design utility revenue decoupling mechanisms or formulas, to require the authority to adopt cost-sharing mechanisms for excess earnings that direct most of these earnings to ratepayers, and to make other changes affecting electric utility companies. One section of this bill would prohibit a public service company from recovering, through rates, any cost associated with membership, dues or contributions to a business or industry trade association, for example AWWA or CWWA. This bill is currently in the Joint Energy and Technology Committee.

**HB-5269 - An Act Concerning Remote Meetings Under the Freedom of Information Act**

Would authorize municipal boards and commissions and other public agencies to hold remote or hybrid remote/in-person meetings beyond April 30, 2022. Currently before the Planning & Development Committee.

**An Act Concerning the Dept. of Public Health’s Recommendations Regarding Testing of Private Wells and Semi-Public Wells**

To require newly constructed private wells and semipublic wells and all private wells and semi-public wells that are part of a real estate transaction to be tested for total coliform, nitrate, nitrite, sodium chloride, iron, manganese, hardness, turbidity, pH, sulfate, apparent color, odor, arsenic, and uranium. Mr. Cansler said he included this bill only because it will affect well owners trying to sell their homes. This bill could force some homeowners to hook into SCWA water.

**b) Water Utility Coordinating Committee (WUCC):** The Eastern Connecticut Water Utility Coordinating Committee (WUCC) met for the first time in two years on February 9, 2022, and that the Statewide WUCC met on February 16<sup>th</sup>. 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 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 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 Ms. Franciosi, the Authority voted to adjourn the meeting at approximately 5:55 p.m.

It was noted the next Authority meeting is scheduled to occur on April 11, 2022, at 5:15 pm, either virtually, or at 1649 Rt. 12, Gales Ferry, CT.

Josh Cansler  
Secretary