

Town of Montville Water & Sewer Commission
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
November 6, 2023-- 6:00 PM
Town Council Chambers – Town Hall

1. Water and Sewer Commission

a. Call to Order

Chairman Longton called the regular meeting of the Water and Sewer Commission to order at 6:00 p.m.

b. Pledge of Allegiance

All stood and pledged the flag.

c. Roll Call

Present were Chairman Chuck Longton, Town Councilor Alfred Mandler, Commissioners Frank Miceli, and Richard Gladue. Commissioner Kevin Lathrop was absent. A quorum was present.

Also in attendance was Mayor Ronald McDaniel, Director of Land Use and Development Liz Burdick and Bill Pieniadz of P & H Construction. Superintendent Derek Albertson was absent due to a family emergency out-of-state.

d. Alterations to the Agenda -- *None*

e. To consider and act on a motion to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of October 6, 2023

Motion by Commissioner Mandler; seconded by Commissioner Miceli to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of October 6, 2023. Discussion: none. Voice vote: 4-0-0; all in favor. **Motion carried.**

f. Communications pertaining specifically to matters which concern the Commission -- *None*

g. Remarks from the Public Regarding Items on the Agenda with a three-minute limit

Chairman Longton asked three (3) times for remarks from the public. There were none.

h. Report from Operations/Administration Division

Superintendent Albertson submitted an Operations/Administrative Report for October 2023, as follows:

1.0 Compliance/Process

1.1 Water Pollution Control Facility

The Montville Water Pollution Control Facility (WPCF) met required state and federal standards for effluent discharged to the Thames River. No complaints were received regarding the collection system or the WPCF.

Average daily influent flow to the WPCF was 2.2 mgd with a total treatment volume of 67 mg of wastewater. Removal efficiencies for key contaminants (BOD₅ and TSS) were 99% and 98%, respectively. Total Nitrogen (TN) loading was discharged in the treated effluent under the state permit limit (with removal efficiencies over 85%). No adverse process issues were encountered during the October storm (rain) events.

Approximately 55% of the treated effluent was recycled (sold) to Rand-Whitney Container Board's paperboard facility. On August 24, the RWCB wastewater discharge was bypassed from their discharge line to our municipal system (along Route 163) to allow for their continued production of paperboard. The bypass ended on October 2.

Overall waste solids handling has improved. Waste activated sludge (WAS produced during secondary process) was dewatered effectively (> 6% total solids) resulting in lower sludge haul/disposal costs. Grit removal has steadily improved in the pretreatment process resulting in a better (dewatered) material.

1.2 Water Supply

The Montville Water Supply (WS) met required state and federal standards.

2.0 Staff

2.1 Personnel

Three senior level workers will retire in less than 18 months. The Superintendent had formulated a succession plan to meet the labor demand for the WPCA and met with the HR Director regarding the hire of a new Collections Operator, Operator and a Laboratory Operator. Following the hire of a Collections Operator, a Laboratory Operator will be sought (current employee in this role to retire in early January 2024).

Dennis Kexel began work as the new Collections Operator on October 16. Dennis is an experienced worker that will add a lot to our team! The new employee was introduced to the Town's municipal collection system. The goal is that the collections operator will conduct routine pump station inspections, cleaning of sewer pipe by either flushing or jetting, CCTV inspections of target pipe runs and then enter all data into the existing GIS platform as inspection attributes. This work brings the WPCA into the state CMOM directive.

To encourage more interest in water treatment (also part of the succession planning), the Superintendent met with the Grasso Technical School Dean of Students on October 16 to discuss student training at the WPCF. The Superintendent taught an Environmental Science class on October 19 and 20. The Superintendent taught a class at Norwich Technical High School on October 2 and attended a experiential learning open house on October 19. Student (UConn, Grasso Tech and Norwich Tech HS) tours were given on October 10, 11 and 12. Our interns will make a positive impact on our community by keeping our water clean and our environment safe. From fieldwork to ratepayer interactions, our paid internships offer invaluable experiences for high school students.

2.2 Health and Safety

Measures of COVID rates including virus levels in wastewater had been increasing in New London County. Wastewater virus data is an important early warning signal- detecting COVID-19 infections (approximately seven days prior to outbreak) and before official test reporting.

Globally, average monthly temperatures broke records this summer. According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), June was the warmest June, July the warmest July and August the warmest August. September was also, by a record margin, the warmest September on record. The last nine years (2014 to 2022) have been the warmest ever recorded in the 143 history of weather recorded in the U.S. Heat concerns will be addressed.

2.2 Training

Staff continued to receive training to meet CTDEEP and CTDPH requirements for (wastewater /water certification) training credits. NEIPCC training schedules were distributed which included online courses for pumps, math industrial treatment and biological treatment. Additionally, ten professional periodicals are routinely distributed to the staff.

New employee training was initiated on October 16 for the recently hired Collections Operator. Safety training occurred on October 20 with CDL training initiated on October 23.

October 19 was the 9th annual *Imagine a Day Without Water 2023*—a day of action in support of a resilient water future. Water is our lifeline—supporting our health, economies, and environment.

3.0 Equipment

3.1 WPCF/Collection System

The treatment facility is also known as a water resource recovery facility (WRRF). Specifically, the plant is composed of six Sequential Batch Reactors (SBRs) in the ICEAS (Intermittent Cycle Extended Air System) continual flow treatment stance with three steps fill/treat, filled/settle and

.....
filled decant. Unlike conventional treatment plants, the facility does not require clarifiers or return systems to make high quality effluent. The system is controlled by computer software to allow changes in treatment cycles to develop high quality effluent.

As indicated in the last meeting, an investigation into onsite (waste) solids handling via a anaerobic digester using one of the existing (unused) tanks.

All desktop phones were inspected by Communication Technologies on October 12. New phones were placed in the conference room/Superintendent's Office.

The fuel cell experienced startup issues on October 14 through 20 due to a component failure. The jet truck and pumper truck had safety inspections the week of October 16.

All pump stations were inspected and cleaned during the month as well as a large number of manhole inspections were made. CCTV sewer pipe/manhole inspections will continue in prioritized areas (those areas identified in the 2010 and 2011 URS reporting/CIP Cross-Country Clearing areas).

Paving along Route 163 lead to manhole inspections and cover/frame replacements. Approximately 2,200 feet of cleaning/CCTV inspection has occurred so far in 2023. Work within the collection system is recorded in the GIS system (inspection attributes) as record for potential regulatory review. The RWCB discharge line was leaking in the vicinity of Depot Road and Route 32, Maple Avenue and Route 32 and other areas along Maple Avenue. Repairs to the Maple Avenue to Route 32 to Depot Road section were completed on September 30.

The 2023 *Nitrogen Operation & Maintenance Costs Survey* (O&M Survey) for the Nitrogen Credit Exchange Program went out to the 64 Nitrogen Project Facilities on October 31. This information is used to calculate the credit costing for buying nitrogen credits (and selling).

GU planned on a meter change out for their meter to the Montville Water Supply. A meeting was held on October 16 to discuss changes. The new meter will be installed on November 2. Quarterly line flushing occurred on October 18.

The World Meteorological Organization reported on October 12 that the global hydrological cycle was increasingly out of balance due to climate change. Heavier precipitation episodes are contributing to more flooding in wetter areas with the opposite extreme (more intense droughts) in drier areas, according to WMO Secretary-General Petteri Taalas in a statement as the U.N. agency released its 2022 *State of Global Water Resources Report*. It showed that over 50% of global (precipitation) catchment areas saw abnormal river discharge conditions. Climate migrant numbers will increase; individuals will be forced to leave their homes due to the impacts of climate change, including "sudden onset" weather events like flooding, forest fires after droughts, and intensified storms. This alarming statistic emphasizes the urgent need for proactive measures to address the impending challenges in water systems planning. All said, more attention to severe rain events is required to keep utilities in working order.

4.0 Projects

4.1 WPCF/Collection System/Water Supply

The Cook Water Tower Project meeting was held on October 18 to define staff, procedures and initial construction concerns. A project walk-through was conducted.

4.2 Regulatory Oversight

No regulatory oversight or action is ongoing for the WPCA; no existing state or federal Consent Decrees or Consent Orders currently exist. The plant is a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit holder. Additionally, two state permits (nutrient removal and stormwater management) exist for the plant.

The USEPA issued revisions to the federal Lead and Copper Rule (LCR) on January 15, 2021. The Lead and Copper Rule Revisions (LCRR) strengthen every aspect of the LCR to better protect communities in elementary schools and childcare facilities from the impacts of lead exposure. Over the next three years, the LCRR will require water systems to conduct an inventory of service lines and determine the material of those lines and fittings. The LCRR's inventory requires all

water systems to develop an initial service line inventory by October 2024 or demonstrate the absence of Lead Service Lines. This has been conducted. Additional information was requested from ratepayers (via an October 11 letter) requesting inspections or as-builts to determine construction details of existing laterals. *Lead Service Line Replacement Plans* must then be created as a result of your inventory. Adequate funding is present to cover the expected costs of compliance. The distribution system is in compliance with the LCRR.

Results of the CTDPH Sanitary Survey were received on October 10; no significant deficiencies were identified.

Two class action lawsuits filed on October 18 claim the state's two largest water suppliers, Aquarion and Connecticut Water Company, knowingly supplied water contaminated with chemicals used in the manufacturing of plastics to hundreds of thousands of state residents.

5.0 Development

The sewer and water connection plans have been proposed for residential and commercial development. Residential development is proposed for several locations along Route 32. The residential development at 303 Route 32 connected to water on October 19. The new animal facility is proposed along Route 163.

6.0 Finances

The WPCA operates within an Enterprise Fund (a business-like account with net-zero goals, that is AR should equal to AP, according to GAAP). FY 2024 began on July 1, 2023. The financial condition of both water and wastewater accounts is considered good. Per WPCA and TC approval, the WPCA FY 2024 Sewer Budget is approximately \$7.1 million and the Water Budget is \$1.91 million. No rate increase is required for sewer for the coming year even with significant investment into the infrastructure. A rate study will be conducted for the water account and applied, as required.

6.1 Accounts Review

Current rates (and ancillary fees) appear to be adequate at this time to cover costs for water and wastewater activities. For the last four years (on average) the revenues for the sewer account has risen annually (above the national average) with a strong showing during the pandemic due to RWCB billing. It should be noted that the Town has a high collection rate (over 90%) which allows for a dependable revenue stream.

Sludge represents the bulk of the cost (outside of energy) of running WPCFs. These costs can range anywhere from 40-60% of total plant costs, depending on the size of the plant and initial wastewater characteristics. Every effort is made to reduce the volume of disposed solids. As indicated in the last WPCA meeting, a study about digester use to lower volumes.

6.2 Assets

A formal review of the Construction-in-Progress occurred in June to improve the understanding of existing assets. The challenge facing water systems (sewer/potable water) is aging infrastructure. A rate structure designed to provide sustainable revenue for operations as well as capital programs is critical to assure reliable effective sewerage and safe drinking water and fire protection. Existing URS Reporting (from 2010 and 2011) provided an asset listing (permanent attributes detailing the age and construction of the collection system and/or treatment plant equipment) which were installed into the current WPCA GIS system. Periodic reviews of the existing asset listing is conducted to determine which have exceeded their life (depreciation to zero) and which new assets have been added to CIP or O & M projects.

6.3 Grants/Funding

Some current wastewater projects are funded by State funds including two bonds and one grant (CTDEEP \$5 million *Grant-in-Aid for Sewage Treatment Facility Infrastructure Improvements and Upgrades at the Montville WPTF- State Grant Agreement 2017-170491*, approved via March 2014 Town of Montville Resolution No. 2014-25). The bonds were for infrastructure improvements within the plant including the new chlorine system, new recycling pumps, and grit removal system. Additionally, the aeration systems for SBR-1, 2, 3, 5 and 6 were replaced. The Mayor requested an extension for the Grant. A review of the approximately \$4.5 million in grant

monies (slated for the WPCF) indicated adequate funding for the proposed projects with approximately \$450,000 margin- this money will be used to remedy the concrete failing in SBR-4.

Based on a review of the WPCA's *Eligibility Application* the CTDPH DWS had determined that the Cook Water Tower replacement project was ready to proceed and that DWSRF funding will be available. The Finance Director was notified of the intent to pursue federal funding for the tower project. The scheduled completion date of the storage tank is October 31, 2024. A Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF No. 2024-7125) loan agreement package for \$1,360,332.50 was signed by the Mayor on August 30 for the Cook Hill Tank Replacement Project (CTDPH Agreement #2024-7125). An Interim Funding Obligation (IFO) was completed on October 13. Initial engineering costs have been submitted for reimbursement.

The State DECD still recognizes the Town as a *Distressed Municipality*. The citation often allows consideration for certain funding and/or grants to enhance the community.

A review of water supply connections is conducted quarterly with connection fees forwarded to MTUA as stipulated in the *Reimbursement Agreement by and between The Mohegan Tribal Utility Authority, Montville Water Pollution Control Authority, and the Town of Montville*.

6.4 Energy

A decrease in plant energy demand has been observed associated with the (more controlled) lower dissolved oxygen (DO) settings in the process tanks due to the new fine-bubble diffusers as well as the new (more efficient) turbo blowers. The (electrical) energy is the single largest monthly expenditure. Electrical Energy is supplied to the plant by the 460 kW Doosan Fuel Cell America, Inc. fuel cell (onsite generation by Unit #10587), Eversource (transmission) and *First Point Power* (generation). The power generation was formerly supplied by *Constellation Energy*. The WPCA is using less public grid kWhs due to this onsite generation. Fuel cell operation issues were encountered during the month. Each month a review of energy usage is conducted for each billing (i.e., plant, pump stations) to determine if there is a sudden rise in demand which often indicates mechanical problems (i.e., pump/motor failures).

In March 2023, the Montville WPCA and Town signed a 20-year solar service agreement with N. Silver Brook, LLC- a Montville based renewable energy company. The agreement will save the Town of Montville more than \$850,000 and is structured for the town to receive the full savings amount within one year of the solar facility's completion. N. Silver Brook and its partners allocated solar energy from a Connecticut solar project in Naugatuck to the WPCA's electrical accounts. On June 9th, that project was selected as a winning bid in Connecticut's Non-Residential Renewable Energy Solutions (NRES) program. All of the WPCA's electrical usage was assigned to the winning bid and will result in lower energy costs.

i. Report from Mayor.

Mayor McDaniel reported another 1-year extension was requested for the \$5 million CT-DEEP grant. The Commission was thanked by him for their service.

j. Report from Engineers -- None

k. Old Business -- None

l. New Business

1. To Consider and Act on Payment for the Repair/Replacement of the Rand Whitney Container Board (RWCB) Wastewater Discharge Line

THE TOWN OF MONTVILLE WATER AND SEWER COMMISSION HEREBY RESOLVES to Consider and Act for payment of \$1,060,000 to P & H Construction for second phase response work (RWCB discharge line repair or replacement from 119 Maple Avenue to Public Works Salt Storage Facility (214 Maple Avenue) as described in their October 25, 2023, Amended Proposal. A bid waiver for this work was approved in the September 7 Regular Meeting.

.....
SAR-No. 2023-21 THE TOWN OF MONTVILLE WATER AND SEWER COMMISSION HEREBY RESOLVES To Consider and Act for payment of \$1,060,000 to P & H Construction for second phase response work (RWCB discharge line repair or replacement from 119 Maple Avenue to Public Works Salt Storage Facility (214 Maple Avenue) as described in their October 25, 2023, Amended Proposal. A bid waiver for this work was approved in the September 7 Regular Meeting. **Motion** by Commissioner Mandler; seconded by Commissioner Miceli. Discussion: Chairman Longton noted for the record that the payment amount was approved at the September 7 Commission meeting. Commissioner Gladue inquired how do we know how much money the Commission has. Mayor McDaniel remarked the funds are in an Enterprise Fund and the Town will slowly be reimbursed at \$200,000 per year by Rand-Whitney. Roll Call Vote: *In Favor*: Commissioners Gladue, Longton, Mandler, and Miceli. *Opposed*: None. 4-0-0. **Motion Approved.**

2. To Consider and Act on approval of WPCA regular meetings schedule for calendar year 2024.

THE TOWN OF MONTVILLE WATER AND SEWER COMMISSION HEREBY RESOLVES To Set the 2024 regular monthly meeting dates on the first Monday of every month excluding holidays (that will be rescheduled on the Thursday of that same week). The scheduled meeting dates are as follows: January 4 (Thursday), February 5, March 4, April 1, May 6, June 3, July 1, August 5, September 5 (Thursday), October 7, November 4, and December 2, 2024 to be held in the Town Council Chambers in the Town Hall starting at 6:00 p.m.

Motion – Discussion – Roll Call Vote

SAR-No. 2023-22 THE TOWN OF MONTVILLE WATER AND SEWER COMMISSION HEREBY RESOLVES To Set the 2024 regular monthly meeting dates on the first Monday of every month excluding holidays (that will be rescheduled on the Thursday of that same week). The scheduled meeting dates are as follows: January 4 (Thursday), February 5, March 4, April 1, May 6, June 3, July 1, August 5, September 5 (Thursday), October 7, November 4, and December 2, 2024 to be held in the Town Council Chambers in the Town Hall starting at 6:00 p.m. **Motion** by Commissioner Miceli; seconded by Commissioner Mandler. Discussion: none. Voice Vote: 4-0-0, all in favor. **Motion approved (by voice vote)**

m. Reports/Referral from Planning & Zoning

Chairman Longton remarked there was nothing of great concern but noted that water and sewer lines will need to be relocated upon the rebuilding of Animal Control.

II. Water Commission

a. Report from Engineers -- None

b. Old Business -- None

c. New Business -- None

d. Remarks from the Public

Chairman Longton asked three (3) times for remarks from the public. There were none.

e. Remarks from Commission Members

Commissioner Mandler expressed thanks for his two (2) years on the Commission and noted it was informative and he learned a lot. He thanked everyone for their help and congratulated Mayor McDaniel on his retirement. Commissioner Gladue remarked that he was trying to figure things out and will note when he does. Commissioner Miceli remarked that he learned a lot in the few months he has been on the Commission. He also remarked that hopefully this will be his last meeting, with no disrespect intended, and moving on to bigger things. Chairman Longton thanked

.....
everyone for their participation and remarked it has been intensive. He also wished the best of luck to those running for election.

f. Adjournment

Motion by Commissioner Mandler; seconded by Commissioner Miceli to adjourn the meeting at 6:08 p.m. Discussion: none. Voice vote: 4-0-0 , all in favor. **Meeting adjourned.**

Respectfully submitted by,

Gloria J. Gathers
Recording Secretary, Town of Montville

**AN AUDIO RECORDING OF THE MEETING IS AVAILABLE ON THE TOWN OF
MONTVILLE WEBSITE.**