

Town of Montville Water & Sewer Commission
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
December 2, 2024-- 6:00 PM
Town Council Chambers – Town Hall

Comments will only be accepted at times designated for public comment by the Chair of the meeting. The Montville WPCA rules of procedure, decorum, timeliness and suitability shall be followed and enforced.

For all publicly broadcasted meetings, public comment on agenda items or topics in accordance with the Town charter may be submitted in writing in advance.

Written comments must be emailed to the Town Clerk's Office at townclerk@montville-ct.org at least 1 working day in advance (if the meeting is on a Monday the questions must be submitted by close of business the previous Friday).

Written comments may not be read in their entirety, but rather similar messages may be aggregated or paraphrased for submission to the Commission.

A three-minute limit is applicable to public comments within the meeting.

1. Water and Sewer Commission

a. Call to Order

Chairperson 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 was Chairperson Chuck Longton, Vice-Chair/Town Counselor Kevin Lathrop, Frank Miceli and Deane Terry. Commissioner Richard Gladue was absent.

Also in attendance were Superintendent Derek Albertson, Administrator Ronald McDaniel and Mayor Leonard Bunnell (6:02 p.m.).

d. Alterations to the Agenda -- None

e. Motion to approve the Discussion Minutes of the November 4, 2024 Regular Meeting

Motion by Commissioner Lathrop; seconded by Commissioner Miceli to approve the Discussion Minutes of the November 4, 2024 Regular Meeting. Discussion: none. **Voice vote: 4-0-0.**
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
Chairperson Longton asked three (3) times for remarks. There were none.

h. Report from Operations

Superintendent Albertson submitted an Operations Report for activities in November 2024, as follows:

1.0 Compliance/Process

1.1 Water Pollution Control Facility

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No local or formal complaints were received regarding the collection system or the Montville Water Pollution Control Facility (WPCF).

Average daily influent flow to the WPCF was approximately 2.3 million gallons per day (mgd) with a total treatment volume of 60 million gallons (mg) for the month. Due to drought conditions, Inflow and Infiltration (I and I) is not significantly contributing to the plant's influent.

Each day, approximately 58% of the treated effluent was recycled (sold) to Rand-Whitney Container Board (RWCB). The paperboard company continues to have "surges" of water demand that can be disruptive.

Plant treatment was very good with permit parameters met. Process control within each unit (preliminary and secondary treatment) functioned well resulting in high removal efficiencies (> 95%) for BOD₅ and TSS. Plant process (effluent) standards were record setting. Average Total Nitrogen (TN) loading was discharged in the treated effluent below the permit (loading) level with removal efficiency over 80%.

Thickened waste activated sludge (WAS) was calculated to be approximately 6.0% total solid (TS) which is considered good due to volume reduction (lower truck hauls/disposal tonnage). Grit disposal (while low volume as compared to the TWAS) is becoming an issue.

1.2 Water Supply

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

2.0 Staff

2.1 Health and Safety

Deane Terry was TC approved as a WPCA Commissioner.

No injuries were reported by the WPCA staff. Mark O'Brien submitted his resignation letter on November 19.

2.2 Training

Staff continued to receive training to (state or professional organization sponsored) meet CTDEEP and CTDPH requirements for (wastewater/water certification) training credits. The training goal is part of the Superintendent's succession plan; to prepare the staff to do their jobs better and qualify them for additional certification exams. Tentative scheduling shows two operators sitting for their Operator II licenses and one operator sitting for his Operator I license. Dennis Kexel passed his Collections Operator II exam on November 15.

As part of National STEM day on November 8, the Superintendent met with technical schools in Norwich and Groton as well as The Williams School to talk science and introduce water careers to high school students. A *Connecticut Rural Water & Wastewater Association* (CRWWA) tutor will conduct teaching exercises at the WPCF starting in December. The tutoring will primarily focus on mathematics to prepare for the various certification exams. The aforementioned is part of the WPCA succession planning to ensure the utility is staffed with educated, certified and experienced operators and mechanics.

The Superintendent met with Anna Breen, Savoy & Son Marketing Coordinator to plan a formal presentation about the recently completed d-box rehabilitation project.

3.0 Equipment

3.1 WPCF/Collection System

A WPCF project summary table is included in the.

The Superintendent and Administrator met with VFS on November 19 to review the performance of the existing fuel cell and expected future results for electrical power generation. All said, the unit continues to exceed expectations with regards to performance and cost savings for energy.

CAI (GIS contractor) effectively linked sewer tie cards to the parcels on our WPCA Axis platform. A link to the tie cards are available when clicking on a parcel.

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A key component of property management is the oversight of security services, which has a direct impact on a property's operations and profitability. As indicated previously, the water and wastewater facilities are considered properly secure including the potential for third party intrusion into the SCADA systems.

4.0 Projects

4.1 WPCF/Collection System/Water Supply

Aging infrastructure and delayed maintenance can be problematic, so routine inspections with a robust CIP programs are directed at the WPCF and collections system. Initial assessment studies of the treatment/collections systems were completed in 2010 and 2011 and lead to CIP focus on several areas for improvement.

The d-box repair (engineering) project has received CTDEEP approval for grant fund use. Bidding was concluded on August 8. A contractor applied a structural coating to the existing (concrete) tanks to prevent further degradation by hydrogen sulfide. This project was initiated on September 25 and completed in November.

CCTV (Closed-Circuit Television) sewer inspections (of the 62 miles of gravity sewers) were made in the priority areas to define Inflow and Infiltration (storm water and groundwater intrusion). High priority areas were identified in the URS 2010 and 2011 reporting and included: The Manor, Chesterfield Estates and The Heights as well as residential development along Lathrop Road, Hotchkiss Lane, and Woodland Drive. Targeted inspections of some of the 1,650 manholes in the collection system were made along Polly's Lane and Route 163. In 2024, over 16,000 l.f. of sewer pipe was inspection and 500 manholes were examined.

As previously indicated, a replacement project is proposed for Cook Water Tower. The glass fused to steel construction is state of the art and represents a low maintenance option to conventional steel tanks. Congressman Joe Courtney (CT-02) visited the WPCF and Cook Tower project site on November 25.

4.2 Regulatory Oversight

A *Fair Share Housing Study* is underway (Public Act No. 23-207, Sec. 18) requires the Office of Policy & Management (OPM) to develop a methodology for determining regional housing needs and a "fair share" allocation for each town within a region for delivering the identified number of housing units. Stakeholders were invited to discuss the scope of the study and the recently released Memorandum of Research & Discovery and raised concerns regarding a fair share allocation plan, including whether the plan would consider whether towns have adequate water and wastewater infrastructure to support dense housing. The final report is not expected until May 2025 and must be submitted to the state legislature for its approval. Montville is cited as a "distressed community" in part due to the lack of affordable housing.

President-elect Donald Trump has named Lee Zeldin as administrator of the USEPA. Mr. Zeldin, a former U.S. Representative (New York) who will likely push for significant (environmental) deregulation with a focus on improving business performance.

The Montville WPCF and associated collection system is required to meet state and federal standards for effluent discharged to the Thames River (Horton Cove). The WPCF adheres to the federal standards in the *National Pollution Discharge Elimination System* (NPDES) and state (general) permit standards related to nitrogen discharges in the effluent and stormwater discharges to surface water bodies. Additionally, state and federal mandates (CMOM- Capacity, Management, Operation and Maintenance) exist for care of the sewer collection system. Required (monthly, quarterly or annually) discharge reporting is signed (certified) by the state-licensed CTDEEP *Operator IV* (Superintendent) in responsible charge of the designated *Class IV WPCF Facility*. The certification required for the collection system is from a professional organization (NEWEA, *New England Water Environment Association*). The Superintendent has the highest certification required (Class IV) for both treatment and collections.

No regulatory oversight or action is ongoing for the WPCA. No existing *Consent Decrees* or *Consent Orders* currently exist. No formal reporting was required other than the typical monthly permit submittals. No complaints have been received from the appropriate regulatory bodies.

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The existing federal WPCF (NPDES) effluent permit is expiring this year (October 31, 2024). The 5-year permit renewal package was submitted to the CTDEEP before April 30 as stipulated by the USEPA. A formal CMOM document was prepared by the Superintendent (and reviewed by the CTDEEP in 2019).

DMR-QA 44 reports were released in late September 27. Results indicated several “Not Acceptable” evaluations. As such, Corrective Action (re-sampling) was taken to resolve the issue with re-testing showing all positives with the exception of residual chlorine. This test sample appears to anomalous and will be sent in for further information.

Lead pipes in public water systems and drinking fixtures have been banned in new home construction since 1986, when Congress amended the Safe Drinking Water Act. However, in some older homes, services lines which are connected to the water mains may be made of lead. In addition, some faucets and plumbing fixtures in homes built before 1986 may also be made of lead. The Federal *Lead and Copper Rule Revisions* (LCRR) requires all community and non-transient non-community public water systems (PWS) to conduct materials inventory of the distribution system including water lines to all service connections supplied water by the PWS. This materials inventory must be completed and submitted to the Connecticut Department of Public Health (CTDPH) by October 16, 2024. The Montville WS is currently compliant with the directive but is working to improve the understanding of all materials used within the distribution system.

PFAS are a class of man-made chemicals that are used to fireproof and/or waterproof and stainproof many products – from raincoats to mascara, couches and cooking pans. They can persist for many years in the environment. PFAS were first made by industrial chemists in the 1930s and are now found widely in the food and water supply and in most people’s blood. Long-term exposure to PFAS through drinking, eating and breathing them in has been linked with liver damage, high cholesterol, and certain cancers. The chemicals have also been linked with immune problems in children. The *Waters of the US Rule*, Section 401 permitting and regulations to remove PFAS and lead from drinking water supplies are a few of the policies that may be vulnerable under the incoming Trump administration, say legal experts. As it stands, the USEPA’s PFAS drinking water regulation requires water utilities to monitor for certain PFAS chemicals in their water through 2027, and to remove those PFAS chemicals that exceed the EPA’s set limits by 2029. GU is required to monitor and manage PFAS chemicals.

The last three months (September and October and November) were the driest in recorded Connecticut history. November set a record for the lowest rainfall accumulation. All of Connecticut is now in a drought, according to the U.S. Drought Monitor. The advisory means that the state is at an “awareness stage,” and it also notifies residents of an “emerging drought event that could potentially impact water supplies, agriculture, or natural ecosystems”. The state is at an elevated level of fire risk because of extremely dry conditions and an emergency burn ban is in effect at all state parks, forests, and wildlife management areas. The state has had the highest number of “red flag” days ever. DEMHS maintains a list of the Municipal Drought Liaisons (MDLs) for each municipality. The municipal drought liaison role was established in the *Connecticut Drought Preparedness and Response Plan* to enable better communication and coordination among state and local government agencies during drought events. The Superintendent is the Montville MDL.

The existing drought conditions have placed a demand on potable and non-potable water. Non-potable reuse regulations have historically been developed and implemented at the state and local level for decades. No specific use has been determined for excess treated effluent (not already sent to RWCB). One resident has requested potable water because of a dry production well at their home.

Hurricane season ended on November 30.

5.0 Development

Several inquiries for potential residential development projects have been presented to the WPCA for review/comment, including two along Route 32, one near Carol Drive and one on Maple Avenue. Numerous meetings were held to assist developers with the proposed work and connections to sewer/water.

6.0 Financial

The WPCA operates with an *Enterprise Fund* which is operated like a (private sector) business account except it contains a goal target of zero-balance (year) ending. In other words, it is understood that a utility is a customer service business.

6.1 Accounts Review

Asset management is the process for maintaining a desired level of customer service at the appropriate cost and lowering asset risk.

The FY 2024 WPCA Sewer and Water Budgets began on July 1, 2023 and ended on June 30, 2024. The FY 2025 WPCA Sewer and Water Budget began on July 1, 2024. A cursory review of the first quarter budget did not indicate concerns.

The ability to receive septic wastewater and to divert (sell) reclaimed (recycle effluent) water greatly increases the utility's water (cash) portfolio. It is anticipated that a rate increase will occur in 2026 for sewer.

A Montville WS rate increase is necessary. The WPCA authorized rate study will consider the current reserve funds, and the typical revenue received as compared to the costs increases associated with several GU rate increases, inflation, and new water tower (as well as the unaccounted-for water). The WPCA Engineer has been consulted to establish a model to include many aspects of utility status and future needs. Notification will be made on the WPCA website for public hearing. A formal notification for approval will be made to the Town Council. The last time the WS rates were increased was via Resolution 2014-50 (July 1, 2014).

6.2 Assets

The WPCA will enhance its understanding of the WPCF and Water Supply assets with the permanent/inspection attributes positioned on the water and sewer GIS platforms. ArcGIS is the system of record for geospatial information and assets. The ArcGIS platform is in a unique position: It is both a system of record (permanent and inspection attributes) and a system of engagement for the operator/mechanics. They use it to collect, manage, and compile geospatial information in maps, which represent reality in a lucid way and allow for better analysis and more sound decision making.

As previously noted, the cost of depreciation is provided in utility spread sheets, but it is not an "out-of-pocket" expense. This data is an important portion of the four-part approach to asset management: planning, financial foresight, capital visibility, and data collection/review. A review was conducted of both water and sewer asset details to remove those no longer containing value. Old assets can be sold on third party websites (i.e. Municibid) leading to revenues.

6.3 Grants/Funding

Per existing contract, the WPCA is responsible for the upkeep of the RWCB discharge and recycle water lines. As indicated in previous meetings, the (approximately \$3 million) replacement/repair pipe project was completed in August 2024. The Montville WPCA financed the project via the Reserve Fund but will be repaid at a rate of \$200,000 per year.

Some current wastewater projects are funded by State funds including 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, influent flow distribution boxes and grit removal system. Additionally, the aeration systems for SBR-1, 2, 3, 5 and 6 were replaced. Wright-Pierce was met on November 21 to discuss specific grant funding from the CTDEEP for collection system studies/projects.

One bond was paid in July 2018, and another was paid in February 2019; thus reducing debt service by at least \$150,000-\$200,000 per year. The remaining two bonds will be paid in August 2032 (headworks upgrade) and July 2034 (new emergency power generator), respectively.

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). Reimbursements for WPCA expenditures have been received on a timely basis. The repayment is scheduled for a 20-year amortization with a 2% rate.

A MTUA loan balance remains on the (not amortized) loan defined in the December 10, 2007 *Reimbursement Agreement by and between The Mohegan Tribal Utility Authority and Town of Montville*. The original principal of the note for extending the water utility into the Town was \$2,642,792. The current balance is around \$500,000 which is paid down when connection fees are collected.

6.4 Energy

Generally, a decrease in plant energy demand has been observed associated with the (more controlled) lower dissolved oxygen (DO) settings (as compared to last year at this time) in the process tanks due to the new fine-bubble diffusers as well as the new (more efficient) turbo blowers. The Administrator/Superintendent met with Dan Joyce of Balanced Rock Energy (WPCA Energy Broker) to review current and future contract conditions. It is likely the generation cost will rise over 50% for the next contract due to market conditions.

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. Typically, the Pure Cell (400 kW) unit is the best performing unit of its kind in Connecticut and provides over 90% of the energy required by the WPCF; thus, 90% of the electrical energy that does not have the higher transmission charge. The recent contract with the energy broker (Balanced Rock Energy) defines the new electrical costs with a approximate 35% increase (rising from \$0.06114 to \$0.09136 per kWh). An increase to the Public Benefits portion (cost) of Eversource bill (for state-mandated and approved energy programs, policies and initiatives) took effect. Additional cost increases will be seen in December 2024.

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. The Hunters Mountain #1 project's Petition and Siting Council documents are in preparation, and almost complete. MLG is still waiting to hear back from Eversource on the *Interconnection Application* (which is undergoing a transmission study). The developer (TRITEC) estimates *Permission to Operate* (PTO) will be achieved in Q4 2025.

Superintendent Albertson summarized his monthly report noting the process controls as being good and 98% removal; the high quality effluent to Rand-Whitney; the structural coating on the d-box project that is pretty much complete; the septage receiving upgrades due on Wednesday; adapting to the new GIS platform that will store applications and Plant data, the lack of rain water and its effect on inflow and infiltration; an efficiency review of the fuel cell; and the outreach program to area schools. Explanation was given to Commissioner Terry concerning the proprietary process of the fuel cell that generates electricity, 92% last month and battery packs used to diminish high demands explored and introduced by former Mayor/Administrator McDaniel. Also explained was the Superintendent's effort to get the word out to accommodate the future of the plant via teaching classes and field trips. Per the Administrator, lab testing is currently being done by the student/trainee at the plant. In addition, he reported the resignation of an operator at the plant that generated discussion about operator qualifications, competitiveness in this area, and how long it will take for a replacement hire given the last opening that took 6-8

months to fill. Superintendent Albertson reported on the Chesterfield Pump Station installed in 1972 and made of wood and its potential liability per a wet well test done two (2) years ago; e.g. the depth of the ground well, drywell, equipment and infrastructure that is problematic. A meeting was held last week with a company on a top seeded module unit to plug and play at a cost of \$300,000. Another company did an influent check of the pumps for a quote and a better price. It was also reported that there is no chance of its failure per discussion regarding a bypass pump directly to a forced unit if a problem arose with currently 6-8 bypass pumps and an end pump in the system.

i. Report from Administration

Administrator McDaniel submitted his report of activities for November 2024 as follows:

- The Stony Brook bridge project is substantially complete, and we are working on a couple of punch-list items.
- Savy & Sons was the sole bidder on the Distribution Box Project at \$703,137 with an alternate add-on for removal of the inoperable gate valve of \$11,600 for a total of \$714,637. Bypass is in place and functioning. Work is behind schedule due to excessive grit removal and substantial completion is set for the end of November. The DEEP grant that we secured in 2017 has \$613,221.27 remaining and is designated for this project. This will close out this grant by the end of calendar year 2024.
- The Septage Receiving Station upgrades have been ordered and the design was reviewed by staff. Estimated delivery date is first week in December.
- We continue to hold regular monthly Cook Drive Water Tower meetings. The tank is constructed and is being readied for testing, disinfecting and commissioning. We have made contact with the three (3) property owners from which Eversource is requiring easements. They are drafted and have been sent to them and I am awaiting their approval and execution.
- We experienced a pump failure at the Chesterfield Pump Station. Pump was repaired and a bypass was in place in case of emergency. We are obtaining a quote for the replacement of the pump system.
- We assisted the Town with a drainage inspection at Camp Oakdale using our camera technology. A large blockage was found.
- We made some changes to our website with input from staff. This will be a work in progress to make it more user friendly for our customer base. One addition we are working on is an Autopay function.
- We continue data gathering for the water rate study. We expect that we will need to raise rates to cover escalating supply costs, water tower loan repayment and ongoing system maintenance.
- Our newest Wastewater Operator I tendered his resignation effective 11/30/24. Human Resources will advertise for a replacement.
- Our Collections Operator passed his NEWEA Grade 2 Certification Exam and has been promoted to the next level.

Administrator McDaniel gave an overview of his monthly report noting that the Stony Brook project is substantially complete--tidying up the outside and the engineer scheduling; the removal and disposing of grit as flow is significantly compromised; the use of the camera for discovery of a blockage at Camp Oakdale; the Collections Operator successfully passing his recent certification exam; and the GIS system and input from staff on the same.

j. Report from Mayor

Mayor Bunnell welcomed newly appointed Commissioner Terry and noted the busy schedules of the Superintendent and the Administrator. He also reported that the WPCA pays a portion of the cost of the Everidge reporting system but noted that signups have slowed as there were comments as to the questions being intrusive but there is the opportunity to promote the system on the Town website once the Town Council reviews and approves it. Samples will be sent to the Superintendent and Administrator as the cost also pays a portion of the boat launch and fishing gear pending DEEP final approval.

k. Report from Engineers

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Superintendent Albertson reported on grit buildup and invited the Commission to review status of the d-boxes that have been coated after having been mudded to strengthen them to prevent corrosion. He also spoke on grit disposal within the state that may no longer be possible. Ten percent less electricity was used in November and operators are looking at too much air entering the tanks. Active strides have been made in getting links for the plant for water and sewer in addition to working to find all the manholes on Route 32—there is supposed to be one every 300-500 feet. Discussion was had concerning CWP's inability to haul from the plant and possible permitted uses at Lisbon, Old Lyme and Preston. There is a large amount of grit on site and bypass is costing \$3,500 per day that is supposed to be done by the end of November but must be done by the end of this week to start demobilizing.

I. Old Business -- None

m. New Business

1. New Business Motion, Discussion, Roll Call Vote To consider and act on approval of WPCA regular meetings schedule for calendar year 2025.

THE TOWN OF MONTVILLE WATER AND SEWER COMMISSION HEREBY RESOVES To set the 2025 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 6, February 3, March 3, April 7, May 5, June 2, July 7, August 4, September 4 (Thursday), October 6, November 3, and December 1, 2025 to be held in the Town Council Chambers in the Town Hall starting at 6:00 PM.

Motion, Discussion, Roll Call Vote

SAR-No. 2024-17 THE TOWN OF MONTVILLE WATER AND SEWER COMMISSION HEREBY RESOLVES To Consider and Act on approval of WPCA regular meetings schedule for calendar year 2025 and to set the 2025 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 6, February 3, March 3, April 7, May 5, June 2, July 7, August 4, September 4 (Thursday), October 6, November 3, and December 1, 2025 to be held in the Town Council Chambers in the Town Hall starting at 6:00 PM. **Motion** by Commissioner Miceli; seconded by Commissioner Lathrop. Discussion: none. **Roll Call vote: In favor: Lathrop, Longton, Miceli, Terry. Opposed: none. Vote 4-0-0, all in favor. Motion approved.**

n. Report/Referrals from Planning & Zoning

Chairperson Longton remarked for the record that he is the representative of the Commission for Planning and Zoning. No report was given.

II. Water Commission

a. Report from Operations

Superintendent Albertson remarked that the Plant water operators, John Lilly and Kevin Loiler, are doing a great job. It was also reported that the Town met the legislation deadline regarding the examination of all water systems for removal of lead pipes. Other towns have many more connections than the Town and ratepayers were asked to take a picture of their water connection according to Administrator McDaniel. The Town completed its report and submitted it to the State prior to October 16—no lead pipes were found.

b. Report from Administration

Administrator McDaniel reported a call was made today concerning easements from three (3) property owners to the Cook Drive Water Tower but there is no feedback yet. Eversource will not schedule next steps until the easements are in hand. Work is being readied toward testing and disinfecting the water tank. Also, work toward payment of water and sewer bills online is near and emphasis was made concerning credit card charges for the same as the WPCA was eating the fees—a charge of 5% was being added to residents' bill and the WPCA does not have the authority to write off that charge. Groton Utilities (GU) will be changing the meters on Thursday on both

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sides of the river so they will be the same. Water rates and the three (3) increases charged by GU is being studied by the Superintendent and modeling is being done as to how it will work. A water study handout was given to the Commission drafted by Wright-Pierce Engineering and deemed homework for the next meeting when the engineers will be present for review and questions about the study. Responding to a question by Commissioner Miceli regarding the current water rate of \$45 per quarter, the Administrator is not sure where the modeling will come out, additionally the Commission needs to determine the amount of the rate increase that must then be approved by the Town Council. An increase of the sewer rate may be pending. Questions by Commissioner Terry were addressed as to whether sewer is tied to water—in some cases, but not directly if water is discharged from a well. It was noted there are 10 times more sewer customers than water customers. Also, there is just under \$3 million in reserve and will be hit in one (1) year per the \$200,000 year recoupment from Rand-Whitney and even with \$5 million the Town must bond for water. Commissioner Miceli noted that Maple Avenue was an emergency, but funds were available for it.

c. Report from Engineers

Superintendent Albertson reported that enterprise funding revenue equals costs and all water companies are fighting the same battle—the purchase of less water since Covid and having more efficient toilets and faucets and other things for water savings. The Plant looks to expand over five (5) years using existing standards for costing and the current water rate is irresponsible to support infrastructure. With a public hearing, it will show how low rates are compared with those of SCWA in addition to the WPCA contribution to water reserves that cannot continue. The WPCA is a business account with a net zero goal and if overshot any extra funds would go into reserves. Referring to pages 9 and 14 of the water rate study memoranda, Administrator McDaniel noted that the black line refers to revenue over the 5-year period from 2025 – 2030, while the blue areas represent operating expenses. Per his response to a question by Commissioner Terry regarding commercial rates, the Administrator remarked that those rates pay more depending upon how much can go through the meter. Commercial establishments include the casino, the prison, car washes, laundromats and Rand-Whitney that are not contracted. Per a question by Commissioner Miceli as to water and sewage flows since Covid, Superintendent Albertson reported they are consistent with pre-Covid, and the revenue stream is now more constant. The Administrator also added that it is not a domestic water factor instead it is the use of air conditioners.

d. Old Business -- None

e. New Business -- None

f. Reports from SCWA -- None

III. Remarks

a. Remarks from the Public with a three-minute time limit

Chairperson Longton asked three (3) times for remarks. There were none.

b. Remarks from Commission Members

Commissioner Terry remarked that his intention on the Commission is to learn. Chairperson Longton suggested scheduling a tour of the Plant noting the bypass is cool but will be cold. Commissioner Terry also agreed to apply for the open seat on the SCWA. Mayor Bunnell thanked Commissioner Terry for his presence on the Commission.

c. Adjournment

Motion by Commissioner Terry; seconded by Commissioner Miceli to adjourn the meeting at 6:54 p.m. Discussion: none. **Voice vote: 4-0-0. 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.**