

Town of Montville Water & Sewer Commission
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
September 4, 2025-- 6:00 PM
Town Council Chambers – Town Hall

This meeting was informational as a quorum was not present.

1. Water and Sewer Commission

a. Call to Order

Chairperson Longton called the regular meeting of the Water and Sewer Commission to order at 6:05 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 and Commissioners Richard Gladue, Frank Miceli and Deane Terry were absent. A quorum was not present.

Also in attendance were Superintendent Derek Albertson and Administrator Ronald McDaniel. Mayor Lenny Bunnell was absent.

d. Alterations to the Agenda – **No action**

e. Motion to approve the Discussion Minutes of the July 7, 2025 Regular Meeting (August Meeting Canceled) – **No action**

f. Communications pertaining specifically to matters which concern the Commission – **No action**

g. Remarks from the Public Regarding Items on the Agenda with a three-minute limit – **No action**

h. Report from Operations – Activities for August 2025 -- **No action**

1.0 Compliance/Process

1.1 Water Pollution Control Facility

The Montville Water Pollution Control Authority (WPCA) operates the federal and state permitted Water Pollution Control Facility (WPCF) and sanitary sewer collection system and the Water Supply (WS). Plant treatment was good with state and federal permit effluent parameters met. No local or formal complaints were received regarding the collection system or the Montville WPCF. Average daily influent flow to the WPCF for the month was low (due to dry conditions), approximately 2.0 million gallons per day (mgd) with a total (influent) treatment volume of 60 mg for the month. Each day, over 45% of the treated effluent (non-potable) was recycled (sold) Rand-Whitney Container Board (RWCB) which is currently using 100% recycle water for their production (the WPCA is required to supply up to 1.4 mgd but averages 0.7 mgd). The month's waste activated sludge (WAS) was thickened (TWAS) near 6% total solid (TS) which is considered very good due to volume reduction from dewatering.

1.2 Water Supply

The Montville Water Supply (WS) met required state and federal standards. The WS purchased 2,277,534 cubic feet (17,035,954 gallons) of Groton Utilities (GU) water this month.

The state is at an elevated level of fire risk because of extremely dry conditions. Only a small portion of Fairfield County is considered in drought conditions whereas New London County is considered *Abnormally Dry*. Some rain was present on August 20 and 21.

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Chuck Longton and Deane Terry have been re-appointed to SCWA (term expiration: September 1, 2027).

2.0 Staff

2.1 Health and Safety

No injuries were reported by the WPCA staff. Poor air quality (due to wild fires in Canada) along with high temperatures were observed in August. Appropriate work alterations were made to keep staff safe, including heat (response) action plans and air quality plans. The staff continue to use “tailgate meetings” to identify hazards before work begins as well as to promote “situational awareness.”

Every August, *National Traffic Awareness Month* offers a crucial reminder: the roads we work near can be as dangerous as the job site itself. For contractors operating on highways or urban roads, observing Traffic Awareness Month isn’t just symbolic — it’s a vital opportunity to reinforce worker safety and save lives.

Fire extinguisher training was provided by the Deputy Fire Marshal on August 13.

Professional outreach continues to be a priority to ensure adequate WPCA staffing. Of particular interest is the engagement of Generation Z to the utility. An interesting group, 35% of Gen Z students say they dislike reading, and 43% say they rarely or never read for fun. Training or other types of engagement require a new approach.

2.2 Training

Staff continued to receive training (state or professional organization sponsored) to meet the CTDEEP/CTDPH requirements as well as support additional related certifications. In-house education continues to be safety-based be it formal or informal training.

The 2025 ASCE *Report Card on the Nation’s Infrastructure* gives wastewater facilities a grade of D+. Advanced training in technologies (such as SCADA controls) is a vital component in meeting the challenges facing utilities. More importantly, the informal transfer of institutional knowledge from the experienced operators/mechanics to newer personnel is key. Understanding the wastewater treatment process is key to running an efficient facility. From the initial screening and sedimentation to biological degradation and final disinfection, each step is important, as it leads to clean water and protects public health and the environment.

The end of August and beginning of September mark the peak of hurricane season in the U.S. The Superintendent attended an Eversource training event on August 5 about storm-related disruptions consistent with past storm events. In-house storm response training is paramount. Connecticut has the CT *ALERT Emergency* notification system which enables state and local 911 emergency communication centers to provide essential information quickly in various emergency situations. Hurricane Erin passed well offshore on August 22 and did not impact Connecticut.

The Superintendent attended several technical webinars as well as the CTDEEP webinar: *Triennial Review: Water Quality Standards* (Public Meeting). As indicated, the controls will likely be expanded under the pending NPDES (federal) discharge permit. The Superintendent enrolled in the September 2025 U.S. Department of Energy *Enhanced Reliability and Operations Planning for WRRFs VINPLT Series*, (part of the *Sustainable Wastewater Infrastructure of the Future* workshop series).

3.0 Equipment

3.1 WPCF/Collection System

The WPCA team is constantly looking forward for the Montville WPCA facilities to prevent deferred replacement or maintenance. Public health, environmental compliance, and community trust all hinge on reliable, high-performance infrastructure. As such, the team considers process Intensification (PI) as an alternative for new construction; rather it stresses focused O & M as well as the enhancement, reuse or improvement of the existing infrastructure. Minimal expansion to the original footprint of the facility and conveyance system is expected in the near future. The three concerns for the future include increased (wastewater) loading, more stringent regulatory controls and increased peak hydraulic loading (due to climate change).

Two of the secondary process tanks (SBR-3 and SBR-5) were made inoperative due to failures in the air distribution system piping. The operators and mechanics worked diligently to identify the problems and make temporary repairs. In 2023, the WPCA replaced all the six tanks' air

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distribution systems (i.e. headers, diffusers) because they were over 25 years old (using grant and CIP monies). The concern is that there are multiple failures due to materials. The engineer, installer and supplier were met onsite on August 20 and 21 to define remedies to ensure the prescribed 20-year life expectancy.

Chesterfield PS is on a bypass pump awaiting the completion of upgrades per the FY CIP. New pumps should arrive soon.

4.0 Projects

4.1 WPCF/Collection System/Water Supply

A requirement of the CMOM directive, the annual CIP supports long-term solutions and addresses short-term needs. This year is the first year the water industry lists CIP financing as their number one issue of concern. A FY 2026 WPCF sewer/water CIP project summary table is included in the submittal. CIP stands for capital improvement plan—also called a capital plan—lays out the financing, location, and timing for capital improvement projects annually and over a 5-year period. Water should be prioritized as a strategic investment asset to drive socioeconomic growth.

SBR-4 (sidewall surface) cracking was sealed by Savoy & Son per the FY CIP. Additional work is proposed to “cap” the affected area with a polyurea application.

The WPCF is required to conduct disinfection from May 1 to October 31 each year. Water is chlorinated just prior to inflow in the contact chamber. A close review of mixing conditions as well as chlorine dosing is showing promise to ensure good disinfection while using a minimal amount of chlorine.

As indicated, the WPCA is required to supply RWCB recycle water each day. The paperboard company utilizes both “pond water” and recycle water to meet production goals. The funding for USGS monitoring of the Oxoboxo Brook (below Rockland Pond) has been significantly reduced and will no longer continue to provide support after September 30. The Superintendent and Administrator will meet to remedy this situation.

CCTV (Closed-Circuit Television) sewer inspections (of a portion of the 62 miles gravity sewers) were made in the priority areas to define Inflow and Infiltration (storm water and groundwater intrusion). Routine maintenance inspections are made of all the lift stations. While jetting of sewer lines is made, when necessary, “flushing” is considered the best option for cleaning. Approximately 40,000 linear feet has been flushed, and 2,100 linear feet has been filmed this year. Surface inspections were made of all but a few of the 1,650 collection system manholes in 2025 with a complete inspection of 300 manholes. Focus areas include The Manor and The Heights due to their age and contribution to recently rehabbed Chesterfield PS.

The CTDOT paving schedule for Route 32 began this summer with milling and paving. Frequent inspections were made by water/sewer staff to ensure manhole/covers were not destroyed and appropriate mark outs were made. Eventually, manhole riser and cover replacements will be made. This is an opportunity for direct inspection and improvement of a significant amount of the collection system assets usually considered inaccessible due to traffic conditions.

Medical surveillance continues within influent wastewater at U.S. WPCFs. As of Aug. 2, the COVID-XFG variant accounts for 44% of wastewater samples in the U.S. sequenced by the CDC. Data from Wastewater SCAN, which monitors diseases through municipal wastewater systems, also show that the XFG variant is the most abundant variant in the U.S., accounting for nearly 65% of samples from their sites.

To combat water loss from the (potable) water supply, the WPCA evaluates potential leaks and water loss (through a monthly water audit). A daily review is made of flow coming into the Montville Water Supply from GU.

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. Based on a review of the WPCA’s Eligibility Application the CTDPH DWS had determined that the Cook Water Tower replacement project was eligible for DWSRF funding. The previous and current Montville Finance Directors were notified of the federal funding for the tower project. Raul Tejada (Environmental Engineer 3, Drinking Water Section, State Department of

Public Health) and Barry Parfitt, PE (Wright-Pierce, WPCA Project Engineer) and the construction manager (Suchocki and Son, Inc.) were met to confirm adherence to the scheduled completion date identified is October 31, 2025. The tank was put online on August 27.

4.2 Regulatory Oversight

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 NPDES program is an important tool established by the *Clean Water Act* (CWA) to help address water pollution by regulating point sources that discharge pollutants to waters of the U.S. Collectively, the USEPA and states issue permits to establish important monitoring and pollution reduction requirements for WPCFs, industrial facilities and stormwater discharges nationwide.

The Montville WPCF is required to meet state and federal standards for (point) effluent discharged to the Thames River per a NPDES permit and the *Long Island Sound Nutrient Reduction Program*. The *General Permit for the Discharge of Stormwater Associated with Industrial Activity* regulates industrial facilities with point source discharges that are engaged in specific activities listed. Additionally, state and federal mandates (CMOM- *Capacity, Management, Operation and Maintenance*) exist for care of the sewer collection system.

Required (monthly, quarterly or annual) discharge reporting and emergency reporting are 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.

The USEPA is publishing *Securing the Future of Water: Addressing Cyber Threats Today*. The report includes recommendations calling for a holistic approach to strengthen cybersecurity in the water sector by enhancing coordination and collaboration across government, associations, and water utilities. These recommendations were produced by a *Water Sector Cybersecurity Task Force* that EPA co-lead at the time they were developed.

WPCAs are increasingly investing in climate-adaptation projects to combat the effects of extreme weather. As indicated, a FEMA review of the pump stations revealed no concerns. However, the recent big storm events have led to effluent non-compliance issues leading to the recent CTDEEP issued NOV. The aforementioned work on the conveyance system is the best way to combat the growing climate issues affecting the WPCF. Federal Emergency Management Agency flood maps are revised frequently amid appeals from property owners and communities seeking removal from high-risk zones, yet studies indicate that FEMA's maps often fail to incorporate up-to-date data and lack the resources for thorough field verification. Independent organizations have developed climate risk mapping tools that use global climate models and advanced analytics to better predict the risk of intense rainfall and flooding. Currently, no assets are cited as being within a flood zone.

The Water Supply is operating according to state and federal standards. The 2024 Consumer Confidence Report (CCR) was released on June 9. The Montville Town Council reappointed Deane Terry to the SCWA (until August 2027).

August is Water Quality Month. Access to clean water is crucial for all life and Water Quality Month is a reminder for us to consider our impact on our water sources.

5.0 Development

Several inquiries for potential residential development projects have been presented to the WPCA for review with the proposed work and connections to sewer/water. The Administrator and Superintendent discussed a proposed MTUA residential development along Broadview Avenue.

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. Appropriate end-of-year accounting will identify areas whereas budgeting should be adjusted in future cycles.

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.

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The FY 2026 WPCA Sewer and Water Budget began on July 1, 2025. A cursory review FY 2025 budget/CIP expenditures did not indicate immediate concerns.

The FY 2026 budgets/CIPs were approved by the WPCA and the Town Council. The budgets will begin on July 1, 2025 and call for economic efficiency with the minimum resource consumption and maximum performance of the equipment required to supply potable water and treat the municipal sewerage. The budgets must establish appropriate funding for reliability of the utility.

A Montville sewer rate increase would increase revenues. Informal reviews of other town's rates show the Montville WPCA sewer rate to be approximately 30% lower than the current utility market.

A Montville WS rate was approved by the Town Council on May 12. The last time the WS rates were increased was via *Resolution 2014-50* (July 1, 2014).

6.2 Assets

The WPCA will continue to 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 specific information of the utility 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.

As previously noted, the cost of depreciation is provided in utility spread sheets, but it is not an "out-of-pocket" expense.

6.3 Grants/Funding

Some current wastewater projects were 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 grant monies were used for infrastructure improvements within the plant including the new chlorine system, new recycling pumps, restoration of the influent flow distribution boxes and grit removal system. Additionally, the aeration systems for SBR-1, 2, 3, 5 and 6 were replaced. Vincenzo Gagliardi, Accountant for the CTDEEP Bureau of Central Services, funds for the grant have now been exhausted. Wright-Pierce was met to discuss future 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

The (electrical) energy is the single largest monthly WPCA expenditure. Blowers can consume up to 60% of the wastewater treatment plant's total energy—and over 90% of the energy used in aeration. Between May 2024 and May 2025, the national average electricity rate jumped 6.5%—from 16.4¢/kWh to 17.5¢/kWh. Thus, the Administrator and the Superintendent are constantly

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looking at ways to optimize energy usage within your water treatment plant/collections system and water supply.

Electrical Energy is mostly 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.

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. 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. Hunter's Mountain #1 is in its last month of ecological study.

The WPCA personnel met with Garrett Cudgma of Resource LE to discuss battery (electrical energy) storage. *Battery Energy Storage Systems* (BESS) are technologies for the storage of electrical energy. It ensures consistent power availability amidst unpredictable energy supply due to factors such as weather changes and power outages and peak demand periods (BESS converts and stores electricity during off-peak times when electricity is more economical). It releases stored energy during peak demand, using components like rechargeable batteries, inverters for energy conversion, and sophisticated control software. This technology reduces reliance on costly peak-power plants, lowers greenhouse gas emissions, and enhances grid stability. It also represents a CTDEEP requested "hardening" response to climate change.

New (proposed) federal legislation will significantly reduce the ability to procure funds for renewable energy.

i Report from Administration – Activities for August 2025 -- **No action**

- (S) Chesterfield Pump Station is still operating in bypass mode while awaiting pump delivery from manufacturer. Staff is working with Kovacs Construction on replacement plan.
- (S) The paving project on Route 32 led to the discovery of another sinkhole in the utility corridor. It was determined not to be water or sewer.
- (W) Cook Tower is operational and online. Securing the easements remains an issue.
- (S) We are continuing to review our sewer rates structure for comparable communities.
- (W&S) We continue to enter data into the GIS system for all aspects of our system. This is an invaluable tool for our staff and clients. We have also tested a new mapping tool that the Town is exploring called NEARMap.
- (S) Changes in the energy incentive arena have forced some suppliers to pull back from new energy saving initiatives. We have now met with Kinsley Energy for a potential battery storage project.
- (S) Savy & Son completed the crack filling repair of the cement failing on SBR 4 on and will be providing pricing for an outer coating.
- (W&S) We experienced some administrative issues due to staffing but are catching up (due to extended medical leave and family death events).
- (S) SBRs 3 and 5 experienced air diffuser failures in the piping system due to poor material quality. Superintendent is working with contractor on long term solution. Staff was able to make temporary repairs to get units online and keep process.

(S) = Sewer (W) = Water (W&S) = Water and Sewer

- j. Report from Mayor – **No action**
- k. Report from Engineers – **No action**
- l. Old Business – **No action**
- m. New Business – **No action**
- n. Motion Discussion Roll Call – **Agenda error**
- o. Report/Referrals from Planning & Zoning – **No action**

II. Water Commission

- a. Report from Operations – **No action**
- b. Report from Administration – **No action**
- c. Report from Engineers – **No action**
- d. Old Business – **No action**
- e. New Business – **No action**
- f. Motion Discussion Roll Call – **Agenda error**
- g. Reports from SCWA – **No action**

III. Remarks

- a. Remarks from the Public with a three-minute time limit – **No action**
- b. Remarks from Commission Members – **No action**
- c. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 6: 06 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

Gloria J. Gathers
Recording Secretary, Town of Montville

**AN AUDIO RECORDING OF THE MEETING IS AVAILABLE ON THE TOWN OF
UNDER “RESOURCES” ON THE TOWN OF MONTVILLE WEBSITE.**