Town of Montville Water & Sewer Commission
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
March 2, 2026-- 6:00 PM
Town Council Chambers – Town Hall

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, Commissioner Miceli, Town Councilor Nick Sabilia and Commissioner Deane Terry. Commissioner Richard Gladue was absent. A quorum was present.

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

d. Alterations to the Agenda -- None

e. Motion to approve Minutes of Regular Meeting on January 5, 2026
Motion by Commissioner Terry; seconded by Commissioner Miceli to approve the WPCA Regular Meeting Minutes of January 5, 2026. Discussion: none. **Voice vote: 4-0-0, all in favor. Motion approved.**

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 February 2026, as follows:

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)/Collection System and the Water Supply distribution system (WS).

WPCF treatment was difficult with some state/federal permit effluent parameters not met. Cold process tank temperatures as well as variable influent loading, led to some process control issues. Additionally, blizzard conditions from February 22 to 23 led to some difficulties.

Average daily influent flow to the WPCF for the month was approximately 2.0 million gallons per day (mgd) with a total (influent) treatment volume of 60 mg for the month. Each day, approximately 50% of the treated effluent (non-potable) was recycled (sold) to Rand-Whitney Container Board (RWCB) for re-use in their production of paper.

1.2 Water Supply
The WS met required state and federal standards. The WPCA purchased 6% less water in 2025 when compared to 2024. March and December of 2025 showed the lowest demand. No demand exceedance was observed for GU. No supply deficiencies were observed for MTUA, CTDOC or SCWA.

2.0 Staff

2.1 Health and Safety

No injuries were reported by the WPCA staff. In addition to formal training consistent with state and federal guidelines, the staff continue to use daily "tailgate meetings" to identify hazards and promote "situational awareness."

An insurance inspection by *Travelers* and *American Public Entity Programs* personnel occurred on February 12. The Administrator and Superintendent provided information and a plant tour. No concerns were raised.

During the winter season, staff are reminded of controls (i.e. handwashing, flu shot) to prevent the spread of seasonal diseases. Desks were placed in the conference room to spread out the team to lessen the chance of a cold/flu spreading.

Interviews were conducted for the vacant *Accountant* position. Cynthia Thompson began work on February 9.

2.2 Training/Certifications

Staff have continued to receive training (state/professional) to meet the CTDEEP/CTDPH annual requirements as well as support additional advanced wastewater/water certifications. In-house education includes discussions of the plant's process control methodologies, conveyance system components as well as identified and seasonal safety issues.

Gaylene Frere, UConn engineering (undergraduate) student reached out to the Superintendent in February to gather data about the plant's waste sludge production/disposal. Additionally, Jaylen Hawkins Western New England University engineering (graduate) student inquired about our use of GIS in managing the utility.

3.0 Equipment

3.1 WPCF/Collection System

The WPCA continues to shift from reactive maintenance to a more proactive, data-driven asset management strategy that delivers measurable financial, operational, and community benefits without requiring disruptive or costly system overhauls. Near constant feedback from the operators and mechanics has led to the most significant sanitary sewer improvement programs. A FY 2026 WPCF sewer/water CIP project summary table is included in the submittal.

The *AI Revolution* is making for SCADA enhancement and potential virtual workers. In the near future, AI will change core activities within the utility including preemptive maintenance, energy usage, I and I, alarm response, work scheduling, influent/effluent monitoring, staff reductions and sludge disposal.

A blizzard occurred on February 23. Plant and collections system equipment was inspected prior and after the event. No significant problems occurred.

A major break in the Potomac Interceptor sewer line caused a large-scale wastewater overflow into the Potomac River. The rupture occurred on January 19 when a 72-inch-diameter section of the interceptor collapsed, releasing an estimated 40 million gallons of untreated sewage per day. It is imperative that routine inspections occur to prevent this type of failure.

4.0 Projects

4.1 WPCF/Collection System/Water Supply

The WPCA staff is making every attempt to improve process operations, effluent parameters, residual solids reduction, chemical dosing effectiveness as well as treatment efficiency. The WPCA Engineer assisted in process control mechanisms leading to better results.

Many problems can develop in the WPCF activated sludge operation that adversely affect effluent quality with origins in the engineering, hydraulic and microbiological components of the process. The real "heart" of the activated sludge system is to control hydraulic overloading and the development and maintenance of a mixed microbial culture (activated sludge) that treats wastewater and which can be managed. Influent and Inflow contributions to flow have been

controlled as evident in the overall lower influent flow. Cold tanks and variable BOD (February 11 = 2000 mg/l, for example) have led to nutrient imbalance and thus slow biomass growth. We have balanced the nutrients, but this variability in BOD has led to an algae bloom (too much ortho-P) which is carrying over to the effluent. Due to elevated TSS concentrations in the effluent, significant process control adjustments were made following consultations with the WPCA Engineer and a contracted microbiologist.

The collections team follows the *2019 Capacity, Management, Operation and Maintenance* (CMOM) Program to provide better asset management, customer service, regulatory compliance, as well as to protect human health and the natural environment. CCTV (Closed-Circuit Television) sewer inspections (of a portion of the 62 miles of gravity sewers) were made in the priority areas to define Inflow and Infiltration (storm water and groundwater intrusion). Roughly 65% of the Town is sewered. Routine maintenance inspections are made of all the 24 lift stations and 1,650 manholes. All work is recorded within the GIS system. Along with condition assessments, the goal is reducing infiltration and inflow contributions to the influent flow to the WPCF. It is evident that the three major separations made in the conveyance system has reduced influent flow.

Solids handling (thickening/dewatering and hauling/disposal) is the second largest cost for the WPCA. Waste solids consist of material removed from secondary (biological) process to support the proper food to microorganism ratio for ideal wastewater treatment control. The "wasting" reduces the volume of organisms to keep the F/M ratio appropriate for each season of the year. There is a land ban in CT, NY and ME of these Class B biosolids. The month's waste activated sludge (WAS) was thickened (TWAS) to approximately 5% total solids (TS) which is considered good due to volume reduction from dewatering. Some very good news as related to WAS or solids handling. For 2025 (1466 WAS truck hauls) and for 2024 (1524 WAS truck hauls); this represents a 4% drop or 58 trucks or $65,000 in savings. This is due to better spring weather in 2025 but clearly points to operator efforts because of the increased BOD loading.

Influent contribution consists of one-third from the Town, one-third from RWCB and one-third from MTUA. An evaluation is made each month by the Superintendent of the sewer reporting as well as septage receiving to ensure there are no blind spots (unauthorized dumping), no lost revenues, no regulatory compliance risks, and minimal plant treatment equipment/process strain from wipes, grease and chemicals. Additionally, the energy billing is reviewed to determine the performance of the fuel cell (onsite generation of electrical power to lower number plant cost).

To combat water loss from the (potable) water supply, the WS team evaluates potential leaks and water loss (through a monthly water audit). Calculations of revenue water, non-revenue (accounted for) water versus non-revenue (unaccounted for) water were completed for the diversion permit. Typically, lost water is under 10% whereas the national average is greater than 16%. As previously indicated, a replacement project was completed for Cook Water Tower. The CTDPH annual reporting was completed for the GU Interconnection, the Inter-Regional Interconnection (Waterford and Norwich) and the Hillcrest Interconnection between SCRWA and the WS. No problems were identified during the blizzard.

4.2 Regulatory Oversight

Craig Motasky, Environmental Analyst, Wastewater Operator Certification Coordinator (Municipal Wastewater Section, Bureau of Water Protection and Land Reuse/Water Planning and Management Division) and Anthony Poon, Environmental Engineer II (CTDEEP Water Planning and Management Division, Bureau of Water Protection & Land Reuse) was notified of good plant and collection system operations during the blizzard on February 23.

The Montville WPCF is also known as a publicly owned treatment works (POTW). It is required to meet state and federal standards for (point) effluent discharged to the Thames River per a NPDES (federal) permit and the (state general permit) for the *Long Island Sound Nutrient Reduction Program.* Some controls may be necessary prior to the WPCF for industrial users including federal pre-treatment permits or state *General Pretreatment Permit for Significant Industrial User Discharges to Publicly Owned Treatment Works* (GP SIU). Additionally, the (state general permit) for the *General Permit for the Discharge of Stormwater Associated with Industrial Activity* regulates industrial facilities with point source (stormwater) discharges. Biosolids (laboratory analytical) reporting is summarized for the USEPA on an annual basis. Additionally,

state and federal mandates (CMOM- *Capacity, Management, Operation and Maintenance*) exist for care of the sewer conveyance system.

As required (monthly, quarterly or annual) discharge and (incidental) emergency reporting is signed (certified) by the state-licensed CTDEEP *Operator IV* (Superintendent, August 2014 Log Number 2312) in *Chief Operator 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*) and is certified by the NEWEA Grade IV Operator (Superintendent, June 2010 Certificate Number C-5170). The Superintendent has the highest certification required (Class/Grade IV) for both treatment and collections. The Superintendent also has passed the highest certification exams for potable water, including Distribution System Operator (Class III) and Water Treatment Operator (Class IV).

The existing 5-year federal wastewater discharge permit was effective on November 1, 2019. The current effluent permit has an expiration date of October 31, 2024; a renewal package was submitted to the CTDEEP prior April 30, as required (6 months prior to the expiration date). The Superintendent had met with Ed Bice of the CTDEEP Municipal Wastewater Program on December 16 to discuss the permit renewal and the eMOR Subscriber list (authorized permit submittal signors) for Montville. It was expected the permit will be reissued in February.

The CTDEEP has authorized the *Two Brothers Hand Car Wash* (Route 32) facility to discharge under the General Permit for Non-Significant Industrial Users (the "General Permit"). This General Permit was officially issued on October 29, 2025, in accordance with Connecticut State Agencies Regulations and Section 402(b) of the Clean Water Act. A General Pretreatment Permit application for SIU GP was submitted to the Superintendent and the CTDEEP by RWCB on February 13. The existing pre-treatment NPDES permit will be issued without changes. The CTDEEP Stormwater General Permit regulates stormwater discharges. The state WPCFs, with a general permit for nitrogen removal complied with the (total) state waste load allocation in 2025 (9,162 eq/ls) per the *Nitrogen Credit Exchange* (NCE) Program. As indicated previously, the Montville plant was well below (50% under) the permit limit for nitrogen discharges in the effluent.

The Superintendent's June, November and December 2025 and January 2026 technical memorandums (TMs) outlined corrective actions to be taken to address Biochemical Oxygen Demand (BOD_5) and Total Suspended Solids (TSS) exceedances (as outline in the June 2025 CTDEEP *Notice of Violation* NOV #WRMU 25-004). The formal responses were submitted prior to deadlines. Following the timely TM submittals, the Superintendent and WPCA Engineer met with the CTDEEP to confirm findings and improvement projects.

The WPCA relies on automated systems and digital tools to manage infrastructure and maintain operations, but with increased connectivity comes a higher risk of cyberattacks. Cybersecurity challenges include awareness and costs. The *Cybersecurity Infrastructure and Security Agency* (CISA) and the FBI offer support to secure systems. No legislation controls exist in the U.S. at this time. Most problems are related to insider threats (i.e. human error, stolen credentials, malicious actors) with devices connected to the internet. Staff work routinely with contractors to assess current exposure conditions and enact appropriate responses (i.e. no network, fire walls, secure PLCs/administrative privileges).

LCRR requirements have been concluded with the recent inspections of several supply lines to determine no lead conditions. The CTDPH has received the appropriate filings for the existing diversion permit. The CTDPH has sent notification about the upcoming sanitary survey.

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. On February 10 and 19, the staff met with the Public Works Director, Town Engineer (CLA) and representatives of Haley Ward (Glastonbury, CT) to discuss a large residential unit development project.

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.

Rate increases are a cornerstone for a utility's financial stability and long-term infrastructure planning. As indicated later in this report, a WS rate increase has occurred. Now, a sewer rate increase must occur. State and federal funding must also be explored to supplement AR to meet the demands of our two utility systems. Low-income loans are more viable funding alterative than grants.

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 2026 WPCA Sewer and Water Budget began on July 1, 2025. A cursory review FY 2025 budget/CIP expenditures did indicate immediate concerns. Future budget must develop appropriate AR to match proposed AP without tapping into the Fund Balance (as a source of revenue).

The FY 2026 budgets/CIPs were approved by the WPCA and the Town Council. The budgets began 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 40% lower than the current utility market. The WPCF has made reclaimed water a revenue source for many years, but plans should be considered for additional outlets.

A Montville WS rate was approved by the Town Council on May 12, 2025. The last time the WS rates were increased was via *Resolution 2014-50* (July 1, 2014). Connecticut's largest water company, Aquarion Water Company (largest CT water company), announced its intention to seek a 42% rate increase after state regulators last month blocked a deal that would have transformed the company into a nonprofit quasi-public entity. The proposed rate hike, worth $88 million annually, would be first in more than a decade for the company, which serves roughly 209,000 homes and businesses in Connecticut.

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.

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. 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). The repayment is scheduled for a 20-year amortization with a 2% rate beginning on October 31.

The Administrator is managing the annual $200,000 RWCB payment (to WPCA) related to sewer O & M.

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. The current inflation rate for energy is twice the total inflation rate or CPI. On average, the WPCF consumes 360,000 kWh per month. As such, the Superintendent examines each point of use to ensure best efficiency.

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 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. Based on the recent storms and brutally cold weather, the spot market/ daily price for natural gas will increase significantly.

On February 28, 2025, ISO-NE launched the *Day-Ahead Ancillary Service Initiative* (DASI), replacing the Forward Reserve Market. This change introduced a new pricing structure for ancillary services, with costs now fluctuating daily based on market conditions. As a result, ancillary service costs have become higher and more volatile, particularly during periods of renewable intermittency and load uncertainty.

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 undergoing an ecological study. As of January 14, Hunter's Mountain #2 (not the same project as the Montville WPCA account is attached to) was not approved by CSC, but a judge has ordered a review and further justification of that project's non-approval. The CSC made a decision based on some false information and did not request clarification. It will be resubmitted for reconsideration to the CSC. Hunter's Mountain #1 (the project that the WPCA and City of Windham are attached to is still moving forward. It has not yet been submitted to CSC. Eversource has this project in their feasibility study. Our best estimate right now is Q2 2027.

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.

Superintendent Albertson reported about two (2) safety inspections that occurred in the month of February—by an Insurance Inspector and the Fire Marshal—and both went well. Staff was thanked for their efforts with clearing the pump stations and the Plant due to the blizzard last Monday. It was noted that staff was well-coordinated and process was not lost as no problems occurred with sewer and water functions given the 70 MPH winds. Per State notification, process is improving and is at 58% given the current nitrogen removal and the loading limit requirement of 118 lbs per day.

i. Report from Administration

Administrator McDaniel submitted a report of activities for the month of February 2026 as follows:

- (W) We are awaiting better weather to activate the three phase power at Cook Drive Water Tank.
- (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 also have access to a new mapping tool that the Town has purchased called NEARMap.
- (S) We continue to look into energy saving initiatives. We are exploring a couple of solar initiatives (off site).
- (W&S) We hired an Accountant after three offers were made to candidates. Cynthia Thompson started with us on February 9 and is settling in well. She will be an asset to the team!
- (S) During the manhole replacement on Route 32 precipitated by the paving project we found two manholes in need of repair. We have pricing from the contractor that we have used in the past (Savy & Sons). **ACTION ITEM**
- (W&S) The ESA modification request to the Water Utility Coordinating Committee (WUCC) through the Council Of Governments has been approved and accepted by DPH. This will allow a developer to go forward with plans for the corner of Chesterfield Road and Route 163.
- (W&S) We continue to deal with the active weather pattern, and the plant and pump stations have remained open throughout. Staff has done an outstanding job of keeping the plant open and functional as well as attending to the pump stations around town.
- (S) We drafted a position description for a Collection System Operator-Trainee in cooperation with the union. This is a position we hope to fill with our intern Will Dudley.

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

Administrator McDaniel noted the action item on his monthly report that is on tonight's agenda and that the Plant is going well. The new accountant that was hired is working well and good things are expected. The Plant staff were commended for the fantastic job done given the capacity of the recent storm. It was also noted that a transfer switch failed at the Massapeag pump station requiring the station to run by generator for three (3) days with no issues. The ESA modification for the corner of Chesterfield Road and Route 163 was approved. Lastly, there is a pending Plant position for a Collections System Trainee that is in the hands of Human Resources. Per a response to Chairperson Longton, the failure of the transfer station switch was not an Eversource issue; the same switch model was previously replaced twice but was under warranty at that time. Also, the switch sometimes must be manipulated manually.

j. Report from Mayor

Mayor Bunnell echoed congratulations to Plant staff for the snow removal and keeping things clear as well as congratulations for the successful safety inspections. Noted also was the request from Administrator McDaniel concerning clean energy solar panels that was added to the Town Council agenda. The Administrator explained that the Plant has been "chasing solar initiatives" and that this deal came up whereby extra credits can be used to be put into a bid for developing a solar panel. Municipal credits are needed to do it in addition to site control that would evolve by way of a sublease agreement of property not owned by the Town. The issue of site control was noted regarding site regulations and CT DEEP. Over a 20-year period, $50,000 or $7,500 per year would be awarded to the Plant at no cost and for doing absolutely nothing. Mayor Bunnell noted that an initial response from the Town Attorney about the agreement was good although questions have been raised about it that are pending vendor attorney corrections.

k. Report from Engineers

Superintendent Albertson reported having met twice with the Plant engineers about SCADA operation and pump station controls and residential development in Town. A meeting was also had with a microbiologist for review of biology in Town having to do with problems with tanks that occurred in January for getting the bugs going. Cold temperatures were able to change the problem that led to the 58% improvement rate by changing the PH and nutrient value to trend through the month of March.

l. Old Business -- None

m. New Business

1. To Consider and Act on the Bid Waiver of Two Manholes located along Route 32.

THE TOWN OF MONTVILLE WATER AND SEWER COMMISSION HEREBY RESOLVES To Consider and Act to waive the sealed bid requirement in Section 708(a) of the Town Charter for the Repair of Sewer Manholes 912 and 916 located at the intersection of Route 32 and Fort Shantock Road to include repair of concrete cracking on the (interior sidewalls), as it is in the best interest of the Town.
Motion – Discussion -- Roll Call Vote

SAR-No. 2026-01 THE TOWN OF MONTVILLE WATER AND SEWER COMMISSION HEREBY RESOLVES To Consider and Act to waive the sealed bid requirement in Section 708(a) of the Town Charter for the Repair of Sewer Manholes 912 and 916 located at the intersection of Route 32 and Fort Shantock Road to include repair of concrete cracking on the (interior sidewalls), as it is in the best interest of the Town. **Motion** by Commissioner Miceli; seconded by Commissioner Terry. Discussion: Per Commissioner Terry's questions about the project, Administrator McDaniel explained that two (2) manhole covers were degraded during the paving process on Route 32. A third one was repaired four (4) years ago at Galvin corner. As the effluent comes down, it degrades the concrete on the inside of the covers and if not vented they degrade. The repair involves removing brick and resealing the cover with an epoxy product. As to the bid waiver, the bid account level is currently at $20,000 according to the Town Purchasing Policy so the bids have been done separately. The cost to go out to bid would be $20,000 and the new bidder would need to bid $30,000 for cost purposes, according to Commissioner Miceli. The vendor, Savy& Sons, has been used for other projects—a manhole at Galvin corner, Connecticut Boulevard, and for repair of the distribution boxes. The project will be done in April/May. Plans are to complete a survey of the other existing manhole covers. Superintendent Albertson explained that the key manholes go through a force main pipe to a transitional gravity feed; the force is likely to be damaged by hydrogen sulfate. The manhole on Connecticut Boulevard is in bad shape. Administrator McDaniel explained the additional costs, police protection for example, to the project due to its location on Route 32. He noted it is not prudent to look at the other manholes, per a question by Chairperson Longton as they are covered with asphalt and cannot be accessed. When the State does the road work, it covers everything and the Town gets credit for the repair as the manhole is dug up and replaced. The status of the manholes cannot be assessed from the top down, but can be surveyed with the cameras. The Town receives a $1,600 credit per cover and

pays $3,000 thereafter—the top layer is replaced at no cost. No problem has been found with manhole covers on Route 163. Camera access is done by Prime Electric. **Roll Call vote: *In favor*: Chairperson Longton, Vice-Chairperson Terry, Commissioner Miceli and Commissioner Sabilia. *Opposed*: none. Vote: 4-0-0, all in favor. Motion Approved.**

n. Report/Referrals from Planning & Zoning

Chairperson Longton reported that he was unable to attend the last meeting of Planning & Zoning. Administrator McDaniel noted that nothing was discussed that pertained to the WPCA. The Administrator also reported that the 235 Route 32 condos revised its project plans. A fire hydrant that was mandated by former Fire Marshal Barnes was removed from plans but has been added back but is too close to the water and sewer lines.

II. Water Commission

a. Report from Operations

Superintendent Albertson reported that 6% less water was purchased from Groton Utilities ("GU") in 2025 than in 2024. This data is a good economic indicator as most water companies are struggling and not producing as much water. The water rate increase was a good move by the WPCA as most appliances need less use of water that equates to less flow. Flows are reduced at the casino but are steady, but not at pre-covid levels, per a question by Commissioner Miceli. There have been no responses to the water rate increase nor complaints. A good public utility must have funds coming in the door, per the Superintendent. The Administrator lead discussion about a proposal to increase sewer rates that will be submitted to the Commission for review prior to its next meeting. The Superintendent and the Administrator spoke about cost increases during Covid and that costs would decrease with supply thereafter. Instead, there have been increases due to tariff charges and the Plant sewage rate is under market. The Town sewer rate is 30% to $40% than any normal utility is charging—the success with the water rate increase should support a higher utility rate. The Administrator proposed a sewer rate increase of $10 in July and additional $10 the following January for overall cost increases per quarter. The Town sewer rate is at a median of 40% when compared to area southeastern Connecticut towns. There are currently 4,500 sewer customers but only 480 water customers. It was also explained that contracts with large, water producers are same as for those with customers. Information was also conveyed about the process to lien a sewer customer that has changed per State regulations—the Administrator testified against that change. Additionally, water bills are based on usage; those who have wells are charged a flat rate for sewer. Some Town customers are charged quarterly and 95% are residential. Some individual homes owe $25,000.

b. Report from Administration

Administrator McDaniel reported that the new accountant is working out great with the water accounts although the calculation for the water data is being worked on.

c. Report from Engineers

Superintendent Albertson spoke about a water element that has recently been discussed in the media stating that water companies must remove it in their treatment. Data on the same can be obtained for Groton Utilities. The Administrator noted that GU does a job with treatment and that it supplies a Customer Confidence Report that must be filed annually at its Town Hall and be available on its website.

d. Old Business -- None

e. New Business -- None

f. Reports from SCWA

Chairperson Longton reported that a meeting of SCWA was not held.

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 Sabilia remarked that the Commission keep up the good work and thanked it for keeping everyone well-informed. Chairperson Longton reminded everyone to turn their clocks forward on Saturday.

c. Adjournment

Motion by Commissioner Terry; seconded by Commissioner Miceli to adjourn the meeting at 6:34 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 UNDER "RESOURCES" ON THE TOWN OF MONTVILLE WEBSITE.