

Town of Montville Water and Sewer Commission
Regular Meeting Minutes – March 2, 2020 – 6:00 p.m.
Montville Town Hall – Town Council Chambers

1. Water and Sewer Commission

a. Call to Order

Chairman Longton called the regular meeting of the Water and Sewer Commission to order at 6:00 p.m. and reminded everyone to please silence their cell phones.

b. Pledge of Allegiance

All stood and pledged the flag.

c. Roll Call

Present were Commissioners Shawn Jinkerson, Anthony Siragusa, Town Councilor Tim May and Chairman Chuck Longton. Also present was WPCA Chief Operator/Superintendent Derek Albertson and Mayor Ronald McDaniel. Commissioner Brian Quinn was absent. A quorum was present.

d. Alterations to the Agenda -- *None*

e. To consider and act on a motion to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of February 3, 2020.

Motion by Commissioner May, seconded by Commissioner Siragusa to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of February 3, 2020. Discussion: none. Voice vote; 4-0, all in favor. Motion carried.

f. Communications pertaining specifically to matters which concern the Commission.

Chairman Longton reported on a communication he received from Mayor McDaniel clarifying the five (5) reasons for holding an executive session as there was discussion among commissioners as to protocol for the same. He stated the information came from the Town Attorney which he read into the record. [See C.G.S. Sec. 1-200 (6).] Commissioner Jinkerson said the information was attorney interpretation and not statute of which he had a copy and had given to Chairman Longton.

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

Chairman Longton asked three (3) times for remarks. Resident Ellen Desjardins of 513 Raymond Hill Road commented on the boards and commissions and how they are spending money. Commissioner Siragusa said that oversight was under the purview of the Town Council.

Resident Jeff Rogers of 146 Forsyth Road thanked the Commission for clarification regarding the executive session specifying the word “potential” stating it was not synonymous with the State statute. He then referenced Agenda Item M.1 under Old Business stating on February 26, 2020,

the State Police did not go forward with the criminal charge; spoke of past practice that he described as unethical, a violation of the code of ethics, regarding the formal complaint he filed last year regarding alleged past criminal activity in the Department that resulted in an audit. Resident Rogers exceeded the three-minute time limit for remarks and continued with them characterizing his personal viewpoint of Department personnel and/or those associated with it to completion, ignoring requests by Chairman Longton to cease.

Attorney Michael Satti, attorney for Accountant Benway, remarked on the closure of the criminal matter associated with the Department stating it did not go to court as it did not meet the minimal standard of probable cause and expounded on the same. *[Commissioner Jinkerson left the meeting at 6:15 p.m. and returned at 6:21 p.m.]* He commented on the removal of records that he described as a crime with respect to the law and invited all to sit and speak with Accountant Benway concerning the matter.

Resident Dawn Jinkerson of 314 Chesterfield Road remarked on the climate of the Commission and its dislike for Resident Rogers and asked Mayor McDaniel to please do what is right. *[Commissioner Jinkerson, Resident D. Jinkerson, and Attorney Satti then engaged in a brief shouting match noted on record.]*

h. Executive Session

1. To consider and Act on a Motion to enter into executive session for the purpose to discuss potential litigation.

Chairman Longton stated the Commission would not be entering executive session as the person who requested it has chosen to make comments publicly in open session. Commissioner May, who requested the executive session, referred to comments made at the last Commission meeting—comments he said had no part on record. He stated that discussion should focus on items on the agenda and said there is a way to discuss things.

i. Report from Operations

WPCA Chief Plant Operator/Superintendent Albertson submitted an Operations Report for February 2020 as follows:

1.0 Compliance/Process

1.1 Water Pollution Control Facility

The removal efficiencies for both Total Suspended Solids (TSS) and Biochemical Oxygen (BOD) were 97%. Overall (as compared to January 2020) effluent quality has improved. Approximately 65 lbs/day of Total Nitrogen were discharged in the treated effluent- below the CTDEEP WPCF general permit limit (118 lbs/day). Effective waste sludge thickening (5% solids) resulted in (overall) fewer truck hauls for the fiscal year. Chemical addition (i.e., polymer, chlorine) was applied to the SBRs for process control when necessary.

The new permit was received on February 10 (effective November 1, 2019). The NPDES (federal) permit did not have changes to effluent controls or sampling requirements.

The general permit for nitrogen loading (in the effluent) allows for credit earnings (proposed at \$6.50 per credit). The WPCF is expected to sell credits for the past year and earn monies. A formal CTDEEP earning statement will be issued in mid-March.

Laura Marcolini & Associates were hired to examine nutrient deficiencies present in the influent. The lack of Phosphorous has caused poor settling in the process tanks. A test run for phosphoric acid (addition to the influent) was conducted followed by a qualitative and quantitative analysis to confirm the deficiency. An engineering report will be submitted to the CTDEEP.

The existing 3-year contract (with D W Transport & Leasing) will expire in March 2020. The new contract was reviewed by the Town Attorney (Richard Cody, Esquire of Suisman Shapiro). Two chemical suppliers were met in an attempt to find lower costs for sludge polymer used at the WPCF. Jar testing will commence next month.

A review of connection fees schedules as indicated in the 2009 regulations and 2018 update. The fee update appears to have removed the user benefit fee associated with connection to the Town sewers. A review of nearby town connection fees will be researched, and counsel consulted. The WPCA Engineer (Wright-Pierce) was met on February 21 about the interpretation of the 2018 update, and the Mayor and the Chairman were met on February 25 to discuss the connection fee schedule. It is expected that the portion of the regulations detailing sewer fees will be amended.

Mr. Sten Spinella, Staff Writer of *The New London Day* visited the plant for a walk-through on February 20. Mr. Spinella had previously made a FOI request for credit card billing receipts and authored an article on February 10. An article also appeared in the February 22 paper.

1.2 Water Supply

The water supply met required standards. Groton Utilities gave public notice on February 25 on their intention to raise their rates following a 3-year schedule, including to the Town of Montville Water Supply.

2.0 Staff

2.1 Staff

No reports of employee injury/accidents this month. No union grievances were received. Negotiations for the two AFSCME unions will soon begin. Maureen Benway announced her retirement, effective March 6. Internal posting for *Accountant I* position begun on February 27.

The Superintendent received notice that the abstract submission (cross-country project) has been accepted by the *New York Rural Water Association Annual Technical Training Workshop &*

Exhibition. The presentation has been scheduled for May 19, 2020 9:15-10:15 am at the Lake Placid Conference Center.

2.2 Training

The WPCA staff has the option of conducting online training (IDEXX lab equipment training/WEF water/wastewater training) for their annual requirement for teaching credit hours (TCHs) necessary to maintain their (CTDPH/CTDEEP) water/wastewater certifications. The option is cost-effective.

The Superintendent has been monitoring information provided by the Water Environment Federation (WEF) for the novel coronavirus and how to protect the workforce. OSHA reports that current disinfection techniques will prove adequate to prevent transmission.

March 23 is the UN *World Water Day* with the theme of how water demand is changing due to climate change.

3.0 Equipment

Please see the January 2020 engineering summary table for information about WPCA projects.

3.1 WPCF

The old crane truck will be given to Public Works. The new crane truck will be delivered to the WPCF in March.

The septic receiving station reader failed. The associated SD card was extracted and replaced. Fortunately, the septage receiving information could be removed from the damaged card for the January billing.

Two HMI units were improved with new SCADA software installation on February 10, 11 and 12. The new units are larger (28-inch screen) with better graphics with multi-output screens for process control.

Rand-Whitney had a one day shut down on February 12. The opportunity was used to clean the chlorine contact chamber.

An agreement was reviewed for Atlas Copco to supply a replacement blower (HSI Blower No. 7). A discussion will be provided at the WPCA meeting.

3.2 Collection System

Approximately 3,500 linear feet of cleaning and CCTV inspection have been completed within the sewer collection system for the fiscal year 2020.

A new radio detection transmitter will be purchased for line locating. The new unit is much more accurate as compared to the older unit.

4.0 Projects

Please see the January 2020 engineering summary table for information about WPCA projects.

Engie representatives were met onsite on February 13 to explore the potential for solar energy usage at the WPCF.

GreenCorp’s Bob Kenyon (safety consultant) completed his annual safety inspection on February 14 and was met on February 24 to discuss the SPCC, SWPPP, BBP, Hoist Inspections and general health and safety for the workforce.

An Eversource energy (efficiency) representative was met on February 18 to discuss grants available for the air blower replacement proposed for the CIP FY 2021.

Jeff Saltus of CONN-OSHA had conducted an inspection of the plant in November (specific to improving the *Town of Montville WPCA Permit-Required Confined Space Program*). A complete review of all working spaces was completed to identify all “confined spaces”. All spaces now have appropriate signage. Additional documentation and training will be conducted to enhance safety protocols.

The fuel cell construction project began on January 21 with delivery of the unit to be on February 28. A GPR survey will be conducted for the driveway to confirm utility location(s). The required energy project requires approval by the Connecticut Siting Council which is taking longer than the initial estimate. Due to the delay, the delivery of the 460kW fuel cell has been moved from February 28 to March 27.

6.0 Development

Construction work will soon be completed for the Oxoboxo Loft (former Faria property) for the residential development (77-unit apartment complex). Information about water and sewer connection has been provided to the WPCA.

A *Lindo Construction, LLC* residential development plan/report for at 90 Maple Avenue (approximately 20-acre parcel) was received. The WPCA Engineer (Wright-Pierce) met with the developer to confirm appropriate connection configurations. Information about water and sewer connection has been provided to the WPCA.

A request has been made to break up the connection fees per the development schedule.

As stipulated in the agreement, Rand-Whitney has been made aware of proposed sewer connections.

7.0 Finances

7.1 Town Accountant Review

Please see the January 2020 budget sheets for financial information about the WPCA.

The 2021 Fiscal Year budget for the WPCA will be presented in the April 2020 meeting. The budget will include a new CIP plan specific to that fiscal year. The WPCA Engineer (Woodard & Curran) was met on February 25 to review proposed projects.

Chief Operator/Superintendent Albertson summarized his report and stated operations have improved. Commissioner Siragusa commented on not having received advance notice about the employee retiring and asked if the water budget had been revised to show the loss in revenue that he said should be addressed immediately. Mayor McDaniel said the accounts would be reviewed at the end of the fiscal year and transfers made as needed. Commissioner Siragusa also asked why there was not an overtime line item in the sewer budget, but Chief Plant Operator/Superintendent Albertson said “yes” it was included. Also, Commissioner Siragusa spoke about a Department truck that is dry rotted and Chief Plant Operator/Superintendent Albertson said he would look at it.

j. Report from Administration Division

WPCA Chief Plant Operator/Superintendent reported on the reduced nitrogen in affluent that will make money on the sale of the same and added that DW Transport would continue to be the sludge hauler. As to the coronavirus, he said there was no direct threat for wastewater plants. He also reported there were no accidents and no union grievances stating contracts are moving forward. Chief Plant Operator/Superintendent Albertson spoke about the posting for Accountant Benway’s position stating it was a pleasure working with her and thanked her for her service to the Town since 2008. Commissioner Siragusa asked about the engineering cost for the right-a-way and he intended to blow out the manhole. Chief Plant Operator/Superintendent said the engineering cost was \$30,000 and said he would investigate making more room in reference to the manhole.

k. Report from Mayor

Mayor McDaniel reported Accountant Benway gave two (2) weeks’ notice and said her position was posted within the Department and thereafter posted with the public. He said Chief Plant Operator/Superintendent Albertson, Accountant Benway, and he were making sure accounts run smoothly. He spoke about the fuel cell project that was pushed off but may be approved; the gas line to the Plant, and development of a credit card policy given to Finance Director Hart to review for comments. Mayor McDaniel also reported he met with Chief Plant Operator/Superintendent Albertson regarding the connection issue; union contracts are being negotiated; the collection operator job descriptions were approved by TARP and will be on the Town Council agenda for approval next month. Commissioner Jinkerson asked if the job descriptions and an additional memorandum of understanding that he said must be reviewed for implementation.

l. Report from Engineers

Chief Operator/Superintendent Albertson reported a summary table of engineering projects was in Dropbox and said the shaded items have been completed. He also said the majority of the CIP has

been completed; some work has been done as well as manholes at Pheasant Hill; working on the collection system at Montville Manor that is in the worst condition; and an evaluation for solar energy is being considered. Commissioner Siragusa said he thought tallies for camera work on the collection system would be tracked and he asked that it be added to the agenda. Chief Plant Operator/Superintendent Albertson reported 3500 linear feet has been camaraed and cleaned for this calendar year and is well in compliance.

m. Old Business

1. Update on Audit Subcommittee: WPCA member discussion upon review of line item document with commissioner/superintendent comments and definition of non-operational expenses.

Chairman Longton stated Mayor McDaniel would send out the proposed credit card policy. Mayor McDaniel said he wanted the Town policy to mirror that of the WPCA. Chief Plant Operator/Superintendent Albertson said there was a memo in Dropbox regarding General Accepted Accounting Practices (GAAP) and said he could not find a non-operational policy concerning the Plant. Commissioner Jinkerson spoke on the 43 items of concern listed on the Audit and said the Subcommittee could only identify non-operational items and had asked Mayor McDaniel and Chief Plant Operator/Superintendent to review the Audit recommendations. Chairman Longton asked for thoughts on the Subcommittee's findings stating he hoped to resolve it next month. Commissioner Jinkerson said the Subcommittee's job was done as it reported on what was not in its purview but said the GAAP policy left a loophole and did not cover oversight. Mayor McDaniel spoke on current WPCA practices in use: authorization on purchases exceeding \$5,000; receipts required for all purchases; and two-party checks with the Finance Director, Chief Plant Operator/Superintendent, or the Mayor as authorized signatories. He said neither the Town nor WPCA had previous policy regarding credit card use and said once he handled it misuse was reduced by 90%. Chairman Longton agreed to narrow down and wordsmith the recommendations for proper enforcement of GAAP and credit card policies and create a draft motion for the same. All of this information he will email to the Commission for review for resolution of the matter at next month's meeting.

2. Maple Avenue Residential Development: (Phased) Sewer Connection Fee Schedule.

Chief Plant Operator/Superintendent Albertson discussed connection fees regarding the 16-building Maple Avenue project based on information obtained from 2009, edits as of August 2018, and a special meeting of March 19, 1997. He said the development has an 8-inch water line and connection fees for it would be \$175,000 for sewer and \$88,000 for water. The proposal is for costs to be paid one building at a time for the 16-building project.

Motion by Commissioner Siragusa; seconded by Commissioner Jinkerson to phase in the connection fees for the Maple Avenue Residential Development project on a building by building basis payable upon receipt of the Certificate of Occupancy for the first unit in each building.

Discussion: Attorney Harry Heller, attorney for the developer, stated upfront project costs were not financeable and spoke for support of the local economy for development purposes. He also said a schedule should be developed as not all buildings would be the same size or have the same number of units thus, he proposed a schedule on a prorated basis. Commissioner May said he wanted a fee schedule for each building given potential changes to project timelines and scope. Chief Plant Operator/Superintendent Albertson confirmed precedent for an amortized, phased payment schedule. Roll Call vote: *In favor:* Commissioners Jinkerson, May, Siragusa, and Chairman Longton. *Opposed:* none. Vote, 4-0, motion carried. May asked that the motion be written out and given to the Commission for reference.

3. Status of Job Opening for Collections System Operator(s).

Chief Plant Operator/Superintendent Albertson stated the job description for system operator(s) was approved by TARP and would move on to the Town Council for approval as stated earlier by Mayor McDaniel.

4. Discussion of Public Emergency System (Everbridge) for Sewer and Water Supply ratepayer notification.

Chief Plant Operator/Superintendent Albertson referenced the warning system used by SCWA as reported by Commission Siragusa at the last meeting. He said the Everbridge Public Emergency System has a reverse 911 system that requires participants to be on a list. He also said Fire Marshal Bundy was working to expand the system to ratepayers or whether the system handle another group on an opt-in based said Mayor McDaniel. Chief Plant Operator/Superintendent Albertson said a separate list was required for water users and said he would report back to the Commission on it. Mayor McDaniel responded to Chairman Longton there was no target date as there was not staff yet at the plant to handle it.

n. New Business

1. Update of 2020 Capital Improvement Projects.

Chief Plant Operator/Superintendent Albertson said six (6) of the nine (9) CIP projects were fully or partially completed equaling 67%.

2. Discussion of Atlas Copco blower “try to buy” agreement.

Chief Plant Operator/Superintendent Albertson reported the blower purchased from HSI is six (6) years old and has been problematic. Atlas, who bought out HIS, has offered the WPCA a blower to try for six (6) months for free. If purchased, the blower would cost \$92,000 but the \$17,000 installation fee would be waived. Chief Plant Operator/Superintendent Albertson said the six (6) other blowers are made by Spenser and are more than 25 years but are workhorses.

3. Discussion of updating Sewer Regulations to clarify connection fee costs.

Chief Plant Operator/Superintendent Albertson spoke about the change made in 2019 regarding edits from August 2018 to the connection fee that appeared to remove the sewer fee benefit. Commissioner Siragusa explained the fee was dropped because the bond was paid in full. Commissioner May said the WPCA had engineering services and to seek professional help as needed and spoke to having reserve the funds on hand would allow eligibility for grants and for future repairs. Expansion for the future was discussed.

4. Estimated connection costs for Oxoboxo Lofts.

Chief Plant Operator/Superintendent said August 2019 sewer changes will apply fees to the connection fees for this project. He said there are two (2) 2-inch water meters that will cost \$40,000 and the connection already installed at a cost of \$24,000 for the 72-unit project.

5. Estimated connection costs for proposed Maple Avenue development.

This item was discussed earlier in the meeting under Agenda Item M.2.

o. Reports/referrals from Planning & Zoning

Commissioner Siragusa said he nothing to report. Chief Plant Operator/Superintendent Albertson reported the resident at 111 Woodland Drive may appeal their taxes concerning the easement to the property behind the WPCA pump station.

p. Payment of Bills -- None

II. Water Commission

a. Report from Engineers

Chief Plant Operator/Superintendent reported inspection will begin on backflow preventer units for various locations in Town. He also said Groton on February 25 published its intended that would increase Town supply rates by 3-year rate. Mayor McDaniel said he disagreed with it as the Town was under a wholesale rate and Groton failed to give them public notice 60 days prior. The new rate is to begin October 1, but Chief Plant Operator/Superintendent said he had a call in to Groton, but Mayor McDaniel agreed to make the call.

b. Old Business

1. Maple Avenue Residential Development: (Phased) Water Connection Fee Schedule

Chief Plant Operator/Superintendent Albertson spoke of breaking up the fee schedule for sewer that was approved by a motion of the Commission.

c. New Business

1. Discussion of Water Regulations to clarify connection fee costs.

Chief Plant Operator/Superintendent Albertson spoke of the gallons of water used by various major properties in Town and the need to have controls in place. He said the Town has the capacity to purchase 1.96 gallons from Groton and said the Town has a daily cushion of \$500,00. He explained that if a big development can draw the cushion via an 8-inch pipe it could use up water reserves. Chief Plant Operator/Superintendent proposed getting professionals involved to review the issue. Commissioner Siragusa spoke of the potential use by the data centers of water for cooling purposes and said the Town needs to be ready. Commissioner May suggested looking at a design for water storage.

d. Remarks from the Public

Chairman Longton asked three (3) times for remarks. _____ of _____ federal manhole covers at the Kitemaug Road intersection and another coated with black top at Ashford Road.

e. Remarks from Commission Members

Commissioner Siragusa asked that the Commission be notified when things occur at the Plant. Commissioner May added that emails be sent to the Commission regarding major issues. Commissioner Jinkerson said the Chief Plant Operator/Supervisor Albertson had sent emails on the weekend. He also apologized to the Mayor, Commissioners, the audience, and the Chair for acting inappropriately earlier in the meeting. He said he would conduct himself more professionally but said his passion and frustration overwhelmed him and spoke of “cleaning up backdoor stuff going on in commissions.” Chief Plant Operator/Superintendent Albertson told a story about Accountant Benway and a failed SD card and praised her ability to problem solve and manipulate data.

f. Adjournment

Motion made by Commissioner Siragusa, seconded by Commissioner Jinkerson to adjourn the meeting at 7:45 p.m. Discussion, none. Voice vote; 4-0, all in favor. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by,

Gloria J. Gathers
Recording Secretary, Town of Montville

AN AUDIO RECORD IS AVAILABLE ON THE TOWN WEBSITE.