

Montville Water and Sewer Commission
Regular Meeting Minutes via Conference Call/Video Conferencing
April 6, 2020 – 6:00 p.m.
Montville Town Hall – Town Council Chambers

**For recording purposes, the first fifteen minutes of the meeting were not recorded due to technical difficulties. **

1. Water and Sewer Commission

a. Call to Order

Chairman Longton called the regular meeting of the Water and Sewer Commission to order at 6:02 p.m.

b. Pledge of Allegiance

All stood and pledged the flag.

c. Roll Call

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

As a matter of record, two (2) members of the public, Kevin Loiler and Sten were present on the teleconference.

d. Alterations to the Agenda

Motion by Commissioner May; seconded by Commissioner Quinn to change Agenda, Item I.1.8-- *To consider and act on a motion to address the results of the 2019 Forensic Audit.* Discussion: none. Voice Vote, 4-0, all in favor. Motion carried.

Motion by Commissioner May; seconded by Commissioner Quinn to remove Agenda, Item I.L.2. Discussion: Commissioners spoke of the appropriateness for discussion of the same. Voice vote, 3-1 (opposed by Commission Siragusa). Motion carried.

Note: Chairman Longton stated all votes during the meeting would be Roll Call votes for clarification of the same by Recording/Minutes Secretary, G. Gathers.

e. To consider and act on a motion to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of March 2, 2020.

Motion by Commissioner May, seconded by Commissioner Siragusa to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of March 2, 2020. Discussion: none. Roll Call vote: *In favor:* Commissioners May Longton, Quinn, Siragusa. *Opposed:* none. Vote, 4-0, all in favor. Motion carried.

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

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

Chairman Longton asked three (3) times for remarks. He asked if there were other members of the public other than K. Loiler who wished to remark. There were none.

h. Report from Operations

Superintendent Albertson submitted an Operations Report for March 2020 as follows:

Together, we are facing a truly unprecedented situation, affecting every aspect of our work to supply water and sewerage to the Town of Montville. In the face of this epidemic, we remain steadfastly committed to this mission. Society does not function without access to clean water, without safe sanitation services to remove waste and containments, and without operational water treatment plants, and operational water infrastructure.

1.0 Compliance/Process

1.1 Water Pollution Control Facility

Overall effluent quality has continued to improve with effluent concentrations below state and federal action levels. On March 17, the Mohegan Sun Casino reduced their operation significantly causing a 75% reduction in their effluent to the WPCF causing an overall 25% reduction in influent. Nutrient (Nitrogen, Phosphorous) deficiencies were avoided by amending the influent stream with phosphoric acid and ammonia hydroxide starting March 24.

Approximately 65 lbs/day of Total Nitrogen were discharged in the treated effluent--below the CTDEEP WPCF general permit limit. Per federal permit, chlorine addition to the effluent can begin as early as April 15th.

The CTDEEP 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.

Effective waste sludge thickening (5% solids) resulted in (overall) fewer truck hauls for the fiscal year. The Superintendent coordinated a sludge disposal agreement extension from the Metropolitan District Commission on March 5. The agreement expires on August 31, 2020. The 20219 USEPA Biosolids Annual Report was submitted (via NetDMR) on March 5.

The semi-annual review of records for the general permit for stormwater was completed with the annual monitoring report submitted to the CTDEEP. Stormwater control mechanisms (e.g., silt fencing, hay bales) were placed to prevent erosion in the areas affected by the fuel cell project.

The Superintendent conducted 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 making a significant drop in revenue(s) in the event of a sewer connection. 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. Attorney Richard Cody (Town Attorney) and Mariusz Jedrychowski (Wright-Pierce, Town Engineer) were met on March 10 about amending the connection fee schedule to include the user benefit fee. A survey of area municipalities' regulations/fees was conducted prior to formation of the new fee schedule.

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. The Town Engineer (Wright-Pierce) was met to set new rates for FY 2022. Additionally, edits to the existing water regulations were discussed to provide control for new water connections.

2.0 Staff

2.1 Staff

No reports of employee injury/accidents this month. No union grievances were received. The AFSCME, Local 1303-341 of Council #4 contract was approved by the Town Council on March 9. Negotiations for the second AFSCME union will soon begin. Maureen Benway announced her retirement, effective March 6. External posting for *Accountant I* position begun on March 6. Signing ability and other access were discontinued relative to the WPCA accounts. The former accountant's workstation was "scrubbed" by the WPCA computer contractor with remote access cancelled. All emails are forwarded by the Town I.T. Director. Administrative rights to the MUNIS software were confirmed with a budget review completed.

On January 30, 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the outbreak of the COVID-19 to be a public health emergency of international concern. The Governor placed the State in a *State of Emergency* related to the above-referenced illness on March 11. The Mayor placed the

Town in a local civil preparedness emergency. The Governor has placed some limitations regarding utility fees. Mutual aid agreements were reviewed with local towns and organizations. Time and expenses related to this COVID-19 event are being tracked; the state of emergency allows the Town to work in and accept help from other jurisdictions. The initial Emergency Operations Center meeting was on March 18.

None of the current Montville WPCF team has indicated symptoms. A two-phase contingency plan is in place to respond to the crisis, and it has been posted on the Town and WPCA website. The Superintendent has been monitoring information provided by the State as well as professional organizations regarding the novel coronavirus and how to protect the workforce. OSHA reports that current disinfection techniques will prove adequate to prevent transmission. Training and information exchanges are performed daily. Additional control measures were made based on a review of WPCF's *Facilities Plan* (URS, 2011) and *Emergency Action Plan* (GreenCorp, 2019) as well as the Water Supply Plan including the Water Conservation Plan and the Emergency Contingency Plan (Milone & MacBroom, 2015).

Currently, the COVID-19 virus has NOT been detected in drinking water, and there is no evidence that the virus can be spread to humans through water. The risk of transmission from the feces of an infected person is also unknown but is expected to be low based on previous outbreaks of related coronaviruses. Information about the COVID-19 virus was posted to the WPCA website, including specific information about what not to flush down toilets; sewer backups have become a problem in surrounding areas.

Each year, March 23 is the UN *World Water Day* with the theme of how water demand is changing due to climate change. The American Water Works Association will celebrate *Drinking Water Week* on May 3 to 9. Online classes and training will be available.

2.2 Training

The WPCA staff has begun training with online classes (IDEXX lab equipment training/WEF water/wastewater training) for their annual requirement. The staff has been given classroom course schedules from the CTDEEP and various professional organizations.

Jon Lilly and Kevin Loiler attended back-flow prevention training (for the water supply) on March 10 and 11 and 12 with certification testing.

The Chairman and the Superintendent will attend FOIC and CCM sponsored training in April and May.

GreenCorp's Bob Kenyon (WPCA Safety Consultant) was met on March 10 to discuss the Confined Spaces, SPCC, SWPPP, Blood Borne Pathogens, and general health and safety for the workforce. Hoist Inspections were completed and stamped on March 12.

George Tamaro, Sr. of the Travelers Insurance Company (Town Insurance Carrier) was met on March 5 to review safety programs associated with the WPCF. Ear protection policies will be examined (Hearing Conservation Program, GreenCorp, 2014) as part of the review with testing in the blower room and adjacent to lawn maintenance equipment (two loudest instances).

3.0 Equipment

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

3.1 WPCF

The new crane truck was received on March 11. The retired crane truck will be given to Public Works. Annual crane/hoist inspections were completed on March 12. New tires were placed on the black sedan.

Two HMI units were improved with new SCADA software installation in February with testing completed in March. The new units are larger (28-inch screen) with better graphics with multi-output screens for process control.

The influent and effluent meters will be calibrated (as required by federal permit) in April.

An agreement was completed for Atlas Copco to supply a replacement blower (HSI Blower No. 7). The blower should be delivered in late April.

Connecticut Scrap and DW Transport both received computer virus infections (ransom ware) which interfered with transactions.

3.2 Collection System

As part of the FOG program, grease was removed from the Indian Hill, Paint Brush, Pequot, Chesterfield, D'Amato I, D'Amato II, Holly Hill, Messapeag, Orchard and Partridge Hollow Pump Stations on March 9 and 10 and 11. Restaurant inspections (Class III and IV Food Establishments) for AGRUs were completed the previous week as part of the general permit compliance.

Manholes noted for improvement (during last meeting) included two along Route 32, including MH-65 (at Kitemaug Road) and MH-70 (at Raymond Hill Road). These two along with 15 others (Route 163, Chesterfield Road, and Kitemaug Road will be repaired in the Spring/Summer.

On March 9, 1,100 linear feet of sewer were cleaned and inspected along Virginia Drive (total 3,500 linear feet YTD of cleaning and CCTV inspection completed within the sewer collection system for the fiscal year 2020). Some solids buildup was noted, but no pipe integrity problems were encountered.

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 2020 engineering summary table for information about WPCA projects: also, the FY 2021 Capital Improvement memorandum.

On March 10, the Connecticut Siting Council issued direction to VFS, LLC regarding cessation of construction activities for the fuel cell. In the correspondence, the State requested that all work stop until the council renders a final decision. VFS, LLC has responded, and the fuel cell delivery is expected to be on June 1. Natural gas line installation has been ongoing.

An Eversource energy (efficiency) representative was met on March 8 to discuss grants available for the air blower replacement proposed for the CIP FY 2021.

A geotechnical report was reviewed as part of the potential solar panel placement at the site by Engie. The Engie solar project was slated to be considered for the ZREC program this year but with the Covi19 issues it might not be realistic so it will be reviewed next season.

The CTDEEP approved a change order for the recycle water pump replacement project (\$228,296) on March 16.

The emergency services contract will be renewed with the existing contractor in April to extend for another year.

As part of the CMOM activities within the collections system, in 2019 6,800 linear feet (1.29 miles) and in 2020 4,000 linear feet (0.76 miles) of sewer pipe has been cleaned and inspected. The majority of the inspections were in The Manor (Subsystem 2) which is considered a priority for I/I.

Formal notification to three landowners (regarding Sewer Easements for the cross-country clearing project) was completed in March after preparation by Attorney Matt Willis (Halloran Sage) with review by the Town Engineer (Wright-Pierce).

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. Information about water and sewer connection has been provided to the WPCA. Fort Shantock Motors has planned to expand to 2066 Route 32 (former bank building). A review of plans was conducted on March 13 with Ed Wenke, PE. As stipulated in the agreement, Rand-Whitney has been made aware of proposed sewer connections.

The former WestRock facility (125 Depot Road) has been sold as of March 18. There is proposed commercial development for that parcel following some demolition of existing structures.

7.0 Finances

7.1 Town Accountant Review

Please see the March 2020 budget sheets for financial information about the WPCA WS and WPCF.

The 2021 Fiscal Year budget for the WPCA has been provided. A conservative approach for the coming year is based on the goal of wrapping up FY2020 projects and the expected loss of revenue stream due to the pandemic. The budget will include a new CIP plan (1st of 5-year CIP) specific to this coming fiscal year. A CIP specific memo is included. The sewer budget will be less than last year, and the water budget will be similar to last year's. Some of the existing capital improvement projects will roll over into the next fiscal year. Additionally, several "grant" projects will be ongoing.

As indicated ledger values will be adjusted in anticipation of balancing the year end (FY 2020) budget which ends on June 30.

Superintendent Albertson summarized his monthly report and spoke of the decrease in effluent concentration levels and the April 15 date for the addition of disinfectant.

i. Report from Administration Division

Commissioner Siragusa asked a question regarding the right-away regarding the cross-country sewer line. Chairman Longton stated the topic would be discussed under Agenda, Item I. 1.9.

j. Report from Mayor

Mayor McDaniel reported on reviewing resumes for the accountant position and said he and Superintendent Albertson would narrow them down for eventual interviews. A temporary accountant will be hired. Also, due to the pandemic fees will be reviewed for water and sewer customers.

k. Report from Engineers

Superintendent Albertson reporting having had a successful year for sludge removal, 43% under the limit that will equate to money back from the State. He also stated he updated the Engineer Summary Table included in the meeting packet.

l. Old Business

1. Manhole Covers.

Superintendent Albertson reported manhole covers requiring repair would be reviewed and schedule set for repair of them.

2. Tires.

This item was removed from the agenda.

3. XC Project.

Superintendent Albertson reported the Town Attorneys had mailed three (3) sewer modification letters regarding the project and said they must be returned before work can begin. To date, there has been no response.

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

Superintendent Albertson reported the job descriptions were approved by the Town Council and the process will move forward.

5. Update of Public Emergency System (Everbridge) for Sewer and Water Supply ratepayer notification.

Superintendent Albertson reported the State has deemed the Everbridge system to not be the best way to notify users hence the reason he developed the WPCA COVID-19 Contingency Plan (2020). He said he spoke with Fire Marshal Bundy regarding the plan and he agreed with it. The Plan has been posted to the Town website.

6. CMOM Update.

Superintendent Albertson reported 4600 linear feet of sewer lines have been cleaned and flushed to date in addition to 11 pump stations that were cleaned and pumped.

7. Sewer Regulation Changes.

Superintendent Albertson reported he met with Attorney Cody and Wright-Pierce concerning reinstating the sewer user benefit fee.

8. Credit Card Policy.

To consider and act on a motion to address the results of the 2019 Forensic Audit.
Motion by Commissioner Siragusa; seconded by Commissioner Quinn. Discussion: Chairman Longton explained his use of the word “administration” when crafting the policy stating it could apply to Superintendent Albertson who is now handling the position or for use later by a superintendent and an administrator. Commissioner Siragusa also objected to having food at meetings. Commissioner May explained meals were typically for crew working extended emergency or long hours. Mayor McDaniel said a working lunch would require having a list of attendees and said under collective bargaining members supply their own meal and are then reimbursed. Commissioners then discussed the credit policy crafted by Mayor McDaniel for use by the Town and the WPCA that has stalled and about the redundancy of having two (2) policies. Mayor McDaniel explained adopting a subsequent policy would supersede an existing one. Without a current policy, Commissioner May said when the Town adopts its policy the WPCA policy could be addressed for ambiguity. The Town policy will address Item 5 of the WPCA credit card policy. Roll Call vote: *In favor:* Commissioners Longton, May, Quinn, and Siragusa. *Opposed:* none. Vote, 4-0. Motion carried.

Commissioner May asked whether the policy end the audit issues. Chairman Longton said the policy did not include items under the purview of the Town.

9. Right-of-way widening for the cross-country sewer line – Tony Siragusa.

Commissioner Siragusa spoke of an expansion of 40 feet with triangular ends to the right-of-way. Superintendent Albertson said the engineers and attorneys said widening the areas adjacent to the manholes would expanding into existing residential properties that might require a temporary easement. Commissioner Siragusa spoke of solving a problem when found, not waiting.

Motion by Commissioner Siragusa to the right-of-way of the manholes for the cross-country sewer line: There was not a second. The motion failed.

10. Sewer scoping monthly status – Tony Siragusa.

Commissioner Siragusa asked why status of this project has not appeared under Old Business stating he was told for three (3) months that it would. Superintendent Albertson provided the statistics for the 2019 for the clean/scoping of the sewer lines (6,800 linear feet); 2020 (4,600 linear feet) to date. He also reported he has set up maps showing work done to assist the DEEP including the 11 pump stations. Commissioner May commented on the substantial report prepared by Superintendent Albertson that describes all activities and tasks and said the information request by Commissioner Siragusa was better suited for reporting in the monthly report. Commissioner Siragusa stated he only wanted to see what was done monthly and Commissioner Quinn countered that the personal stuff be left out.

m. New Business

1. To consider and act on a motion the Capital Improvement Plan Sewer Plan for the fiscal year 2020-2021 in the amount of \$339,840.00 (Three Hundred Thirty-Nine Thousand Eight Hundred and Forty Dollars) as included in the proposed sewer budget.

THE TOWN OF MONTVILLE WATER AND SEWER COMMISSION HEREBY RESOLVES to approve the Capital Improvement Plan Sewer Plan for the fiscal year 2020-2021 in the amount of \$339,840.00 (Three Hundred Thirty-Nine Thousand Eight Hundred and Forty Dollars) as included in the proposed sewer budget.

Motion – Discussion – Roll Call

Motion proposed and read into the record by Commissioner May; seconded by Commissioner Quinn. Discussion: Commissioner May said he reviewed the CIP that he said was well-thought out and included maintenance items. Roll Call vote: *In favor:* Commissioners Longton, May, Quinn, and Siragusa. *Opposed:* none. Vote, 4-0. Motion carried.

2. To consider and act on the Sewer budget for fiscal year 2020-2021 in the amount of \$4,403,840.00 (Four Million Four Hundred Three Thousand Eight Hundred Forty Dollars).

THE TOWN OF MONTVILLE WATER AND SEWER COMMISSION HEREBY RESOLVES to approve the Sewer budget for fiscal year 2020-2021 in the amount of \$4,403,840.00 (Four Million Four Hundred Three Thousand Eight Hundred Forty Dollars).

Motion – Discussion – Roll Call

Motion proposed and read into the record by Commissioner May; seconded by Commissioner Quinn. Discussion: Superintendent Albertson explained the budget was 17% more than last year and said water/sewer revenues were anticipated to drop by 20% given the pandemic and the scaling back of Rand-Whitney and the Mohegan Sun. Commissioner Siragusa asked if the administrator position was getting a raise. Mayor McDaniel explained the Superintendent was hired at a low, bargain rate but said once he successfully passed his probationary period his rate was increased. Commissioner Siragusa also asked how overtime was calculated and it was explained as being four (4) hours on Saturday and Sunday to process control operations and waste, as described by Superintendent Albertson. Commissioner May added that overtime of \$80,000 - \$100,000, a fair assumption, had occurred for 15 years. Commissioner May asked if more overtime was being used for pandemic issues and its reflection on the budget. Superintendent Albertson reported there had been three (3) non-pandemic related callouts and said he had met with property managers regarding flushable/treatable items. Roll Call vote: *In favor:* Commissioners Longton, May, Quinn, and Siragusa. *Opposed:* none. Vote, 4-0. Motion carried.

n. Covid-19 Response.

Superintendent Albertson reported the main concern within the plant was exposure due to virus and wastewater. He reported on the Covid-19 response at the plant that includes separation of crew and having the crew self-monitor for temperatures, etc. Superintendent Albertson again spoke of the posting of the response plan on the Town website and his continuing to review information from other state and federal sources.

o. Reports/referrals from Planning & Zoning -- *None*

p. Payment of Bills -- *None*

Superintendent Albertson said due to the transition by Accountant Benway that Diane Weston and the Finance Department have stepped up to fill the gap and he thanked them for their efforts.

II. Water Commission

a. Report from Engineers- -- *None*

b. Old Business

1. GU Rate Increases for October 2020.

Superintendent Albertson spoke about rate increase for water by Groton Utilities (GU). Precipitated by Commissioner Siragusa, the Commission discussed the increase to customers given the money given back to the Town, \$50,000, per discussion last year. Mayor McDaniel explained the hydrant flushing charge was offset by the WPC for its use of office space at the Town Hall, a feud between the Town and the WPCA. Superintendent Albertson said the \$50,000 was not included in last year's budget per the directive of the Commission. Commissioner Quinn said there was no water increase last year. The increase by GU equates to about 5%, a one-time increase, that was considered over a period of years. Mayor McDaniel spoke of the moratorium on shutoffs for utilities, property taxes, etc., as a result of the pandemic. Superintendent Albertson calculated the new GU rate increase if applied as approximately 3% a year.

c. New Business

1. To consider and act on a motion to approve the Capital Improvement Plan for Water for fiscal year 2020-2021 in the amount of \$128,800.00 (One Hundred Twenty-Eight Thousand Dollars) as proposed in the water budget.

SAR-NO. 2020-16 THE TOWN OF MONTVILLE WATER AND SEWER COMMISSION HEREBY RESOLVES to approve the Capital Improvement Plan for fiscal year 2020-2021 in the amount of \$128,800.00 (One Hundred Twenty-Eight Thousand Dollars) as proposed in the water budget. Motion – Discussion – Roll Call. The motion was read into the record by Commissioner May.

Motion by Commissioner Siragusa; seconded by Commissioner May. Discussion: Superintendent Albertson said the CIP would improve flows and pump stations. Roll Call vote: *In favor:* Commissioners Longton, May, Quinn, and Siragusa. *Opposed:* none. Vote, 4-0. Motion carried.

2. Water Budget.

To consider and act on a motion to approve the Water budget for fiscal year 2020-2021 in the amount of \$1,260,000.00 (One Million Two Hundred Sixty Thousand Dollars).

SAR-No. 2020-17 THE TOWN OF MONTVILLE WATER AND SEWER COMMISSION HEREBY RESOLVES to approve the Water budget for fiscal year 2020-2021 in the amount of \$1,260,000.00 (One Million Two Hundred Sixty Thousand Dollars). Motion – Discussion – Roll Call.

Motion proposed and read into the record by Commissioner May; seconded by Commissioner Siragusa. Discussion: Superintendent Albertson explained the 6% increase on water was reduced because of expenses. Commissioner Siragusa felt the increase should be lower given shuttering of the casino, restaurants, etc. Commissioner May allowed that the budget will cover use for next year with the unknown variable as to the when the pandemic will end. Mayor McDaniel said the budget should plan for what you expect to happen. Roll Call vote: *In favor:* Commissioners Longton, May, Quinn, and Siragusa. *Opposed:* none. Vote, 4-0. Motion carried.

d. Remarks from the Public

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

e. Remarks from Commission Members

Commissioner Siragusa remarked the sewer budget must be sent to the Town Council for information purposes and the water budget for approval. Commissioner May asked if the water budget would be considered via a virtual meeting of the Town Council and further said she was please with the emails from Chairman Longton and Superintendent Albertson who said they were working hard, and it shows. Commissioner Quinn thanked the Superintendent and said the Commission needs to understand its role i.e. picking things apart and/or micromanaging as voluntary stakeholders. Mayor McDaniel praised the good job of the Plant crew and D. Weston who he described as being pulled in all directions. He also spoke about a meeting for the fuel cell project attended by him and Superintendent Albertson that was delivered today. Superintendent Albertson said he was excited about the fuel cell that was placed on the pad and would be online within approximately two (2) weeks and reduce electric consumption by one-third to one-half. Chairman Longton thanked the people working on the front line and said he work to better the virtual meeting.

f. Adjournment

Motion made by Commissioner May, seconded by Commissioner Quinn to adjourn the meeting at 7:28 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.