

**LITCHFIELD WATER POLLUTION CONTROL AUTHORITY  
REGULAR MEETING  
Remote Meeting by Live Internet Video Stream and by Telephone  
April 8, 2021 ~ 7:30 p.m.**

**CALL TO ORDER:** Chairman David R. Wilson called the remote meeting to order at 7:37 p.m.

**ROLL CALL**

Present: William Buckley, Christian Bratina, Thomas Waterhouse, David R. Wilson, and Sky Post. Also present were Ted Donoghue, Plant Superintendent, Ann Combs, Recording Secretary, Raz Alexe, Public Works Director and First Selectman Denise Raap, who hosted the Zoom meeting. Members of the public were also present.

Absent: David Geiger, James Koser

**SEATING ALTERNATE:** Chairman Wilson appointed Sky Post to be seated for J. Koser as a regular voting member.

**MINUTES**

a) **3/11/21 Regular Meeting:** D. Wilson moved the approval of the 3/11/21 minutes to the next meeting.

**BUSINESS**

**1. Public Request and/or Comment:** Attorney Perley Grimes, representing the Concerned Litchfield Citizens, referred to the 3/9/21 DEEP letter from Jennifer Perry regarding water quality issues in relation to Bantam Lake, and the ensuing meeting on 3/29/21. Before making any decisions on the 3/9/21 letter, as well as any connection with WLSL, and before making any decisions from the meeting held 3/29/21 with reps of DEEP, T. Donoghue, D. Wilson and D. Raap, Mr. Grimes requested asked that they all read his letters of 3/22/21 and 4/7/21 very carefully. He does not believe there is merit to DEEP's Commissioner Perry's statements, both made in the 3/9/21 letter and at the meeting on 3/29/21, about the impact of WLSL effluent discharge on the water quality of Bantam Lake, and no action by the Litchfield WPCA should be taken until all his issues are addressed, questions answered and are resolved.

**2. Update of Torrington Inter-Municipal Agreement:** D. Wilson said Torrington is still working on its portion of the draft.

**3. Meeting with DEEP on 3/29/21:** In meetings with DEEP as part of the permit renewal process, they filed the notice of intent and have received a notice of sufficiency from DEEP (that it is not missing anything), and then the 3/9/21 letter was received by D. Raap, T. Donoghue and D. Wilson from Commissioner Jennifer Perry of DEEP. The 3/29/21 meeting followed with D. Raap, T. Donoghue and D. Wilson and five members from DEEP. They reviewed the letter, discussed concerns and agreed that we would submit some written questions for them to answer. DEEP indicated that we might be a solution to solving the Woodridge Lake issue, and noted that they have the authority to order us to accept WLSL sewage. One point stressed by Commissioner Perry was that WLSL had to be included in the upcoming Facility Plan, as they would not allow or pay for two separate ones. We also have a year to complete a Facility Plan, which will then be submitted to the DEEP for a review. T. Donoghue asked the Commissioners to review the draft letter of April 8 to DEEP and the questions included.

**4. 670 Northfield Road (old Grange building):** D. Wilson explained that this property was included in the study when we did the Northfield sewers and was in the service area where the DEEP wanted limited development that would increase population. The property was pulled out when the Grange argued that its

septic was adequate. If they want to connect, they will be billed as if they were part of the upgrade when it took place. They were never assessed and no caveat was filed on the land records; so while technically they are on the map, they are not currently in the sewer service area and not eligible to connect. However, should we agree that they are eligible, they would be assessed as if they were at the table when the project was done back in the mid '90s. The average assessment for a single family house was \$12,000. The sewer would have to go down to the intersection of Main Street and Knife Shop Road to join the system.

**5. Summer Intern:** S. Post said that this would be a beneficial program for public relations and education that would help young people, possibly making it easier to recruit in the future with good word of mouth. They have secured approval through the Union to bring in an intern. They would have to work out payment and devise a work plan. C. Bratina noted they cannot perform union work, but perhaps they could set up and load data on Hach Wims, CMOM, GIS, etc. The Union should approve the work list. T. Donoghue noted the plant is fully staffed now, and the candidate would have to be 18 years old. He also said he has an active concern with bringing someone in without everyone fully vaccinated against COVID-19. D. Wilson asked Sky and Ted to meet to fine tune and formalize the parameters of the job description, even if they hold off a year for vaccinations.

**6. Chief Plant Operator Position:** D. Wilson noted they have an employee, Jim Hill, who has obtained his Class 3 license and Ted would like to post the open Chief Plant Operator position internally. Ted said a lot of plants are looking for Class 3 Operators, and this employee has proved himself and is more than ready to move into this position. Ted warned that he did not want to risk losing Jim to another plant who could hire him and allow him to accrue in charge time as a supervisor, which he needs to eventually sit for his Class 4 exam. C. Bratina said Ted should develop a test to evaluate his qualifications as a standard and precedent. Ted said there is no stipulation for a test per the collective bargaining agreement if he is promoted internally and he did not recommend it. W. Buckley thought there should be some sort of evaluation or specific questions with the interview and asking the same questions for all. C. Bratina said a written test insures that the questions are the same for all, but Ted maintained that there is no provision for this per the Union of by the Town. Further, he has been training Mr. Hill for six years and believed D. Wilson could attest to his work ability. Ted stressed the importance of having a plan in place for any possible changes in staffing, or unforeseen circumstances, and by having a Chief Plant Operator his would ensure that this person could run the plant in Ted's absence. C. Bratina agreed that questions could be asked as long as Ted had them written down, asked all candidates the same questions and noted the answers. The Commission did not come to a decision about posting the Chief Plant Operator position internally, but instead directed Ted to develop the questions to be asked during Jim's interview.

**7. Selected RFQ Engineering Firm Interviewing Schedule/Letters/Committee:** D. Wilson said the interview date has changed to April 22<sup>nd</sup> at the Litchfield Firehouse. He reiterated the format of allowing two hours for each firm with three before lunch and two after. All Commissioners are welcome to come, but questions will be asked by W. Buckley, C. Bratina and him. Questions will then be asked by T. Donoghue and Raz Alexe. If there is still time, other Commissioners may ask questions.

**8. Discussion on Impact of Arethusa Dairy Significant Industrial User (SIU) Designation:** The application deadline for renewal of permit is April 29<sup>th</sup> if Arethusa is not granted an extension from DEEP. D. Wilson said he will review the application with them before it is submitted.

**9. Sewer Rate Study:** Sandy has gathered the water usage numbers from 2010 – 2020 including Torrington numbers as relates to Hunter's Chase. The data shows what percentage of people have meters and will be a good starting point for future discussions.

**10. 2021 Flow Monitoring Study:** Ted said they pulled the meters today, and he will get the Excel charts up next week. He expects to find valuable data that can be compared to the previous study.

**11. FY 2022 Operational Budget:** The debt service for Thomaston will be \$18,000, as we agreed to pay off the phosphorus upgrade in two payments of \$10,105 each. One was just made and the next will be in the next fiscal year. Outside lab testing was increased by almost 6%. He increased electricity based on Eversource's changes to the distribution rate charge. Adjustments were made in revenue per good recommendations by Sandy so that we are reflecting more of what we actually collect. Year to date actual shows we have surpassed what we had budgeted for. They are again looking at solar with an electrical cost of \$.10 or \$.11/KWH for everything the array could produce. **Motion:** W. Buckley moved to approve the budget for 2021/22. C. Bratina seconded for discussion, and said there is an issue with the audit numbers, as the actual expenditures do not agree with the audit. There are a lot of little errors that should be cleaned up. He said we will not need a rate hike in the foreseeable future until we get into construction. He also said in the future we should look at the capital projections for the next five years. Upon voting W. Buckley, S. Post and C. Bratina voted aye with reservations noted by C. Bratina. T. Waterhouse was no longer in the meeting so did not vote. Chairman Wilson said the motion carried and the budget will be submitted to be published with the rest of the budget.

**12. Collection System Work:** Ted presented and reviewed the new inspection report. The data has to be taken out of the app and put into this report so they can monitor and measure success. All the details are in the app, though, if they should want to gather more detail.

### **13. Plant Equipment Updates**

**a) UV System:** Ted reported the UV system is out to bid, with bids due at the end of the month. Ted has been getting questions from bidders that he deferred to C. Bratina. Ted said they have received the replacement parts; i.e., the bulbs and new power supply.

**b) Mechanical Bar Screen:** Ted said we have two proposals, but D. Wilson would like one more. Duberon quoted \$194,000. Ted suggested maybe holding off until we hire the engineering firm.

**14. Safety:** Ted said there was no training held and no accidents to report.

**15. Commissioner's Requests:** None

**16. Public Works / Treatment Plant Report:** Permit compliance has been maintained since the last report. Routine operations and maintenance work continues. For the month of February the total flow was 21.542 MG and the daily average flow was 0.695 MGD. We removed 78,000 gallons of sludge for final disposal during the month of March.

- We processed a total of 70,100 gallons of septage during the month of March, a 28% decrease over last March. YTD we are down 22%.
- For February effluent BOD removal percent was 98% and TSS removal percent was 97%. The minimal removal rates per our NPDES permit is 85%.
- The daily average of Total Nitrogen lbs. /day discharged into the Bantam River was 3.2 mg/ or 19 lbs. /day. Our daily limit is 24 lbs. /day.
- The daily average for Total Phosphorous discharged in the Bantam River was 1.2 mg/l. The monthly seasonal average, between May to October, cannot exceed 3.7 mg/l or 9.97 lbs. /day.
- On 3/14/21 the generator run alarm sounded at 2:26 AM, Ted responded and the plant had no power, as the transfer switch did not activate. The plant had line power so Ted manually switched the transfer switch and went back to line power. Plant had no power for about 40 minutes and we reported it as a mechanical failure with the CT DEEP. Treatment was not impacted. They ran tests on it, and will have follow-up inspections performed.

- On 3/14/21 reported an effluent non-compliance event, due to west tank began burping at 4:30 PM. We began dropping our total solids as a result and have not had a problem since.
- On 3/22/21 Joe Carey came back to work on full duty. We began manhole inspections.
- On 3/23/21 the sludge line to the FST pump became severely blocked due to rags. It took us over 3 hours to clear the blockage of wet wipes, in 2 ft. of pipe.
- On 3/29/21 more manhole inspections were performed, and we grouted one gusher on a manhole on Bantam Terrace.
- On 3/30/21 we began spring preventative jetting work.

**a) Easements:** No report

**b) Operations:** discussed above

**17. Financial Report:** Ted reported revenue similar to last year at this time. We are down in expenditures, but all the big ticket items are in. We are 82% spent year to date including encumbrances. C. Bratina said they should keep only \$150,000 fund balance and talk about transferring \$320,000 into Cap NR at the next meeting. C. Bratina said this was the first year with extremely good total nitrogen removal, 2 mg/L. This is a tribute to Ted and his staff, and he suggested rewarding the staff, perhaps with pizza, and D. Wilson said he would take care of that.

**18. Old Business**

**a) Second Vehicle:** No report

**19. Adjournment: Motion:** W. Buckley moved to adjourn at 9:17 p.m. and C. Bratina seconded. All voted aye and the motion carried.



Ann Combs, Recording Secretary