

**LITCHFIELD WATER POLLUTION CONTROL AUTHORITY  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
Town Hall Annex, 80 Doyle Road, Bantam, CT 06750  
Thursday, November 10, 2022 ~ 7:30 p.m.**

**CALL TO ORDER:** Chairman David R. Wilson called the regular meeting to order at 7:35 p.m.

**ROLL CALL**

Present: Members present were David R. Wilson, William Buckley (7:55 p.m.), James Koser, and Christian Bratina. Also present were Ted Donoghue, Plant Superintendent, Raz Alexe, Public Works Director, Ann Combs, Recording Secretary and First Selectman Denise Raap.

Absent: David Geiger (alternate), Sky Post (alternate), Christine Harding

**SEATING ALTERNATES:** None present

**MINUTES**

**a) 2/10/22 Regular (tabled from 9/29/22):** Tabled until the next meeting

**b) 9/29/22 Special:** Tabled until the next meeting

**BUSINESS**

**1) Public Request and/or Comment:** Kate Honan referred to the two Clean Water applications, one for \$6.5 million which was treatment with nutrient removal and resiliency project. The \$3.5 million application was described as treatment without nutrient removal. The December minutes refer to the \$6.5 million as the total cost of solids handling, and the \$3.5 as “other”. So she is asking what is making up the \$6.5 and the \$3.5 costs. D. Wilson said those figures are place holders to get in line for the possible use of Clean Water money down the road. He said Woodard & Curran developed the numbers, and Ms Honan asked for more clarification on the nutrient removal process. She also asked if we are dealing with Arethusa on pretreatment of TSS and BOD, since Arethusa has been reclassified as a significant industrial user. D. Wilson said they are in the process of renewing their permit. She asked if they do pretreatment, will the TSS and BOD be lower at the plant, and Mr. Wilson said yes, but it is more complex than that. They are now removing the whey before it leaves Arethusa. Ms Honan then asked if getting the \$6.5 million means we don’t get the \$3.5 million. Mr. Wilson said no, it simply means we get on the priority list before MDC and others. R. Alexe clarified that we do want the resiliency study, so she said it should be in the \$6.5 million. There was also some talk about possible funding coming from the American Rescue Plan Act funds.

Second, Ms Honan asked about inflow surges and how to correct the storm surges. D. Wilson said they go out in the storms to find the trouble areas. C. Bratina said they have a CMOM program that looks at the collection system that the WPCA and Town own. The staff inspects manholes to finds holes, leakage and pipe problems. As they find these problems with cameraing, they can contract for repairs that our staff cannot do. The field work with the camera is more valuable than an engineering study with flow meters. Mr. Bratina also noted there are building laterals that belong to the homeowners that can also leak. When we get our plant issues resolved, we will take a closer look at the homes. D. Wilson added that we have more miles of laterals than we do the collection system.

**2) Update on Torrington Intermunicipal Agreement:** D. Wilson reported the cost is now less, so the borrowing will be less. We got a bill for last year based on 150,000 gallons of reserve flow, so once it’s based on 50,000, we should be in the area we want. Whether it’s a valid reason to try to get out of the portion based on EDUs, he didn’t know, although we have a contract with Thomaston based on the

number of connections. He said he always like it based on flows, because it's an incentive to keep their flows down. But it's not the case with that contract, so it's hard to argue with DEEP that it's unfair. C. Bratina noted we have two flow meters in Torrington based on flow.

**3) Scope of Work & Contract Negotiations with Woodard & Curran:** *(tabled until W. Buckley arrives)* D. Wilson told Woodard & Curran to redo their numbers; we have a draft discharge permit with no significant changes, and we want to make sure we prioritize the resiliency portion of their work to determine the flood elevation. W. Buckley said so there is no change in scope; and D. Wilson said no, but wants to make sure they start with that. Further, he wants them to verify levels of the hydraulic capacity of the tank. With their information, we should be able to put some staff gages on to read the elevations during storm events. W. Buckley said he would like to read the contract with the redlines incorporated into it. R. Alexe asked them to send Woodard & Curran the redline version, but D. Wilson said the redline has nothing to do with the contract work. W. Buckley wanted to get it back quickly, so the Board decided to ask for the updated contract by next Friday so that we could add the boilerplate and have a contract by the Wednesday before Thanksgiving. This was acceptable to D. Wilson.

**4) 2023 Regular Meeting Dates:** *[W. Buckley arrived here at 7:55 p.m.]* C. Bratina questioned Ted Donoghue having time to get all his data together in time for the early meetings. It was then discovered that January should be the 12<sup>th</sup> and December should be the 14<sup>th</sup>. **Motion:** C. Bratina moved and J. Koser seconded a motion to approve the 2023 WPCA meeting schedule with the above-noted changes. All voted aye and the motion carried. The Board then took up Item 3 above.

**5) Revisit Decision for a Subcommittee for Woodard & Curran:** D. Wilson reported that the First Selectman spoke to FOIA in Hartford and found that if they set up a subcommittee, it would be answerable to all FOIA requirements. With two members meeting without a quorum, it is nothing more than a meeting, and is not reportable with agenda and minutes. They will, however, take notes on their progress. **Motion:** W. Buckley moved to rescind the vote to create the subcommittee of two people and C. Bratina seconded. All voted aye, and the motion passed. **Motion:** W. Buckley moved to have a two-person working group consisting of D. Wilson and C. Bratina to work with the engineers at Woodard & Curran to advance the renovation project at the plant. C. Bratina seconded, all voted aye and the motion carried.

**6) Solar Project at WWTF:** D. Wilson reported that the Town groups were working on it, but they had to back out and rebid the project because the inflation reduction act now has afforded a higher percentage of credits. The project will be on the Town's property, but we will be getting the benefit of the lower rates, 8.2 or 8.4 cents/kwh. T. Donoghue said they anticipate saving \$2,800/yr. When asked about a time frame, R. Alexe said the Board of Selectmen will make a recommendation next Tuesday and then it will be scheduled for Inland Wetlands, then P&Z, so it may be ready to go in June.

**7) Safety:** T. Donoghue said they participated in forklift training with the DPW. They will look at having a training schedule for each activity.

**8) Commissioner's Requests:** W. Buckley asked where we are on our permit. D. Wilson said we reviewed it and C. Bratina has some areas to question DEEP on or suggest changes. Ted said there are minor changes from the previous permit. There is one new test per month for carbonaceous BOD, and there are lower limits for arsenic and mercury. We have not had trouble passing the chronic toxicity test. C. Bratina noticed there are tests that require grab samples, so it's cost effective to switch the F1 to a DO probe so it's continuous. We need that now because our DO is low. Using a DO probe, we can monitor the temperature and see the trend so we can improve it as will be required in the upgrade. C. Bratina said that with the UV system they will have a PLC, and it will take the flow rate more and measure the dose. It will give us a signal and goes back to SCADA so we can record that dose. We do need to monitor the

transmittance of the water, and how well the light passes through it determines the effectiveness of the UV dose. With our normal high quality effluent we shouldn't need a high dose. When we install a UV system, we should test and see what the minimum requirement is for the dose. T. Donoghue said it is important to note that the UV transmittance can be effected by the turbidity numbers going up that could increase the ecoli, so there must be checks and balances. He and C. Bratina have a difference of opinion, but when asked by W. Buckley if they are on the same page as to what they are asking DEEP to do, C. Bratina said they are getting there. W. Buckley said he did not want them to approach DEEP unless he knows what they are approaching DEEP on. R. Alexe referred to the draft permit with C. Bratina's redline suggestions that R. Alexe felt were pertinent. Ted said we should first give the comments to Chris Falk, the DEEP engineer he's been working with, and who asked for our comments back in July. DEEP will review them and then set up a meeting with us. The WPCA and DEEP will finalize, and it will go out for public comment. W. Buckley asked if we will be ready to do that, and D. Wilson said we have to find someone at DEEP to talk to, as they have all new staff, no organizational chart, and the names they used to see are not there now. W. Buckley asked at what level we would begin, and T. Donoghue reiterated that we would start with Chris Falk, who he has been working with for a year and a half, then we would go up the chain of command. We would be called in for any changes to the draft, as whatever is negotiated will become the final permit. C. Bratina did not recommend asking them for a DO limit, but every plant he's managed has always had a minimum DO limit of 5. Since we do not meet the limit, he thought sooner or later the DEEP would realize it's not in the language, and they will put it in. In the interim, Woodard & Curran can help us determine what is needed to get a DO of 5. We can install the DO meter including temperature and monitor to get a better understanding of why it is so low. T. Donoghue suggested that a reason may be that after settling and UV, we discharge into rapids where there are bottlenecks in the river where we test. R. Alexe asked if they can tell the ratio of depletion of DO from the BOD, and they said no. D. Wilson said there is a natural attenuation due to the rolling of the water coming down. Ted said the DO will drop in the secondary settling tank, even though there is no aeration, because the bugs are consuming oxygen. C. Bratina noted that installing DO meters will save on labor in sampling or taking a DO probe out. T. Donoghue stressed the importance of operators checking the entire tank, doing the tests, as they can find dead spots and discover things by being there, as the DEEP encourages. W. Buckley said Christian's point was that we don't need them to do it as a requirement of the permit, but taking a grab sample is probably not quite as good a measurement as a continuous monitoring. Ted said the hand-held has the same sensor as they use in the aeration tank and is an accurate and precise device. He felt that because we are under 1 million gallons/day, the DEEP wants to make sure we are seeing things. W. Buckley said Ted holds the license and should decide where he does inflow measurements to meet the limit going out and protect the environment. He would like Ted to ask, under 7Q10, what is the percent of our flow permitted flow. They will use this to lower the standard for arsenic and HG and others.

Next W. Buckley asked if we should attend the committee meeting with Bantam Lake Protective Assn./WLSLSD. He understood that the DEEP is coming to a meeting. Is that a public meeting that we can send a representative to? D. Wilson said it should be a public meeting and said further that the Bantam Lake Protective Assn. and DEEP hired an engineering firm to do a study for them to show that Woodridge Lake is a big problem for Bantam Lake. They ended up sampling in the wrong places and published the report. They are not interested in fighting it enough, and it's such a hot potato that they would just as soon DEEP issue an order and say they (BLPA) made us do it. W. Buckley said that it sounds like the Bantam Lake group is meeting with Woodridge Lake Sewer District (WLSLSD) to form a coalition to get us to swallow that pill. D. Wilson hesitated, and D. Raap offered to read part of the letter that Connie Trolle (BLPA) wrote to Nisha Patel (DEEP). Ms Trolle spoke of the BLPA's invitation and visit to the WLSLSD for a tour of its plant. It was informative and the WLSLSD expressed its willingness to provide additional site visits to others as necessary. D. Raap said that WLSLSD invited the BLPA because they believe the study that shows 60% of the pollutants affecting Bantam Lake come from the WLSLSD. W. Buckley said they should take their sewage to Torrington, and never really followed through on that. They

never sat down to negotiate with us, where they might have found they were better off going to Torrington. D. Raap said the letter continues that they met with D. Raap on October 24<sup>th</sup> and “emphasized the substantial benefits of a modernized regional system incorporating the Litchfield WPCA and the WLSL. The foremost benefit is the elimination of the primary source of increased pollution in Bantam Lake.” Further take-aways from the WLSL meeting included: 1) they discovered that only 18% of Litchfield town residents are connected to WPCA, 2) the independent volunteer board was created by Town Statute (sic., ordinance) and provides the WPCA with complete oversight and direction, 3) the signing of an engineering study signed by the WPCA is imminent, describing the scope of the stand alone study. W. Buckley said what they wrote was incorrect. T. Donoghue said, as a member of the Bantam Lake Task Force, he felt broadsided by not being informed of these meetings. They have a whole priority list of items for all the towns to do at an associated cost. For the Task Force’s grant, there has to be an administrator who would report to DEEP and monitor the funds. However, they have to pay up front for the best management practices with reimbursement in 30 – 60 days. W. Buckley does not want someone doing an end run negotiating around us and then we get an order. Who was the firm who did the Bantam Lake Study? D. Wilson said it was a man from New Hampshire. W. Buckley then said we need to know what our upgraded plant needs to satisfy our sewage generated within the Town of Litchfield. He didn’t think we have DEEP’s ear and that there are some players on these committees that are using connections they have. Maybe we should set up a meeting and go up and chat. Ted felt, in talking with Nisha of DEEP, that they want to see us doing our due diligence as our first step. W. Buckley felt others may be doing their first steps that may produce an order for us to negotiate with WLSL before we have done our work. Ted added it may also create leverage against the Town. D. Raap confirmed that no one from WLSL has reached out to set up an interlocal negotiating committee. R. Alexe noted that Jim Mersfelder from WLSL had reached out to him last year, and R. Alexe sent him to the First Selectman. C. Bratina asked for a copy of the study, and D. Raap said it is online. It was suggested that they go to the DEEP for a meeting. Those suggested to go to the meeting were D. Wilson, W. Buckley, and R. Alexe. R. Alexe felt we should be proactive and meet with them before they force us to negotiate. Our position is that we have to know if our plant can meet the standards they are proposing; and if not, what are the costs to bring it up to standard for Litchfield-only sewage generation. If asked by DEEP what we think of Woodridge Lake, D. Wilson said we would go back to the original questions we asked them when they approached us one and a half years ago - concerns about our system: 1) hydraulic capacity coming into the plant, 2) the direction the line would come, and 3) whether we have the hydraulic capacity to take the flows. He said that WLSL partially answered that. We need to ask the DEEP why it is better for WLSL to come to Litchfield rather than to Torrington. What did they look at regarding Torrington? A discussion followed on the cost and funding problems associated with going to Torrington. C. Bratina noted that our secondary clarifier is surcharged at high flows, as our high flows exceed the design of the plant. W. Buckley feels the DEEP is hearing that our WPCA is ineffective and we don’t know what we’re doing. We need to meet with someone with stature in the DEEP so we can present who we are. Ted said that would be Nisha Patel, who took over as Bureau Chief of Municipal Wastewater. W. Buckley said we are sitting back and waiting while other parties are negotiating around us, and we must be proactive and perhaps get a third party engineering firm to review the study for validity as R. Alexe suggested.

Upon request, D. Raap said she will call the DEEP Commissioner to get a meeting and all agreed. She emailed the CT DEEP/EPA report to the Commissioners for their review. R. Alexe said the DEEP Bureau Chief is Graham Stevens, and Nisha Patel reports to him. W. Buckley said we might just call Graham Stevens, and D. Raap agreed.

## **9) Public Works/Treatment Plant Report**

### **a) Easements:** No report

**b) Operations:** Permit compliance has been maintained since the last report. We are having our best year for nitrogen ever, with two months to go, at 10 lbs. Ammonia will be higher. Routine operations and maintenance work continues, and for the month of October the total flow was 10.858 MG and the daily average flow was 0.35 MGD. We removed 71,500 gallons of biosolids for final disposal during the month of October.

- We processed a total of 126,400 gallons of septage during the month of October an 11% decrease over last October. YTD we are up 51%.
- For October effluent BOD removal percent was 99% and TSS removal percent was 98%. The minimal removal rates per our NPDES permit is 85%.
- The daily average of Total Nitrogen lbs. /day discharged into the Bantam River was 3.0 mg/l or 6 lbs. /day. Our daily limit is 24 lbs. /day.
- The daily average for Total Phosphorous discharged in the Bantam River was 3.1 mg/l. or 8.9lbs./day, better than what we've seen in the past couple of months. The monthly average cannot exceed 3.7 mg/l and our daily maximum cannot exceed 7.43 mg/l.
- On 10/1/22 Joe Carey Completed his Lab Analyst 1 training. He will take a test in January for his certification.
- On 10/13/22 Ted and Eric inspected White Woods right-of-way and installed 12 manhole inserts and inspected some manholes they discovered back in 2017. A sales rep from Green Mountain Pipe will come out to advise on manhole candidates for relining.
- On 10/14/22 they pumped down both primary settling tanks into the west aeration diversion tank to remove sludge that was not settling and creating phosphorus problems. The result was good settling in the primary tanks and no rising sludge. Then they had better phosphorus numbers in late October. New BST mixer pump was delivered. We need PW to adjust the holding frame.
- On 10/19/22 a new house connection at 544B Torrington Road was connected to the system.
- On 10/20/22 Ted and Dave attended CT WEA's Fall Conference. We also had a trouble call at 181 Circle Drive which the team jetted and determined it was the property owner's issue. There are a lot of roots, and they will do a treatment.
- On 10/24/22 Ted and Eric began jetting in Bantam. This included all areas but Trumbull Street, West Morris Road and Bantam Road to the brook.

**c) Collection System Work:** C. Bratina asked Ted to update the CMOM program, and Ted said he would. They would also like to know the mileage and material of all the laterals, and R. Alexe said it can be extracted from GIS. Looking at the Morris flows, they have been relatively low in the last two months, even as ours increased. This is highly unusual and he will reach out to Mike Doyle. They will pull a sample next week and one at the Deer Island causeway. Their BOD and TSS numbers are much higher than in the past and ammonia higher as well. D. Wilson wondered if there was an off the web hauler who was dumping to a manhole. Ted said they checked and it was not obvious, but it was like a septage load with the TSS that high. They are keeping an eye on it.

**10) Financial Report:** Sandy's been out with shoulder surgery, so there was no revenue report. Ted said we are at 30% through the first quarter, including encumbrances. Expenses show we are paying dramatically more on the biosolids. We've paid about \$100,000 for capital costs for the Torrington upgrade in the last two years based on the old buy-in. In the new IMA our reserve will go from 150,000 down to 50,000 gallons. There is no question about the volume they are reserving, but the user portion is not based completely on volume. They say in no case will it be less than what their user pays, or a minimum charge. C. Bratina asked why we have to pay Torrington's minimum when their minimum includes other fees. W. Buckley said we should pay for the flow we send them with the cost it takes to get to their treatment plant. He and D. Wilson will set up a meeting with Torrington to discuss this.

**11) Old Business**

**a) Second Vehicle:** No report

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

Ann D. Combs  
Recording Secretary