

**LITCHFIELD WATER POLLUTION CONTROL AUTHORITY
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
Town Hall Annex, 80 Doyle Road, Bantam, CT 06750
Thursday, March 9, 2023 ~ 7:30 p.m.**

CALL TO ORDER: David Wilson called the regular March meeting of the Litchfield WPCA to order at 7:30 PM.

ROLL CALL

Present: Members present were, Christine Harding, David Geiger Christian Bratina, Dave Wilson, and James Koser. Also present was Ted Donoghue, Plant Superintendent and Raz Alexe, Public Works Director.

Absent: William Buckley. Sky Post and James Koser.

MINUTES: No minutes were presented.

BUSINESS

1) Public Request and/or Comment:

Selectman Jeff Zullo provided an update on the solar project, there have been some changes since his last presentation. It is going to final zoning approval on March 20th, then to Public Hearing. It has passed Inland & Wetlands and approved the 824. The town attorney Mike Rybak has reviewed the Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) with SHR Energy. M. Rybak would like both the WPCA and Dense Rapp both sign the contract. D. Wilson stated the WPCA s the customer. There is some site work for drainage that has to be done, along with the array being moved to a different location. Public Works will provide some material for some of this drainage work. J. Zullo recommend that at a future meeting that the WPCA approved the final PPA before it is signed, this also included the BOS needed to approve it before D. Rapp would sign the contract, then it will have to go before a special meeting of the Board of Finance for their approval. Then the PPA agreement will have to go before a Town Meeting for final approval, since it is a lease at \$1 a year. D. Wilson said that the Greenway has plans to come down alongside the solar project, and that this project will be built where they envisioned parking. J. Zullo acknowledged this and though there would be no issues because they would have a great view of the new solar array. The 15 year ZREC is already in place- although one year has already expired. D. Wilson asked if the ZREC has already been paid. J. Zullo said it was secured. The project started in April of 2022, so we have lost a year and it is vital that we get this started as soon as possible. Unfortunately this delay does lowers the value of the ZREC and the rate we could be paid for electricity. It is basically a 15 year credit and you divide that over the life of the contract, so we have lost 1/15th of the value. And that is why we want to get this started in April. C. Bratina asked when the array could be an operational. J. Zullo answered that we expect a three month build out so it could be online and generating power of the plant in July or August and we expect a \$30,000 savings each year. One estimate is that we will pay \$0.804 per kWh, but that number is subject to change, due to some of the additional site costs. T. Donoghue mentioned that the new rate for generation will be \$0.1107 per kWh. J. Zullo said that Eversource has stopped net metering, so that is the reason you don't over build the array.

Motion: C. Bratina put forth that the WPCA Chairman be authorized to sign the final PPA agreement. C. Harding seconded. There was no discussion. All members voted "aye" and the motion carried.

- 2) Salt Hotels Restaurant Grease Interceptor:** Representatives from the boutique hotel presented their proposal to use an under the counter grease intercept in the basement of the proposed hotel. Patrick Kennedy from Lex Litchfield LLC introduced himself and how they partnered with Salt

Hotel to develop this project. Jeff Fitzgerald from Bohler Engineering- who has been working on this project for well over a year was also present. J. Fitzgerald walked the Commission through the project at 15 West St- the old court house, which will become a 20 room hotel with a restaurant, a roof top bar, a lounge, a private dining room, and a basement kitchen and described the structural and site limitations that prevent the developer from installing a 1,000 gallon in-ground grease tank- or a kitchen floor grease interceptor. They were aware that a 1,000 gallons in ground grease tank was the WPCA preference- but that request could not be accommodated due to the site limitations and the fact that the kitchen will be in the basement, J. Fitzgerald presented a site plan, a summary of the issues, hardship and of the constraints of the site plan and the kitchen being in the basement, along with a cut sheet to support their position that their only solution- which is to utilizing an under sink Automatic Grease Unit (AGRU) commonly known as a Big Dipper®. Issues with an Eversource right-a-way, close proximity to the two neighboring buildings, and no direct access to the kitchen to pump out a unit like the Trapzilla®. They worked with Bohler to size the proper needed Big Dipper®. They will inspect their building connection during the construction. C. Harding asked if the restaurant is going to be open to the public and what will be expected for diners. J. Fitzgerald said that all food and beverage will total 114 seats, and that the AGRU is sized correctly to handle this level of business. D. Wilson shared why the WPCA does not like the Big Dipper®, it required proper maintenance to ensure that they work properly. D. Wilson said DPH could give you variance. J. Fitzgerald said you would still need an injector pump to do that and they would have to penetrate the stone foundation. C. Bratina asked if we have other customers use AGRU. T. Donoghue responded “yes” and shared that the proper maintenance is critical to them to work correctly. D. Wilson asked about a dishwasher. J. Fitzgerald was not sure, but the Board agreed that there must be. The WPCA does not want the dishwasher to discharge through the AGRU. D. Wilson asked if they have spoken with Torrington Health District about their food license. C. Harding stated that her Big Dipper® are great and thinks they work fine. C. Bratina asked if the 3 bay sink is above the rim of the manhole out in the municipal parking lot. J. Fitzgerald said it was. T. Donoghue explained to D. Geiger how the restaurant can fine tune the operations of the Big Dipper® to run more often and remove the FOG properly, even when it’s busier. C. Bratina asked if we needed a motion to approve the variance of installing the Big Dipper®. T. Donoghue said we normally generate a letter for the P & Z- that Dave will sign, and it will put in in the file

- 3) **The FY 24 Budget:** T. Donoghue shared that he and D. Wilson went through the proposed budget and made some cuts and Ted had Sandy look at the proposed revenue. She did add 70 additional EDUs since last month’s meeting. T. Donoghue raised septage to 1.3 million gallons, as we are on par to exceed \$100,000 in revenue this year, He went on to explain that our largest budget line item is 3201-52111-Professional Services. Bio-solids cost have increased over 7% due to the language in the contract- plus the new highway tax. T. Donoghue stated they expect costs for Torrington to be similar to the current FY. He said we should wait until after November to finalize the current IMA. Thomaston usage has increased \$32.50 per EDU, Torrington could do a rate increase and a usage fee increase as well. T. Donoghue will reach out to Ed at Torrington WPCA. Looking at a 3% increase for FY 23. We have the new polymer mixing station which will help give us a better yield on sludge de-watering and can help lower sludge hauling costs. C. Bratina asked about the processing costs- at only \$500. The ADP cost for payroll is in 3201-52111- Professional Service. C. Bratina asked if we should go out to bid for sludge hauling. The current contract is 3 years. C. Bratina asked about specific vendor totals under plant supplies and lab analysis fees. EML \$26,000. Sludge hauling was over \$76,000. Sandy’s services are under \$9,200. T. Donoghue shared some of the other top vendors and they spent for FY 22. C. Bratina asked about the \$37,000 for FY 24, we spent over \$42,000 in FY 22. C. Bratina said we should budget what we actually expect to spend. T. Donoghue stated that the Commission has historically directed Ted to spend for items out of the Operation’s budget and that has led to budget lines being overspent. The argument could be made to pull some of these expenses out of Fund 66. D. Wilson asked about the 2% cash back from the credit card that we use. Donoghue explained that the Town gets the 2% cash back, no the WPCA. T. Donoghue talked about

the cost of electricity and the reduction from the solar array we will see. C. Bratina suggested we start the lower rate starting in January of 2024. C. Harding asked what the FY 24 budget increase is. D. Geiger said it was 1.36%- the group was impressed that it was that low. D. Geiger asked if we should increase the plant supplies by \$30,000. We nearly have \$900,000 in Cap Non-Recurring. T. Donoghue shared this would be the second year in row which we did not have a set aside in the operation budget for Cap Non-Recurring. The suggestions is too to spread the proposed surpluses among supplies and fund 66 and email it out for more review. C. Bratina brought up his concerns that we have not had an accurate audit. He would like C. Harding to bring up these concerns. And the consideration that we can shop around for another auditor. The current auditor firm has meet with the WPCA and has acknowledged numerus issues- but has never made the proper recommendations to the WPCA or the Town

4) Update on Torrington Inter-municipal Agreement: D. Wilson reported that he had spoken to R. Drew but no major discussion. Talked about the capital cost sharing that may not increase from current FY 22 levels- but the usage will more than likely go up, we will wait until after November to finalize the IMA.

5) Scope of Work & Contract Negotiations with Woodard & Curran: D. Wilson reported that both he and Denise Rapp had signed the contract with Woodard & Curran and that this original copy was overnighted to their office. As discussed at the prior meeting any progress reports of invoices will be issued before the next schedule WPCA meeting, to then be reviewed and or approved by the Commission. Second no funds would be utilized on studying Woodridge Lake until the first four tasks have been completed and reviewed by the WPCA Commission

6) NPDES Permit: No update to report, as the time line has slowed down with the DEEP.

7) Staff Requirements: D. Wilson shared that we have been running with three operators for the last three years. Do we actually need to add a fourth person? We may not need that during the winter, but for the collections work in the summer we do need four operators. C. Harding spoke about her concerns that with the scope of work and other things, and it might be a good things to get someone on bard sooner rather than later. We are moving forward. D. Wilson stated that “we are not growing”. Plus the town gives away so much time off- he described it all as vacation time. C. Bratina said it has been challenging to do the collections work last summer. T. Donoghue shared that since the Pandemic, the private sector has become much more competitive against municipals workers and we only had two people interview for a position since it was posted more than six months ago. T. Donoghue agreed with C. Hardin’s position for the fourth operator is in the proposed FY 24 budget. We don’t want to be put in a situation in which we only have one operator at the plant. D. Geiger asked R. Alexe what his opinion is- he thinks we need the fourth operator. C. Bratina said the only way to do CMOM with three on staff is to contract it out. C. Bratina shared that if we only had three operator and lost one- then we would really have some challenges. The fourth person is an insurance policy. C. Harding asked if we need a motion, the group agreed that we do not, and came to the collective conclusion that if the candidate we interviewed three weeks prior is good that we should hire him.

8) Safety: T. Donoghue said there are no incidents to report. but that they just has the safety meeting the day before with the CIRMA rep. He talked about claims are down and there are two set component the first being the set aside in reserves and what the actual cost has been. The 8 claims so far this year have cost less than expected CIRMA has introduced a new online training- unfortunately many of these mail have gotten caught up in the two spam filters, so we have not been aware of the new site. We will correct that and start utilize the new training classes.

9) Commissioners Requests: Gagarin Place. We explained that if the collection system was built to our construction standard they could possibly sign it over to the WPCA There were numerous issues discovered on the final inspection. Issues with missing bench in a manhole, off set manhole that

were weeping inflow, and poor quality construction work. They are working on fixing them and Dave and I are schedule to go back tomorrow to follow up. D. Wilson suggested getting them getting a bond to allow them to close on properties that may need to close- five of the eight want to close next week, D. Wilson will speak with M. Rybak the next morning about the issues. The issue with inflow is our major concern, as we pay by the gallon with the flow to Torrington. C. Bratina we suggested that the vacuum test and get a bond. D. Geiger asked what the cost of the bond would be. D. Wilson stated \$15,000. C. Bratina asked about Arethusa. T. Donoghue shared that Chris is supplying weekly data and how M. Parvicella has not been an issues so far this winter- we believe there are three bulking filaments and concerns about the low pH in the mixed liquor. C. Bratina would like to review the surcharge parameters- but needs to review the data in Hach WIMS. He does have a template that could be used to surcharge Arethusa on other things- such as high TSS, FOG, pH, and nutrients.

10) Public Works/Treatment Plant Report

- a) **Easements:** No report
- b) **Operations:** Permit compliance has been maintained since the last report. Routine operations and maintenance work continues, and for the month of February the total flow was 13.157 MG and the daily average flow was 0.470 MGD. We removed 52,000 gallons of bio-solids for final disposal during the month of February.
- c) We processed a total of 59,550 gallons of septage during the month of February a 367% increase over last February. YTD we are up 92%.
- d) For February effluent BOD removal percent was 97% and TSS removal percent was 99%. The minimum removal rates per our NPDES permit is 85%.
- e) The daily average of Total Nitrogen lbs. /day discharged into the Bantam River was 1.4mg/l or 6 lbs. /day. Our daily limit is 24 lbs. /day.
- f) The daily average for Total Phosphorous discharged in the Bantam River was 2.0 mg/l. or 9.4lbs./day. The monthly average cannot exceed 3.7 mg/l and our daily maximum cannot exceed 7.43 mg/l.
- g) On 2/1/23 pulled RAS pump #2 out to have bearings and seals done to it, we put it back on line on 2/14/23.
- h) On 2/14/23 exercised generator full load with no issues, Pulled WAS pump to have bearings and refurbishment performed. The total costs for all three pumps was \$8,300.
- i) On 2/27/23 Green Mountain Pipe grouted five manholes, the work looked very good. One manhole needs to be redone as it was pushing water out when we respected it this past Monday. T. Donoghe shared before and after photographs of some of the work- including the culvert on Torrington Road and several manholes that had concrete and grouting. We saw a drop of 15,000 gallons the next day after the work was completed. The age of the system is revealing failing mortar and joint sin manholes. Green Mountain guarantee their work for 1 year. Joe really did a great job discovering that the surface water is more than an issue for us. When the ground is saturated this water can get into the collection system through the manhole frame. Last week when we had the snow melt- and no rain for over a week, the plant flows went up 0.2 MGD. We can continue finding areas with surface water and getting the new mortar to seal up these manholes frames on the inside

and outside Morris hit the penalty in December and January. Ted shared their observations with Mike Doyle and shared that whatever can be taken out of the their flows will only benefit us and any future design work when Morris is over 8% it will

- 11) Financial Report:** T. Donoghue reported that in current Munis report, they dumped two months of labor. Bio solids were \$8,100 for January. We had the generator service work. Sandy handed in her first invoice of the FY, so it was over \$4,000. Electricity generation was higher due to paying a high cost for generation. We also had to purchase polymer too.

12) Adjournment:

Motion: C. Harding moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:20 PM. C. Bratina seconded and there was no discussion. All members voted “aye” and the motion passed.

Terrence Donoghe
Interim Recording Secretary