

THOMASTON WATER POLLUTION CONTROL AUTHORITY
REGULAR MEETING & PUBLIC HEARING
WPCA PLANT 258 OLD WATERBURY RD THOMASTON CT 06787
7:00 PM TUESDAY, Oct. 21, 2025

Present: Ch. Mueller, Comms. Piscopo, Chandon, Leduc, Scott Amendola from Unimetal, Dianne Labonte, Tony Durso, Pat Dibeneditto, Tanya Galpin, Barb Mueller, Matt Pronovost, Chip Quinn, Plant Mgr. Galpin and Office Admin. Tammie Ireland

Ch. Mueller called the public hearing to order at 7:00 pm.

On a motion put forth by Ch. Mueller to waive the reading of the public notice that was in the newspaper and incorporate it into the record, 2nd by Comm Chandon. Motion passes unanimously.

Ch. Mueller asked the commission if there were any comments or questions regarding the proposed rate or benefit connection rate. Comm Chandon commented that the increase just brings Thomaston in line with the rest of the towns in the area. Ch. Mueller then opened the comments and questions up to the public.

Dianne Labonte of Bristol St indicates she has had the same argument; this sewer use charge is too high and not fair and equitable. She has asked for years to have the way we charge for the sewer use, changed to meter readings. She wants to know what our balance is in the sinking fund and why can't we use that to offset charges. Ch. Mueller explained that we can only address matters that are on the agenda and changing the way we figure the sewer use tax is not on the agenda. Ms. Labonte wanted to know if we are still giving \$50,000 to the town every year? Mgr. Galpin explained that we do not give \$50,000 to the town, it is given to our R&R account, however we could not do that this year because we ran short on the budget.

Tony Durso of Old Northfield Rd requested to know what % we have in our sinking fund, Ch. Mueller explained that we have about 15%, we had to tap into the account to get replacement parts for age old equipment to keep things running at the sewer plant. The last upgrade in 2002 there was an anticipated life expectancy of 15 to 20 years for our equipment and we have surpassed that. Mr. Durso would like to know why this year is such a large increase? Ch. Mueller explained that the cost to operate the plant, the utilities, the equipment, labor, medical and the cost of repairs to the equipment. Mr. Durso asked that we look over the budget again.

Pat Dibeneditto of High St Ext we are not comparable to area towns, he knows area towns that are not this high. Ch. Mueller explained that we do consider that and we are comparable to surrounding towns.

Matt Pronovost of Strawberry Park, from his perspective, he feels that the cost of our sewer use bill for \$1.50 a day is fair and reasonable.

Chip Quinn of Bradley Way, understands that no one wants to see a cost increase, however, the sewer plant has no choice but to increase sewer use rates because the plant is aging out, as Ch. Mueller indicated, we have more than exceeded the expectancy of the last upgrade in 2002.

Ms. Labonte commented again that she wants to see the sewer use bill to go to usage-based billing because it is unfair and she knows other towns are doing it. Why can't we investigate doing this?

Comm Leduc added that we have been able to keep the increases on a lower scale in the past because we had the sinking fund to take from, however, it is below what the state recommends we maintain. We have had many unexpected expenses due to the plant needing upgrades that we do not have the funds in the sinking fund to take from this year.

Ch. Mueller motioned to close the public hearing, so moved by Comm Chandon, 2nd by Comm Leduc. Motion passes unanimously at 7:21pm

Ch. Mueller called the regular meeting to order at 7:21pm

On a motion put forth by Comm. Piscopo to accept the minutes as presented from Sept 16, 2025, 2nd by Comm Leduc. Motion passes unanimously.

On a motion put forth by Comm Leduc to move UniMetal above Consultant Report, 2nd by Comm Piscopo. Motion passes unanimously.

UNIMETAL

Scott Amendola reported that the ZLD is finally on the boat and he provided the comm with a picture. They are still working on their water quality problems and have seen that the clay usage is making a difference.

CONSULTANT REPORT

Nothing new to report.

Status Report by Plant Manager Bert Galpin:

A. Review of the Status report as follows...

B. Treatment Plant

Process is running ok. The new TSS oven for the lab has been received. The UV system is offline for the winter and the crew has cleaned it. Operator Brett replaced the wash valve for the Grit system. Traver was here to work on the Limitorque valves. Kovacs was here to work on the sludge valves. We submitted the DMV QA study 45 to the state and we passed everything.

Pump Stations

Northeast Generator serviced the generators and repaired the generator at Electric Ave.

Collection System

The crew continues working on mapping for CMOM. There was a force main break at Kennedy Drive, Joes Sanitation repaired it and paved after. The crew cleared a blockage at the siphon chamber.

Correspondence:

Email from Unimetal for an early start up on October 16, 2025 due to gas main repairs.

OLD BUSINESS

A. Unimetal

Reported above.

B. Capital Improvements:

Plant upgrade and Flow Study

C. FOG:

We continue to receive the reports back. Asst Mgr. Jim has done a few inspections of grease traps and reported they were all up to date.

D. List of equipment/projects needed

Still waiting on the SBR waste sludge valves. They are due to be in soon.

D. NPDES – Permit Renewal

Nothing new to report

E. Tim Bobroske-Reynolds Bridge Rd

Nothing new to report

F. Jim Osowiecki- West Hillside Ave

Nothing new to report.

G. Main St – Apartments

Nothing new to report

H. 55 Stoughton St – 3 Family

Nothing new to report

I. Benefit Connection Fees

Manager Galpin contacted Tighe & Bond and found out that the average price of construction per foot of pipe is \$300, not including paving. With the last increase back in 2006, it is agreed that an increase is necessary. On a motion put forth by Comm Leduc to increase the Benefit Connection Fee from \$2000 per unit to \$4000 per unit, 2nd by comm Chandon. Motion passes unanimously.

K. Moratorium

Ch Mueller suggested that the board gives some thought about whether we will be extending the moratorium and/or when we can come out of the moratorium. It was suggested by the engineer that the UV needs to be designed, ordered and installed before opening the plant back up for flow. We are looking at approximately 2.5 million dollars to do these beginning steps and will need to hear back from

the town regarding funding before this can get ordered. The commission will discuss this again in November.

New Business

Mgr. Galpin presented quotes for new door closers for the doors that are broken and a quote for the lighting that needs to be repaired. On a motion put forth by Ch. Mueller to have Mgr. Galpin contact Henry Osowiecki & Sons to place the order for the broken door closers and complete the job, not to exceed \$18,000, 2nd by Comm Leduc. Motion passes unanimously. On a motion put forth by Ch. Mueller to have Mgr. Galpin contact MJM Electric to place the order for the lighting repairs, not to exceed \$8,000, 2nd by Comm Chandon. Motion passes unanimously.

Budget/User fee

On a motion put forth by Comm Leduc to set the user fee per unit with a 10.5% increase, \$10.91 per thousand, \$545.50 per unit for the 2025/2026 user fee, 2nd by Comm Chandon. Discussion by Comm Piscopo that he has voted against the rate increase a couple years now, however, this time he must vote for it, we have seen so many large expenses hit the plant that we no choice. Discussion by Comm Chandon that with the 25% increase in electrical in the past two years, he does not see that 10% increase is out of bounds. Motion passes unanimously.

On a motion put forth by Comm Piscopo to accept the bills as presented, 2nd by Comm Chandon. Motion passes unanimously.

On a motion put forth by Comm Chandon to adjourn the meeting of Oct. 21, 2025 2nd by Comm Leduc. Motion passes unanimously.

Ch. Mueller called the time adjourned 8:03pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Tammie S. Ireland
WPCA Administrative Assistant

