

Town of Montville Water & Sewer Commission
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
June 6, 2022-- 6:00 PM
Town Council Chambers – Town Hall

1. Water and Sewer Commission

a. Call to Order

Chairman Longton called the regular meeting of the Water and Sewer Commission to order at 6:00 p.m.

b. Pledge of Allegiance

All stood and pledged the flag.

c. Roll Call

Present were Commissioners Anthony Siragusa, Town Councilor Andrew Mandler, and Chairman Chuck Longton. Absent were Commissioners Shawn Jinkerson and Brian Quinn. A quorum was present.

d. Alterations to the Agenda -- None

e. To consider and act on a motion to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of May 2, 2022
Motion by Commissioner Siragusa; seconded by Commissioner Mandler to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of May 2, 2022. Discussion: None. Voice vote: 3-0, all in favor. Motion carried.

f. Communications pertaining specifically to matters which concern the Commission

Superintendent Albertson communicated Attorneys Harry Heller and Andrew McCoy were present to discuss correspondence concerning Agenda Item, I.L.1, the 120 Gay Hill Road subdivision.

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

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

h. Report from Operations/Administration Division

Superintendent Albertson submitted an Operations/Administrative Report for May 2022 as follows:

1.0 Compliance/Process

1.1 Water Pollution Control Facility

Average daily influent flow to the WPCF: 2.5 mgd with a total treatment volume of 78 mg. Removal efficiencies for key contaminants (BOD₅ and TSS) were both over 95%, respectively. This is well above permit requirements. Total Nitrogen (TN) loading was discharged in the treated

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effluent well under the State permit limit with a removal efficiency over 85%. No complaints were received.

Waste activated sludge (WAS) (produced during secondary process) was improved considerably-
-over 4% total solids with polymer addition on the gravity belt thickener (GBT). The ????

1.2 Water Supply

The Montville Water Supply (WS) met required state and federal standards. No complaints were received.

2.0 Staff

2.1 Health and Safety

No injuries, grievances or concerns were reported for staff. The Maintainer/Administrator positions have not been filled. Bruce Kelly has expressed interest in the open Collections Operator II position for which he is qualified. The Clerk will be retiring in late June. Lower staff will likely lead to overtime demands.

One staff member tested positive for COVID-19. Experts say new forms of the virus (including BA.2.12.1) are spreading rapidly and will probably become dominant in the next few weeks. In the week ended May 8, BA.2.12.1 made up about 36 percent of all new cases in the United States, according to the CDC. In May, a 170% increase in the disease has been detected in the US when compared to April; in Connecticut there is a near 20% positivity rate. There is no indication the new variants cause more severe illness.

2.2 Training

Staff continued to receive training to meet CTDEEP and CTDPH requirements for (wastewater /water certification) training credits.

Operators completed KEG Technologies, Inc. *Sewer Cleaning 101* on May 9 to earn CEUs. The onsite presentation provided a review of jetting (cleaning) and CCTV (inspection) activities within a collection system. The Superintendent completed his *Loyalty Oath* for the Uncas Medical Reserve Corps on May 10. CCM training on May 12 was attended (entitled: PFAS Contamination); the webinar was for superintendents, government officials and public water system owners to learn the history of this “forever chemical” and specifically, how PFAS contamination affects their facilities and the communities they serve. LCRR inventory training was provided by Atlantic States Rural Water Association on May 19. The Superintendent presented a paper on cross-country sewer clearing at the NYRWA annual conference on May 24 and a CCM civility (virtual) workshop via the Jodi M. Rell Center for Public Service on May 26. Ms. Abby Dungey and Eileen McKee LifeSafe LLC was contacted about upcoming safety courses in the next FY.

The water operators toured the newly improved Groton Utilities water treatment plant on May 19.

The Superintendent reviewed Gateway Community College Fall 2022 programs specific to utility workers, including the *Water Management Certificate of Achievement Program* which provides

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(among other things) preparation and eligibility for CTDPH *Water Treatment and Distribution Operator Certification Examinations*. The Program credits can be used for the college's A.S., Public Utility Management and SCSU's B.S., Public Utility Management.

3.0 Equipment

3.1 WPCF/Collection System

All pump stations were inspected and cleaned during the month as well as a large number of manhole inspections were made. Grass mowing operations began at the plant/collection system. CCTV sewer pipe inspections in prioritized areas will continue now that the weather has improved.

An review of all electronic forms within the MUNIS program was conducted on May 31 with representatives of Tyler Technologies.

The Montville WPCF was featured in the June 2022 *Treatment Plant Operator* magazine (Please see: <https://www.tpomag.com/ezone/2022/06>).

A representative from Sulzer Abs USA was met at two pump stations (Chesterfield and Woodland) to discuss “pass through” pump application. The plant has had success with the newly installed (Sulzer) influent pumps.

An inventory of WPCF plans was conducted and then scanned for electronic filing. The Montville WPCA (customer number 664139) has been renewed for their Esri Account. The Superintendent is the listed administrator.

4.0 Projects

A summary of existing projects is provided in an attached project summary table.

The Superintendent has worked to develop a strategic plan for the WPCA infrastructure including formal (annual) CIP requests as well as a 5-year plan. Also, development of the treatment plant management program has been in place to identify needs, risks, and adaptations to improve the existing facilities program (URS, 2011). This plan will include the examination of possible interim treatment reduction or alteration at the existing facilities, along with integration with the currently planned construction of future treatment processes. Significant delays in supply chains have been experienced on all projects due to the pandemic. Appropriate (early) ordering has helped to move projects into their construction schedules.

FY 2022 CIP has included manhole repairs, enhanced (GIS mapping), cross-country project, SCADA upgrades at two pump stations, new (emergency power) generators, grit chamber project, new effluent recycle pumps, new blower and new pickup truck. Other projects have concentrated on training and improved asset management with the extended use of existing equipment.

The capacity, management, operations, and maintenance (CMOM) program (for sewer collection system) was initiated three years ago when the current Superintendent began work at the WPCF. Per the CTDEEP routine discussions, the facility is in compliance with the mandate.

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A number of schools have conducted outreach to the WPCA Superintendent including The Williams School (New London, CT). A *Touch-A-Truck* outreach project will be conducted on June 26 for Montville Youth Football.

4.1 WPCF/Collection System/Water Supply

Managing wastewater biosolids is typically the second or third largest expense with future costs expected to rise. The WPCF has now extended the process time in plant in May (extended air) to ensure good settling/solids reduction in the tanks (>1% Total Solids with enhanced endogenous respiration) and confirmed BMPs for polymer addition. A belt was replaced on one of the GBTs to enhance thickening. As indicated, in the future one of the SBRs may be converted for use for an aerobic digester. Additionally, low-temperature drying equipment could be employed to lower the overall volume of waste sludge destined for trucking/incineration.

The chlorine contact chamber and EQ tanks were cleaned of residual sludge and all pumps/sensors were cleaned and maintained (and a routine established) to prepare for the chlorine (disinfection) season which officially began on May 1. Effluent quality continues to improve and confirmatory (biological analysis for Enterococcus/Fecal Coliform) confirming very good disinfection.

The Superintendent confirmed with the CTDEEP the participation in the annual DMR-QA (quality assurance testing) program for the onsite laboratory on May 1. The facility contacts, addresses and phone numbers were given.

Robert Borchert of the Kitemaug Orchard Association was met on May 10 to discuss utility mapping for areas in that development area. Mr. Borchert and the Superintendent compared available mapping to best identify locations of utilities.

COVID influent surveillance is ongoing with particular attention aimed at identifying the new variants identified. The sampling/analysis is part of the CDC's *National Wastewater Surveillance System's* DCIPHER platform. A formal report was received on May 10. While there may be a very small amount of viable virus in wastewater, the majority of the viral RNA that detected is non-infectious "viral bits". Standard biosafety precautions that are used for working with wastewater should be sufficient even if COVID-19 is detected in a sample.

Generally, COVID levels have increased from March.

Rand-Whitney conducted a 16-hour shutdown on May 11. The shutdown allows for cleaning within the chlorine contact chamber and an evaluation of flow within the plant. Certain challenges can exist for the WPCF upon their startup (i.e., loading). Rand-Whitney is connecting to the public water supply with a 2-inch supply line and reportedly will use approximately 18,000 gpd. Rand-Whitney is attempting to modify their existing permit for discharge from the paperboard facility. In their draft *Amendment to CTDEEP Permit Application* (May 4 and updated May 27) for Permit No. SP 0002032) the paperboard facility proposes to increase the strength of the effluent due to production projections as well as variability of their discharges. A larger concentration of BOD/TSS could be present in their wastewater discharged to the WPCF, if the new permit is approved by the CTDEEP. Rand-Whitney's consultant provided a draft copy of their proposed permit amendment. Per the agreement, a larger loading would be directed at the WPCF in their

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effluent. The Town Attorney and WPCA Engineer were consulted. A significant data review as well as reviews of past facility plans was conducted. The paperboard company is looking for approval from the WPCA prior to formal submittal to the CTDEEP. The WPCA Engineer (Wright-Pierce) was met on May 20 to review the WPCF's current standing as well as the proposed loading levels.

Woodard & Curran conducted WPCF inspections on May 13 and 19 for the distribution box project; the formal land survey was completed and now the soil borings (geotechnical testing) were completed May 31. The geotechnical firm was met to confirm borehole locations, utility locations and receive information about the surficial geology of the site. Each aspect of the design was reviewed to ensure the project not only replaced the existing structures, but also enhanced the pretreatment process.

Jason W. Strano (CEM, CLEP- Eversource Energy Efficiency Consultant) was met on May 13 to explore opportunities for efficiency related to the recycle water pumps. The efficiency programs allow for savings in energy by promoting technology to reduce demand.

Coagulation testing within the process tanks (for sludge blanket settling) was conducted the week of May 16. Polyaluminium chloride (aluminiumchlorohydrate) also simply called PAC or PACl, is used as a coagulant in water purification. This compound is preferred in our situation because of its high charge, which makes it more effective at destabilizing and removing suspended materials than the existing polymer additive.

Manholes and sewers were inspected along Manor Road on May 19. Additionally, manholes associated with the most recent cross-country clearing project were inspected (a total of 25). Per Attorney Cody, because the law requires a prescriptive claim to be based in part upon the invasion of the property being visible and overt, the courts have held that subsurface pipes do not meet that element. The alternatives the WPCA has then are to negotiate with the property owner or conduct a governmental taking for those properties found to contain the sewer pipe (outside of the easement).

The SBR-4 renovation (diffusers) was significantly delayed due to delivery issues (COVID related) but scheduling now shows project completion for June.

Roofs are failing at the Avery I, Holly Hill, and Chesterfield PSs. The roof at the Avery I PS is leaking with the potential for damage to the controls. Requests were made for emergency repair.

Chris Falk, CTDEEP *Sanitary Engineer I* reported that the PFAS sampling results for the WPCF influent are pending following appropriate QA/QC reviews.

The June 6 and 7, 2022 hydrant flushing schedule was posted on the Town and WPCA websites as well as formally posted at the Clerk's Office. The Golden Road (water) pump station work is ongoing to improve the SCADA and communication systems.

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A “high risk” vulnerability was reported for Microsoft computer software products in May (i.e., Microsoft Office); the most severe of which could allow an attacker to install programs; view, change, or delete data; or create new accounts with full user rights. No identified problems were found at the WPCF.

4.2 Regulatory Oversight

No regulatory oversight or action is ongoing for the WPCA. No existing *Consent Decrees* or *Consent Orders* currently exist.

The USEPA issued revisions to the federal Lead and Copper Rule (LCR) on January 15, 2021. The Revisions (LCRR) strengthen every aspect of the LCR to better protect communities in elementary schools and childcare facilities from the impacts of lead exposure. Over the next three years, the LCRR will require water systems to conduct an inventory of service lines and determine the material of those lines and fittings. The LCRR’s inventory requires all water systems to develop an initial service line inventory by October 2024 or demonstrate the absence of Lead Service Lines. Lead Service Line Replacement Plans must then be created as a result of your inventory. As of May 17, more than 50% of the existing as-built drawings were inspected by the WPCA Engineer with no lead service lines identified.

On May 18, *Consumer Confidence Reports* (CCRs) for the Montville WS were created and placed on the Town/WPCA websites as well as the Clerk’s Office as required by law. CCRs, also known as water quality reports or drinking water quality reports, provide the public with important information about the quality of drinking water. The USEPA requires every community water supplier to provide a CCR to its customers.

The annual SWPPP inspection occurred on May 2. The inspection is part of compliance with the general permit for stormwater management at the WPCF. The facility is required to have a state stormwater plan because of its SIC code.

After two of the most active hurricane seasons on record in 2020 and 2021, top NOAA hurricane forecasters expect another above-normal season this year. Top forecasters predict 19 named tropical storms in 2022 of which 9 will become hurricanes. The forecast now predicts seven years in a row whereas the storm season was considered extreme.

5.0 Development

The sewer and water connection plans have been proposed for residential and commercial development. Demolition activities were scheduled for 1967 and 1981 Route 32 with utility locations provided. The May 17 *Application of Gateway Montville LLC for the Development of an Intermodal Facility* (55 Dock Road, 125 Depot Road and 133 Depot Road) was reviewed. The application for the 29-lot subdivision (Gay Hill Road Subdivision) was reviewed on May 20. A certificate of notice of decision was given from the Planner to continue development at The Village Apartments (15 and 82 Jerome Road/241 Norwich-New London Turnpike).

6.0 Finances

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The WPCA operates with an *Enterprise Fund*. The FY 2022 WPCA Sewer and Water Budgets begin on July 1 of each year. As indicated in last month's report, the financial condition of both water and wastewater accounts are considered "healthy."

Proposed FY 2023 wastewater and water budgets (as well as proposed CIPs) were provided and reflect an increase in expected revenues due to the end of the worldwide pandemic. The expected high revenue is supported by Rand-Whitney's continued production expansion (sewer/recycle water billing), the Mohegan Sun's continued recovery and the proposed development connection fees. Some concerns exist for costs of energy and fuel as indicated in the markets. Collections on aged accounts continues to be successful.

A summary table of Groton Utilities (GU) water (supplied to the Town) was made to examine the effect of COVID on amount purchased. It appears that an approximate 25% drop in water purchased was observed in 2020 and 2021 after the pandemic began subsequently having a negative effect on WS revenues. Additionally, a non-revenue water percentage was calculated for the WS indicating a low volume of water (due to bleeding and flushing lines) that is not billed for.

6.1 Accounts Review

Current rates (and ancillary fees) appear to be adequate at this time to cover costs for water and wastewater activities. With the close of FY 2021, the WPCA is in good financial condition; in the black and not in the red, overall. While some individual overruns are expected for a budget proposed a year in arrears, nothing has put us over the edge into the red for both Water and Sewer Accounts. Depreciation is required to be posted, but it is not an "out of pocket expense."

6.2 Assets

GAAP indicates that all reserves should be allocated for the 5-year capital improvement except for 90 days of O & M (Sewer= \$1.6 million/Water= \$480,000). Some bonds, grants and a proposed pandemic relief funds will be considered for current and future asset financing.

6.3 Grants/Funding

On May 13, the USEPA announced \$1.9 billion in grant funding to the State Revolving Funds (SRF) to accelerate progress on water infrastructure projects. Combined with historic investments through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, this funding will help states. Through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), the U.S. Department of Treasury is providing over \$350 billion in funding to state and local governments nationwide. The \$1 trillion jobs act will provide \$55 billion for drinking water, wastewater and stormwater infrastructure. Some money will be invested in the state revolving funds. The *Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds* provide a substantial infusion of resources to help turn the tide on the pandemic, address its economic fallout, and provide the foundation for a strong and equitable recovery. These funds provide substantial flexibility for each government to meet their local and regional needs- including response efforts to continue to decrease the spread of the virus and making necessary investments in water, sewer, and broadband infrastructure.

Some current wastewater projects are funded by State funds including two bonds and one grant (CTDEEP \$5 million *Grant-in-Aid for Sewage Treatment Facility Infrastructure Improvements*

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and Upgrades at the Montville WPTF--State Grant Agreement 2017-170491, approved via March 2014 Town of Montville Resolution No. 2014-25). The bonds were for infrastructure improvements within the plant including the new chlorine system, new recycling pumps, and grit removal system. Additionally, the aeration systems for SBR-1, 2, 3, 5 and 6 will be replaced. The Mayor requested an extension for the Grant. A review of grant monies indicated adequate funding for the proposed projects with an approximately \$200,000 margin.

Based on a review of the WPCA’s *Eligibility Application* the CTDPH DWS had determined that the Cook Water Tower replacement project was ready to proceed and that DWSRF funding will be available. In a January 12 *Circular Letter*, the CTDPH DWS provided information about drinking water infrastructure funding directed through DWSRF programs over the next five years from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Bill (BIL) aka the Infrastructure Investments and Jobs Act (IIJA). The possibility of using American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds to help offset the costs of this project is a possibility. The Finance Director was notified of the intent to pursue federal funding for the tower project. The CTDEEP held a hearing to collect comments on the draft fiscal year 2022 and 2023 Priority List (Priority List) for the Clean Water Fund program on May 16.

On February 18, the USEPA announced \$20 million in available grant funding to assist communities and schools with removing sources of lead in drinking water. The grant funding, and additional funding through the *Bipartisan Infrastructure Law*, will help make rapid progress on the goal of addressing lead and removing lead pipes across the country. Money is available for remediating lead pipes in homes.

The CTDEEP announced on a “straw proposal” for the state’s new *Climate Resilience Grant Program*. The federal government is making a historic investment in climate resilience with the roll out of the *Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act*, with approximately \$47 billion in funding available nationwide to help communities prepare for climate-related hazards. This grant program would make funding available for planning grants for Connecticut communities, to help them develop projects that can compete for federal resilience investments.

6.4 Energy

Superintendent Albertson summarized his monthly report stating

i. Report from Mayor. – *No report*

j. Report from Engineers

Superintendent Albertson reported an engineer from Wright-Pierce was present who authored the cross-country report in draft memorandum for the clearing in FY 2022. The first part of the project is done and now undergoing the second year where the survey has been completed and defining the easements for the sewer mains. PE Barry Parfitt reported on the status of the project--the submitted, updated memo noting the easements did not quite match up with existing sewers and consulting with Attorney Rich Coty as to how to handle it.

k. Old Business -- *None*

l. New Business -- *None*

m. Reports/Referral from Planning & Zoning

Town Planner Burdick reported

II. Water Commission

a. Report from Engineers

Superintendent Albertson

b. Old Business -- *None*

c. New Business -- *None*

d. Remarks from the Public

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

e. Remarks from Commission Members -- *None*

f. Adjournment

Motion by Chairman Siragusa; seconded by Commissioner Mandler to adjourn the meeting at 6:22 p.m. Discussion: None. Voice vote: 3-0, all in favor. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by,

Gloria J. Gathers

Recording Secretary, Town of Montville

**AN AUDIO RECORDING OF THE MEETING IS AVAILABLE ON THE TOWN OF
MONTVILLE WEBSITE.**