

Town of Montville Water & Sewer Commission
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
January 5, 2023-- 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 Kevin Lathrop, Alfred Mandler, Brian Quinn, Anthony Siragusa, and Chairman Chuck Longton. A quorum was present.

Mayor Ronald McDaniel and Superintendent Derek Albertson were present for the meeting.

d. Alterations to the Agenda -- None

e. To consider and act on a motion to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of November 7, 2022

Motion by Commissioner Siragusa; seconded by Commissioner Mandler to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of November 7, 2022. Discussion: none. Voice vote: 5-0, all in favor. Motion carried.

f. Communications pertaining specifically to matters which concern the Commission

None

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 December 2022, as follows:

1.0 Compliance/Process

1.1 Water Pollution Control Facility

The Montville Water Pollution Control Facility (WPCF) met required state and federal standards for effluent discharged to the Thames River. No local or formal complaints were received regarding the collection system or the WPCF.

Average daily influent (average) flow to the WPCF was approximately 2.5 mgd with a total treatment volume of 65 mg for the month. Approximately 60% of the treated effluent in November was recycled (sold) Rand-Whitney Container Board (RWCB). RWCB scheduled a production 16-hour outage on December 14. No process control issues were encountered with this.

Process control was very good with high removal efficiencies BOD₅: 98% and TSS: 96%, respectively. Total Nitrogen (TN) loading (50 lbs/d monthly average) was discharged in the treated effluent well below the permit (loading) level (118 lbs/d monthly average). Waste activated sludge (WAS produced during secondary process) was improved to over 5.5%.

1.2 Water Supply

The Montville Water Supply (WS) met required state and federal standards.

2.0 Staff

2.1 Health and Safety

No injuries, grievances or job-related concerns were reported for staff. The Superintendent reviewed existing succession planning with the new HR Director as related to the lab director who will retire in approximately one year.

William Clark (plumbing instructor for Ella T. Grasso Technical High School) was met in December to schedule a student visit to the WPCF. The introduction to students of careers in the water industry is part of the Superintendent's succession planning.

All states updated case and death data has shown an increase in December for COVID-19. Staff will receive test kits and are encouraged to test often. COVID protection measures are reviewed weekly with staff. One case was reported for the WPCF staff.

2.2 Training

Staff continued to receive training to meet CTDEEP and CTDPH requirements for (wastewater /water certification) training credits. All said, the goal is a culture of success through accountability and situational awareness is enhanced with routine technical/health and safety training.

The Gateway Community College Spring 2023 *Water Management & Public Utility Management* course schedules were provided to staff. The program allows for students to achieve A.S. Degrees in several areas while achieving necessary certification CEUs.

3.0 Equipment

3.1 WPCF/Collection System

Routine maintenance was performed at WPCF.

A lighting survey included the replacement of lightbulbs throughout the plant's working areas; particular focus was made to enhance visibility in the stairways. All workstations were inspected for capacity and several updated with larger hard drive capacities to support work duties (i.e., billing, SCADA viewing, GIS control). A preliminary survey of the security camera system was conducted. The camera aimed at the front gate was replaced. A proposal to completely renovate the security system is forthcoming following a visit by a consulting firm on December 16. The HR Director was informed on the goal of enhanced surveillance at the plant to include new (and additional) cameras along with HMIs placed in three locations. This is consistent with calls from regulatory agencies to heighten both electronic and physical security measures by utilities.

No failures were encountered during the December 23 storm event.

All pump stations were inspected and cleaned. A large number of manhole inspections were made. An updated grinder pump (response) list was created and distributed (following the sunset clause). The CMOM driven O & M reduces the chance of SSOs as well as I/I.

A review of all the stored sewer permits (including lateral as-built drawings) was completed. New binders were purchased and the applications were transferred. Additionally, the mapping room was organized; cleaned with a safety step added near the entrance.

4.0 Projects

A summary of existing projects is provided in an attached project summary table. Consideration is being made for FY 2024 CIP projects. Project construction at the WPCF is necessary for permit compliance, ensuring a state of good repair as well as to improve resilience and energy efficiency. Near constant attention is made to process control to all existing equipment to work at its best, annual CIP projects look to the future demands.

4.1 WPCF/Collection System/Water Supply

As indicated, the CTDEEP is being solicited for approval of altering one SBR as an aerobic digester to reduce sludge volumes (thus costs). A formal request was made to the CTDEEP on November 9. Notification of the process stance change (five SBRs from six) was made to Carlos Esguerra, *Sanitary Engineer 3* (Water Planning and Management Division, Bureau of Water Protection & Land Reuse). The Superintendent will respond to the comments in initial CTDEEP review by Mr. Esquerra.

Woodard & Curran personnel were met in December to review their designs for the proposed d-box (as part of the engineering study).

The new turbo blower unit (FY 2023 CIP) was received and will be installed in January. The grit chamber project was completed and startup was conducted on December 20. Adjustments have been ongoing to ensure best (drained) grit is removed during preliminary process. Sampling will be conducted to determine TSS/BOD₅ removal efficiencies.

At the end of December, four of the six SBRs have had their entire diffuser system replaced.

Savoy and Sons representatives and the Wright-Pierce personnel were met onsite to review failing concrete sidewalls along SBR-4. The 2016 report about concrete cracking on the (exterior top of sidewall) was supplied to both parties. The contractor will provide remedy information about capping to prevent further concrete failures. The possibility of alkali-silica reaction (ASR) was raised due to the presence of map cracking and the longitudinal cracks in the tops of the walls, which can be manifestations of ASR. No shop drawing submittals for the concrete mix were available. The draft specification indicates a concrete design compressive strength of 4000 psi with air entrainment of 4 to 6%; considered appropriate for the 1 mg contained in the process tank. It states that the contractor is to provide the source of aggregate, with no specific test data identified. It indicates, "...the Engineer will determine the extent of new tests of aggregates and mixtures that the Engineer will perform prior to approval." This is unusual. It is normal to require submission of aggregate data that demonstrates compliance with requirements explicitly specified. It is also notable that no specific requirements pertaining to aggregate test performance data are indicated in the draft specification, other than compliance with ASTM C33. The FY 2021 CIP allocated approximately \$110,000 to address this problem.

CCTV inspections enable observation of the condition of pipes firsthand and address defects that could result in costly repairs in the future. A targeted inspection/review of some of the 1,650 manholes in the collection system was made. Those found to be inaccessible were opened. Weakened manholes (i.e., lids, frames) can be a hazard during the winter (plowing) season. CCTV sewer pipe/manhole inspections was conducted in prioritized areas (those areas identified in the 2010/2011 URS reporting/CIP Cross-Country Clearing areas) as having a high R-value; that is, those sewers most likely to have increased flow due to strong rain events. Additional review of transition lines (force to gravity) will also be inspected. Of concern would be the pipe extending from the Chesterfield PS. Approximately two miles (10,000 feet) of cleaning/CCTV inspection has occurred in 2022.

GIS work includes converting hard copy maps (URS, 2010) to electronic representations that can be manipulated and more easily used. Asset descriptions (permanent attributes) are listed. Also, all related O & M work within the collection system is recorded in the GIS system (inspection attributes) as record for potential regulatory review. In the future, some additional MSI work (multi-sensory inspection) including radar and sonar may be used for the larger sewer mains if found to contain problems.

On November 15, the WPCA Engineer provided the CTDPH with updated submittals for the Cook Water replacement project, including final drawings, specifications, and responses to their review comments. The CTDPH was met on December 13 with some minor changes requested for the

formal submittals. The CTDPH will approve the project. Then, the WPCA and TC will approve the construction of the new water tower as well as the funding options.

4.2 Regulatory Oversight

No regulatory oversight or action is ongoing for the WPCA. No existing *Consent Decrees* or *Consent Orders* currently exist. No complaints have been received from the appropriate regulatory bodies. Permit renewal activities will begin in April 2024; as stipulated, a permit renewal package must be formally submitted to the CTDEEP six months prior to the federal NPDES permit expiration date (October 31, 2024).

A preliminary water audit was completed. The lost water was found to be approximately 5% of the total water purchased from Groton Utilities (GU); the national average is 13%. The lost water...

As indicated, a large scrap yard fire occurred on the morning of November 16 at DW Transport and Leasing (33 Pequot Road). Engineers were met in December to consider options for preventing line surges (which lead to breaks) in the event of a future fire. The Engineers were met in December regarding the LCRR compliance. A formal review of all...

The Superintendent participated in the December 16 CTDEEP (Water Planning & Management Division, Bureau of Water Protection & Land Reuse) *USGS Data Programs Evaluation Workgroup* for groundwater and surface water quality.

5.0 Development

Several development projects have been presented to the WPCA for review/comment.

6.0 Finances

The WPCA operates with an *Enterprise Fund* which is operated like a private sector business account except with zero-balance ending. The FY 2023 WPCA Sewer and Water Budgets began on July 1. The Superintendent has met with the new Finance Director on several occasions. The accounting software (MUNIS) update is scheduled for January 17, 2023.

6.1 Accounts Review

Current rates (and ancillary fees) appear to be adequate at this time to cover costs for water and wastewater activities. While the other communities will see rate hikes, the Montville WPCA does not require this to cover costs. Next year, the Superintendent will employ the Engineer to conduct a rate survey.

6.2 Assets

The WPCA will enhance its understanding of the WPCF and Water Supply assets with the permanent/inspection attributes positioned on the water GIS platform- CAI consultants will be met in January to begin the GIS platform enhancement. As part of year end activities for 2022, an asset listing was completed and reviewed by key staff members to determine depreciation. Additionally, the listing was “trimmed” to remove assets no longer of value or no longer in use.

As noted, the cost of depreciation is provided in utility spread sheets, but it is not an “out-of-pocket” expense.

6.3 Grants/Funding

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 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 the approximately \$4.5 million in grant monies (slated for the WPCF) indicated adequate funding for the proposed projects with approximately \$200,000 margin. The Grant was extended (due to the efforts of the Mayor) for one more year.

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). The Finance Director was notified of the intent to pursue federal funding for the tower project at that time. In a November 1 *Letter of Project Eligibility*, the CTDPH confirmed receipt of the Montville Water Supply's request for DWSRF loan funding for the project. Additionally, the CTDPH provided the State Fiscal Year 2023 *Annual Intended Use Plan* (IUP) published showing the tank project listed. Each project's eligibility and ranking has been reviewed under the new DWSRF Priority Ranking System (PRS) and BIL provisions. 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 (the proposed water tank project was listed). The WPCA Engineer provided updated final drawings, specifications, and a response to CTDPH comments to the CTDPH on November 16. Raul Tejada, *Sanitary Engineer 3* confirmed receipt of the project package on November 16 and will begin a formal review.

The USEPA recently marked one year of progress in implementing the BIL with the release of a new report detailing the agency's investments in the nation's infrastructure- more than \$60 billion over five years for a wide range of environmental programs for water infrastructure, environmental cleanups and clean air protections, while also advancing environmental justice and combatting climate change. Funding for the distribution box replacement project will be sought to offset costs.

6.4 Energy

Overall, there has been a continued decrease in plant energy demand observed associated with the lower (and more consistent) DO settings in the process tanks and the new (more efficient) turbo blowers.

Electrical energy is supplied to the plant by the Doosan Fuel Cell America, Inc. fuel cell (onsite generation), Eversource (transmission) and *First Point Power* (generation). The power generation was formerly supplied by *Constellation Energy*. In November, 87% of the energy demand was supplied by the fuel cell.

The Doosan *PureCell Model 400* Fuel Cell unit began producing power onsite in June 2020 resulting in a large drop in grid power demand (up to 75%). Of note, the Doosan Corporation formally changed its legal entity name to HyAxiom, Inc. (effective February 24). The HyAxiom 460 kW fuel cell has run close to perfection (96%) in 2022. The unit is the best performing in Connecticut. The onsite generation has led to significant savings by reducing the transmission costs because most of the power used is generated onsite.

Eversource notified state regulators that the price their customers pay for power generation will jump by roughly 50% early next year. The state offers financial assistance to households struggling to pay their energy bills, but only to those below a certain income threshold; recently, the TVCCA will offer assistance to other utility users of sewer and public water. Information has been posted on the WPCA website and the Superintendent met with the Social Services Director relative to this program.

Superintendent Albertson remarked the November 2022 and December 2022 monthly reports to the Commission are self-explanatory. He praised John Lily and Kevin Loiler for their efforts during the DW Transport fire on November 16, 2022. They were readily available to monitor water flow and the pumping station so the fire was subdued. He also thanked Mayor McDaniel for extending the \$5 million grant to use public funds for plant improvements. The Superintendent also welcomed Commission Lathrop.

i. Report from Mayor.

Mayor McDaniel reported that he and Superintendent Albertson had met twice with Dave Waddington of DW Transport to work toward long-term efforts to get more permanent water flow from that location and of issues for the same that require resolution. He provided history on the

grant sought 12 years ago for water control facilities improvements--an anerobic digester to Rand-Whitney that did not come to fruition. Covid 19 and supply chain issues delayed projects. A third extension of the grant was secured with \$1 million remaining. Per a question by Commissioner Lathrop regarding the cause of the fire, Mayor McDaniel indicated there were two (2) events and neither is definitive. Commissioner Siragusa asked whether there was a water pressure issue with the fire; Superintendent Albertson responded there was some but was greatly improved by coordination by the fire departments opening hydrants.

j. Report from Engineers

Superintendent Albertson reiterated the effort by Mayor McDaniel to secure a third extension of the grant as aforementioned and its funds used during his four (4) years at the plant. Improvements

made from the grant funds include the replacement of the chlorine and water recycling systems, replacing SBR diffusers, installation of a new grit removal system, and concrete inspection of one (1) of the water tanks. These improvements have made the plant more compliant with permits and a better plant. The Superintendent also referenced having included in the meeting packet CIP project summary tables for 2022 that is near completion and 2023 that is well on its way.

k. Old Business -- None

l. New Business

1. To Consider and Act on the Election of a Vice Chairman.

THE TOWN OF MONTVILLE WATER AND SEWER COMMISSION HEREBY RESOLVES to Consider and Act on motions for the election of Vice Chairman of the Town of Montville Water Pollution Control Authority.

Motion – Discussion – Roll Call

SAR-No. 2023-01 THE TOWN OF MONTVILLE WATER AND SEWER COMMISSION HEREBY RESOLVES to Consider and Act on motions for the election of Vice Chairman of the Town of Montville Water Pollution Control Authority. **Motion** by Commissioner Mandler; seconded by Commissioner Siragusa to open nominations for Vice Chairman. Discussion: None. Voice vote: 5-0, all in favor. Motion carried. **Motion** by Chairman Longton; seconded by Commissioner Siragusa to nominate Commissioner Quinn for Vice Chairman. There were no other nominations as requested by Chairman Longton; the nominations were closed. Discussion: Commissioner Siragusa noted next month there will need to be nominations for Chair and Vice Chair. Roll Call vote: *In favor:* Commissioner Lathrop, Longton, Mandler, Quinn, and Siragusa. *Opposed:* none. 5-0 vote. Motion carried.

2. To Consider and Act on approval of Regular Meetings scheduled from calendar year 2023.

THE TOWN OF MONTVILLE WATER AND SEWER COMMISSION HEREBY RESOLVES to Consider and Act to set Regular Meeting dates on the first Monday of every month (excluding holidays to be rescheduled on the Thursday of that same week). The proposed meeting dates are as follows: February 6, March 6, April 3, May 1, June 5, July 6 (Thursday), August 7, September 7 (Thursday), October 2, November 6, and December 4, 2023—all meetings to be held in the Town Council Chambers in the Town Hall starting at 6:00 PM.

SAR-No. 2023-02 THE TOWN OF MONTVILLE WATER AND SEWER COMMISSION HEREBY RESOLVES to Consider and Act to set Regular Meeting dates on the first Monday of every month (excluding holidays to be rescheduled on the Thursday of that same week). The proposed meeting dates are as follows: February 6, March 6, April 3, May 1, June 5, July 6 (Thursday), August 7, September 7 (Thursday), October 2, November 6, and December 4, 2023;

all meetings to be held in the Town Council Chambers in the Town Hall starting at 6:00 PM. **Motion** by Commissioner Siragusa; seconded by Commissioner Quinn. Discussion: none. Voice vote: 5-0; all in favor. Motion carried. (*Note: a voice vote, not a roll call vote was taken.*)

3. To Discuss WPCA funding for lighting for the proposed Town of Montville Town Boat Launch improvements and Fishing Pier Construction, 55 Dock Road.

Superintendent Albertson reported on a proposal to for boat launch improvements and an enhanced fishing pier at 55 Dock Road. The boat launch ramp would facilitate inspection or repair of the plant effluent discharge pipe by accessing the area plant boat. Appropriate lighting is needed at the location especially if night access is required. The Superintendent suggested a contribution be made toward the lighting. Commissioner Siragusa asked whether plant boat had been launched and why the concern for lighting that would probably be more useful for the police and fire departments. Commissioner Quinn inquired if the lighting would be LED and if grants were available for them and whether Eversource has been contacted about rebates. Commissioner Mandler reported that the Director of Land Use & Development Burdick is checking on grants and suggested approaching the Commission months ago for a contribution. Mayor McDaniel explained in detail of a proposal to request three-quarter million from the Department of Fisheries for the fishing pier and approaching the State for another half million to build the boat launch—doing both projects in tandem for economy of scale. Having stakeholders, the Town, WPCA, and possibly Gateway, would enhance prospects for renovation. Expansion of the west side of the launch for additional parking is in progress and the ARPA Committee has assigned funds for engineering the project. Use of the boat launch would be regional given the funding sources—it will be accessed by the WPCA to inspect effluent lines in Horton Cove and water lines in the area, Eversource for its gas lines and potentially for an offshore wind project. There are no existing lights at the location and incentives will be researched. Endorsement for the project is being sought from the WPCA; the Town may also be a funding source.

4. To Consider and Act on a Motion to enter into Executive Session for the discussion of a personnel matter: session to include Commission Members and Mayor Ronald McDaniel.

Motion by Commissioner Siragusa; seconded by Commissioner Quinn to enter into Executive Session for the discussion of a personnel matter: session to include Commission Members and Mayor Ronald McDaniel. Discussion: none. Voice vote: 5-0, all in favor. Motion carried. *The Commission went into Executive Session at 6:24 p.m. and returned at 7:12 p.m. Chairman Longton noted for the record that no votes were taken.*

THE TOWN OF MONTVILLE WATER AND SEWER COMMISSION HEREBY RESOLVES to authorize Mayor Ron McDaniel enter into a settlement agreement with the Montville Association of Management Employees (MAME) Local 818, AFSCME, AFL-CIO upon approval by the Montville Town Council.

SAR-No. 2023-03 THE TOWN OF MONTVILLE WATER AND SEWER COMMISSION HEREBY RESOLVES to authorize Mayor Ron McDaniel enter into a settlement agreement with the Montville Association of Management Employees (MAME) Local 818, AFSCME, AFL-CIO upon approval by the Montville Town Council. **Motion** by Commissioner Quinn; seconded by Commissioner Siragusa. Discussion: none. Roll Call vote: *In favor:* Commissioner Lathrop, Longton, Quinn, and Siragusa. *Opposed:* Commissioner Mandler. 4-1 vote. Motion carried.

m. Reports/Referral from Planning & Zoning

Mayor McDaniel reported on an email sent by Director of Land Use and Development Liz Burdick of a redevelopment of an entertainment center near Route 32 for housing. Commissioner Quinn commented on the amount of time spent on discussion of such topics and the Commission having

more ultimate authority to finalize them. Chairman Longton confirmed with Mayor McDaniel the Town Council has control of the water portion and thus has joint authority with the Commission.

II. Water Commission

a. Report from Engineers

Superintendent Albertson reported the Cook Water Tower project tank replacement will shortly get approval from DPH with motions to the Commission and the Town Council to pursue and finance the project. ARPA has provided 50% of the funds; the remainder has a finance option of 20 years at a rate of 2.00%. Commissioner Siragusa expressed concern about a water rate budget increase; Superintendent Albertson will provide figures on the same and information on possible use of reserve funds, approximately \$1 million. Per request by Chairman Longton, the Superintendent agreed to show Commissioner Lathrop existing GIS mapping program the facilities, water towers etc. under the purview of the WPCA. Mayor McDaniel said the GIS information can be found on the Town website.

b. Old Business -- None

c. New Business

Superintendent Albertson reported on the diversion permit, Town water supplied by Groton, and the calculation of unaccounted/unbillable water. The percentage of unaccounted water was calculated over the last six (6) months or 5% and deemed far less than the national average of 13% and thus shows the health of the system. Superintendent Albertson explained sonar technology that would generally subcontracted is used to assess unaccounted water with the cause thought to be irregularities, pluses and minuses with the meters. Hydrant flushing is estimated at 1 million gallons of water; water used for fire suppression is deemed unaccountable.

d. Remarks from the Public

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

e. Remarks from Commission Members

Commissioner Mandler clarified his reason for opposing the motion for Agenda Item I.L.4 stating not having enough time to digest the data that was presented at the meeting. Additionally, he asked to see financial statements monthly. Commissioner Lathrop remarked his first meeting was a great one. Chairman Longton welcomed Kevin Lathrop to the Commission and thanked Commissioner Quinn for accepting the position of Vice-chair.

f. Adjournment

Motion by Commissioner Mandler; seconded by Commissioner Siragusa to adjourn the meeting at 7:28 p.m. Discussion: None. Voice vote: 5-0, 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.**