

**Town of Montville Water & Sewer Commission  
Regular Meeting Minutes  
October 4, 2021-- 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 Brian Quinn, Anthony Siragusa and Chairman Chuck Longton. Absent were Commissioners Shawn Jinkerson and Town Councilor May. A quorum was present.

Chairman Longton noted the absence of Superintendent Albertson.

**d. Alterations to the Agenda -- None**

**e. To consider and act on a motion to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of June 7, 2021**

Motion by Commissioner Siragusa; seconded by Commissioner Quinn to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of June 7, 2021. Discussion: None. Voice vote: 3-0, all in favor. Motion carried.

**f. Communications pertaining specifically to matters which concern the Commission**

Chairman Longton highlighted letters received in the meeting packet from Superintendent Albertson that included 1) a letter to all water customers that Groton Utilities, the Town water supplier, has 32 milligrams of sodium for those on sodium restricted diets so they can inform their doctors, 2) a notice regarding sewer easement improvements per the CMOM, 3) a letter from U.S. Dept of Interior to Superintendent Albertson concerning joint funded agreements for operation and maintenance of a partial stream flow gauging system; 4) a memo effective October 1 to all elected officials and operators of domestic sewage collection systems from Jennifer Perry, Director of Water Planning & Management concerning requirements and changes to C.G.S. 22A-482-4; and Public 21-42 5) memo to Superintendent Albertson regarding proposed design services for removal and replacement of the Rand-Whitney distribution boxes detailed how it would occur, and 6) a memo to Superintendent Albertson from Jim Sturgis, the WPCA structural engineer of Woodard and Curran, concerning replacement of Rand-Whitney distribution boxes with detailed drawings of the project.

Per discussion, Commissioner Siragusa thought the distribution boxes were going out to bid for an engineers and asked whether the Town Engineers were capable of doing the job. Mayor McDaniel noted the Town Engineer does not work for the WPCA, and the WPCA have engineers who would write the RFQ or RFP for bids for the project. Woodard and Curran the WPCA engineers have general contract for engineering services but there is also a general contract for emergency services.

**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 September 2021 as follows:

**1.0 Compliance/Process**

### 1.1 Water Pollution Control Facility

Effluent from the Water Pollution Control Facility (WPCF) met state and federal action levels. Total Nitrogen (TN) loading was discharged in the treated effluent well under the permit limit. Due to the extreme rainfall (groundwater recharge), elevated influent flows were observed for 10 days following Tropical Storm Ida due to the elevated groundwater table.

Waste sludge thickening was improved with fewer truck hauls observed. The MDC has confirmed that it is unlikely the sludge from the facility contains mercury based on the large amount of confirmatory sampling. It was permitted that quarterly sampling (not weekly or monthly sampling) would be considered appropriate at this time for screening purposes.

### 1.2 Water Supply

The Montville Water Supply (WS) met required standards. A low sodium concentration in water notice was given with the September billing.

### 1.3 Concerns

The Superintendent is monitoring available health data to be informed on the increase in SARS-CoV-2 infections particularly those associated with new (more contagious) variants. On September 28, the Connecticut House of Representatives voted to extend Governor Lamont's emergency executive powers until February 2022.

According to the Connecticut Interagency Drought Workgroup, there are no Town drought designations currently.

## **2.0 Staff**

### 2.1 Personnel

No injuries, grievances or concerns were reported for staff. The public utilities are facing a challenge of an aging workforce--40% of all current public utility workers will be eligible for retirement in the next five years (PricewaterhouseCoopers Study, 2021). Seventy-eight percent of current senior operators (Operator IVs/Superintendents) will be in retirement age in the next 7 years. ASCME, Local 818 begins negotiations with the Town on October 7. The Superintendent received a nice letter from Ray Bigalbal thanking the WPCA for his opportunity to work at the WPCF this past summer as an *Environmental Engineering Associate*.

### 2.2 Response to Health Crisis

OSHA reports that current (wastewater) disinfection techniques have been proven adequate to prevent transmission of COVID-19- extra measures are not needed and (water/wastewater). Operator occupational risk (of infection) is considered low even with the new variants. The USEPA reports that the COVID-19 virus has not been detected in U.S. drinking water supplies.

### 2.3 Training

The Superintendent and staff continued to receive training to meet CTDEEP and CTDPH requirements for training credits.

The two water operators attended training on September 23.

The Superintendent attended a virtual *GT Molecular* lecture on COVID-19 in wastewater on September 20. Of note, was the microbiologist's (Dr. Rose Nash) discussion that the influent stream is inhospitable for the virus and is not likely a source of concern for transmission. Early testing of wastewater treatment plants are considered the best source of determining community outbreaks.

Bob Kenyon of GreenCorp was met on September 27 to confirm training schedules for the operators related to safety including forklift training and road flagging certifications. SCSU, School of Business in collaboration with Gateway Community College, has created education pathways to meet the demand for utility managers. A *Public Utilities Management* (PUM) Associates Degree programs will prepare workers to meet the challenge. Information about this education option has been provided to staff.

## **3.0 Equipment**

### 3.1 WPCF

The influent distribution box is failing due to long-term erosion of concrete and rebar by hydrogen sulfide. An engineering review at the last WPCA meeting suggested eminent failure without immediate reconditioning. The Superintendent met with the engineers (Woodard & Curran) and it was decided that replacements with coated tanks would be conducted. The new Rand-Whitney box would include an auto-screen to remove the biocides that collect in the warmer months as well as flow meters. Both boxes would be installed adjacent to the existing distribution boxes. An engineering proposal for preliminary study was received on September 7.

Some initial consideration was made for repurposing an existing tank (former primary clarifier) as an aerobic digester. Biomass destruction (reduction of waste solids) by onsite treatment will significantly lower the amount of solids requiring hauls offsite.

Side-stream testing options (chlorine contact chamber) for disinfection alternatives (PAA by BioSafe Systems) will be explored if regulatory approval is granted.

### 3.2 Collection System

The staff's efforts have made for a complete response to the 2020 CTDEEP CMOM directives which include (among other things) pump station inspections, manhole/sewer inspections and GIS mapping with work documentation and asset management. Formal recording of collection system work is included in the improved GIS mapping. Individual inspection reports provide documentation for the regulatory bodies, including CCTV inspection, Pump Station inspections as well sewer cleaning operations. All pump stations were inspected during the month as well as some CCTV sewer inspections in prioritized areas.

## **4.0 Projects**

Please see the engineering summary table for information about WPCA projects.

The entire pre-treatment has been or will soon be improved. Last year the new influent pumps (and SCADA/VFD controls) were installed. The improved main pumping station allowed the plant to move large amounts of water during the recent storms (Henri and Ida). The previous configuration would have been overwhelmed and likely led to significant surcharging in the collection system. The auto-screen unit was completely overhauled several years ago. The new grit chamber will be installed this calendar year. The distribution boxes for influent flow have been examined and replacement measures are proposed.

The entire SBR aeration systems (part of secondary treatment) have been or will be improved. Last year a new turbo blower and re-built backup blower were positioned for SBR-5 and SBR-6. This year a new turbo blower and re-built backup blower will be positioned for SBR-3 and SBR-4. This coming year the configuration will be completed for the final two tanks. The improvements will lead to better air delivery, control/efficiency and cost savings.

A roof inspection was made on September 22 to determine repair areas.

The Superintendent conducted a 60-month (5-year) data review to eventually optimize treatment lower process costs. Additionally, this work makes for easier regulatory compliance. Technology and innovation are key to saving money for the ratepayers. It is important to demonstrate value, understanding and addressing challenges, mitigate risk and of course, foster communications. Some pilot and bench studies have been conducted (i.e., 5 x SBR treatment stance, polymer jar testing, TP removal efficiency calculations) with more to come in the future. It is expected that some proposed innovation/technological changes will involve the WPCA Engineer such as repurposing a former tank as an aerobic digester to reduce the waste solids volume for trucking. Additionally, collaboration with other utilities (i.e., data management software) or participation in professional studies (i.e., IDEXX COVID screening lab bench tests, Sanitair ICEAS NDN studies) or innovative review of alternative treatment (PAA addition for disinfection rather than chlorination).

### 4.1 WPCF/Water Supply

In a February 17 letter, the CTDEEP authorized the WPCA to construct the new grit removal system under the existing State grant in accordance with the plans prepared by Martinez Couch &

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Associates (MCA, contracted engineer). The low bidder (for construction services) was O & G Industries, Inc.; awarded in a letter dated June 24.

The RFP for the SBR-4 aeration improvement (diffuser/piping replacement) was advertised with a bid opening on April 27. The bid was prepared by the WPCA Engineer (Wright-Pierce) and awarded to Holzner Construction. It is noted that the concern for high level of grit in the SBRs was not observed in the two tanks taken out of service (SBR-2 and SBR-5). This is positive news for the removal of grit would be time consuming and expensive.

Woodard & Curran personnel were onsite on September 20, 22, and 23 to correct a control room SCADA1 HMI computer hard drive support issue leading to a Windows operating system failure. The faulty hard drive's data was immediately deployed on SCADA2 HMI computer hard drive to ensure alarm notifications and process monitoring. The SCADA1 system was repaired. Each hard drive has been configured in a RAID configuration for redundancy in the event of future failure(s).

In an attempt to enhance sludge thickening as well as save money on polymer purchases, representatives from Atlantic Coast Polymer and CleanWaters, Inc. were asked to conduct jar testing onsite to confirm the existing thickening (cationic) polymer is still ideal for current conditions. An alternative polymer for lowering costs was explored for Atlantic Coast Polymer as well as CleanWaters.

Formal scoring of the engineering RFQ and RFP submittals was conducted for the Cook Tower Replacement. Wright-Pierce was asked to supply a scope of work and cost proposal for the tank replacement project.

#### 4.2 Regulatory Oversight

Due to the COVID concerns, state and local personnel are mostly working remotely.

The Montville facility was slated for a routine audit in September. The USEPA has authorized CTDEEP to perform *Off Site Desk Audits* in place of Compliance Evaluation Inspections for required compliance monitoring activities under the CWA-NPDES program. Craig Motasky (Environmental Analyst II) remotely conducted the review of the plant's process control and reporting. The Superintendent and Laboratory Directory provided initial data as requested and reviewed findings with Mr. Motasky on September 30. No significant concerns were identified.

The Superintendent signed the annual (September 2021, fixed cost) USGS agreement for joint-funding for the operation and maintenance of a partial streamflow gaging station (01127749-Oxoboxo below Rockland Pond) extending from October 1 to September 30, 2022.

Some recent changes to *Sewage Right-To-Know* (reporting) requirements (SB 927) were supplied to the Superintendent on September 21. The changes become effective on October 1, 2021. The bill required the CTDEEP to have real-time public notice of spills/bypasses within the State. Bill SB941 imposes some restrictions on WPCAs to enforce liens for recovering water/sewer charges by July 2022.

Rand-Whitney will likely meet their BOD effluent requirements (under their NPDES permit) in September. The industrial facility has failed to meet their controls for several months.

#### 4.3 CMOM

A total of 12,500 l.f. of cleaning and CCTV inspection has been completed so far in the calendar year. In total, 150 locations (of the 1,611 sewer system manholes) have been inspected to confirm condition. The inspections are adequate to satisfy the CTDEEP requirements.

CAI Technologies (Town GIS contractor) was met in September to confirm mapping of the collection system with appropriate naming/data nomenclature for the sewers and pump stations. Additionally, the platform ensures documentation of all work completed cited above.

As part of the 2022 CIP, the Superintendent received a proposal from the Town Engineer (Wright-Pierce) on August 6 for the Cross-Country Clearing Project near sewer mains in Subsystem 2 near

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Oakdale Elementary School; in an area identified previously as having high I/I. Letters were sent to property abutters to announce the work and Notice was placed on the website on September 9.

#### 4.4 Water Supply

The volume of water purchased from Groton Utilities (GU) continues to be lower than normal due to COVID's effect on economic conditions within the Town.

CAI Technologies (Town GIS contractor) will be provided information for the development of accurate mapping for the Town's water infrastructure using a combination of existing (CLA Engineers) mapping and improvements. Initial kickoff meeting will begin in September.

### **5.0 Development**

Some inquiries were received about single-family home construction with connection to municipal services.

### **6.0 Finances**

The FY 2022 WPCA Sewer and Water Budgets (which include the respective CIPs) began on July 1 (approved at the April 12 Town Council Meeting).

#### 6.1 Accounts Review

The WPCA-approved budgets provide transparency to rate payers about priorities and the use of the enterprise fund. An adequate 5-year capital (rolling) plan is in place. CIPs from previous FYs are ongoing (e.g., SBR diffusers, grit chamber); while CIP funds can be repurposed- they must remain in capital funding.

Blum Shapiro (now CLA CPAs--Town Accountants) began a formal review of the WPCA accounts in July and continued in September. The utility net position (i.e., fund balance) revenues/expenditures (i.e., income statement) and cash flow statements will be reviewed. Additional "testing" will be conducted in August and September, but for now the goal was to confirm procedures. No concerns were raised.

#### 6.2 Assets

Overall, asset management improves worker safety, reduces operational risk, as well as improves regulatory compliance and emergency response readiness. The USEPA and CTDEEP promote effective utility asset management based on water quality, operational resiliency and efficiency and infrastructure stability.

The Superintendent is working on an asset identification and subsequent registry recorded in the GIS platform; this initial asset accounting system will permit management of aging equipment and the development of an appropriate CIP through risk modeling. Asset labeling will be improved with markers and tags and signage. Finally, software deemed appropriate will be purchased and brought online to assist in the operators and mechanics work day and work flow for overall better facility management.

Funds in the water and sewer accounts have been appropriately reserved for capital improvement (for infrastructure) with the development of a 5-year projection. Some bonds, grants and a proposed pandemic relief funds will be considered for current and future asset financing.

#### 6.3 Pandemic Response

The executive orders established during the course of the COVID-19 pandemic were extended (*Declaration of a Health Emergency*). The declaration authorizes the Governor to order certain actions that will help expedite potential reimbursement funding to municipalities. Reimbursable items would include PPE.

#### 6.4 Grants

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. The grant money is being used for 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 (due to expire in June 2021). On June 1, the Mayor was notified that the extension has been drafted and routed for all the signatures of approval from CTDEEP.

The 2020 CTDEEP Draft *Integrated Water Quality Report* was prepared to satisfy statutory reporting requirements pursuant to the Clean Water Act (CWA) to assess designated uses established by the State's *Water Quality Standards* (CTWQS). Relative to the document, the treatment plant is a point source of discharge and is available for federal funding (grants and low interest loans) for wastewater infrastructure improvement projects. Additional CTDEEP grant monies were applied for via the *Connecticut Clean Water Fund Request to Place Project on Priority List* for monies for constructing a (sewer) collection system asset management plan.

Potential water grant needs were sent to the CTDPH via their *Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) Project Eligibility Application*. The revolving fund is a channel for low interest loans or grants for investments in water infrastructure. Specifically, grant monies would help pay for the replacement of the Cook Tower water storage facility (tank). A WPCA FY 2021 CIP project allowed for an engineering report to determine a course of action for the water facility and FY 2022 CIP allowed for \$1 million to be financed through the grant program. Project meetings have been held with Raul Tejada on May 24 and 26, CTDEEP *Sanitary Engineer 3* to discuss project scope and an engineering RFQ. The *DWSRF Project Rollover Application* was updated on May 27 to move the project along--note the costing and the budget are not binding. A scope of work and cost proposal was requested from Wright-Pierce on September 24.

The Superintendent met with representatives of Gordian on September 30 to discuss the American Rescue Plan funding for the WPCA.

#### 6.5 Energy

The Doosan *PureCell Model 400* Fuel Cell unit began producing power in June 2020 at near 100% capacity resulting in a large drop in grid power demand. The onsite generation has led to significant savings by reducing the transmission costs because most of the power used is generated onsite. Maintenance requirements have somewhat dropped the onsite generation of power. A 4% drop in overall energy consumption was observed for the WPCF for August 2020 and August 2021. A 2% drop was noted for September 2020 to September 2021 even though there was an additional demand due to the big storm events. Demand at the four larger pump stations showed an approximate 20% increase in energy usage.

Chairman Longton summarized the Superintendent Report specifically the sewer related ones--Item 1.1, Water Pollution Control Facility; Item 3.1 WPCF; Item 3.2 Collection Systems; Item 4.0 Projects --SBR improvements for better air delivery, control/efficiency and cost savings as well as a roof inspection for repair areas; Item 4.2 Regulatory Oversight; and Item 4.3 CMOM. Commissioner Siragusa asked about completion of the road clearing for the cross-country project stating any ongoing project should be updated to keep track of it. Chairman Longton will note the same to Superintendent Albertson.

#### i. Report from Mayor

Mayor McDaniel remarked Phase 1 of the right-of-way clearing project was completed, but Phase 2 has lingering legal issues concerning as to access through the property for clearing to complete and whole access to the sewer system. He also spoke of issues regarding the Cook water tower, juxtaposed to the proposed communication tower. The Mayor also spoke to a federal project regarding funding for specific water projects, a meeting with a consultant for the project by Superintendent Albertson to look into incorporation into the infrastructure build, some items raised by Commissioner Siragusa. Tropical Storm Ida exposed a lot of issues regarding pump systems with 67 driveways, roads, roofs, culvert systems that will require attention . He also spoke of shovel ready projects, and a proposed meeting with Public Works, Planning & Zoning, the WCPA, and his office. Mayor McDaniel also introduced Liz Burdick, the new Town Planner, who spoke of her prior position as the Town ZBO, leaving to work in Ledyard as its Director of Land Use and Planning, and her plan to return to Montville, precipitated by the retirement of Town Planner Vlaun. She also spoke of her intent to attend all Commission meetings and to respond to inquiries

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by phone or email or to provide information to the Commission they wished her to bring back to them. Commissioner Siragusa commented on a letter regarding sewer lines from Attorney Chase. Sewer avoidance area and POCD determines designation for sewer extensions per Town Planner Burdick but did not feel comfortable responding about the letter given it was her third day on the job.

**j. Report from Engineers**

Chairman Longton stated he reported on the same per Superintendent Albertson's narrative.

**k. Old Business -- *None***

**l. New Business -- *None***

**m. Reports/Referral from Planning & Zoning -- *None***

**II. Water Commission**

**a. Report from Engineers**

Chairman Longton summarized from the September 2021 Monthly Report submitted by Superintendent Albertson, specifically items referring to the Water Commission as enclosed— Items 1.2, Water Supply; Item 2.3, Training; Item 4.1, and WPCF/Water Supply; 4.4 Water Supply.

**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***

Chairman Longton thanked everyone for attending and seeing everyone again.

**f. Adjournment**

Motion by Commissioner Siragusa; seconded by Commissioner Quinn to adjourn the meeting at 6:20 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.**