

REPRESENTATIVE POLICY BOARD

AUGUST 22, 2024

MEETING TRANSCRIPTON

Bob:

I would like to welcome you all to the RPB meeting we'll be having it here at 6:30 and at 7:00 we'll end and go into our hearing.

So to start we have the safety moment that has to deal with school bus safety. It's all in your packets. Biggest concerns are don't block crosswalks when stopped at a red light waiting to make a turn, forcing pedestrians to go around you. In school zones, when flashes are blinking, stop and yield to the pedestrians crossing, stop for school patrol officers or crossing guards, never pass a vehicle stopped for pedestrians. Never pass a bus from behind and if the yellow or red lights are flashing and the stop arm is extended, traffic must stop. So that's our safety moment for tonight. We'll move on. We can have public comment during the meeting. I don't know if anyone wants to talk and if so, you're limited to three minutes. Okay?

Jennifer:

There is a member present at phone #3 0 1 3 4 6 9 1 8 3.

Bob:

Okay. We have a public member on Teams, does that person want to say anything at this time Hearing not. We'll take it as that. I'll have a motion to approve our minutes from our July 25th meeting.

Mike:

So moved.

Jamie:

I'll second.

Bob:

Any opposed? All those in favor of the minutes unless there's a discussion? All members in favor please say "aye."

RPB members:

Aye.

Bob:

Any "no"s? And Greg abstains. Motion is so prepared. Communications, the Nominating Committee for Authority member has been formed and they will be meeting, I believe, shortly within the next week on August 28th, they're going to be having their first meeting.

We have some public hearings coming up, one of them being tonight at 7:00. The next being next Tuesday the 27th at 10:00AM here also, and also, here again, on the 27th at 6:30PM. We will then be

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having a special RPB meeting on Thursday, September 5th. Items for consideration, we have someone from the Finance Committee, Jamie. Is there a resolution?

Jamie:

I have a resolution, proposed resolution, dated August 22nd, 2024, regarding the Authority's application for approval of the 2025 Rate Application, whereas on July 29th, 2024, the South Central Connecticut Regional Water Authority filed the 2025 rate application for application for approval to the representative policy board, the RPB. And whereas the Finance Committee of the RPB reviewed the application and recommended that the application be accepted by the RPB and whereas the Finance Committee of the RPB recommended that a public hearing be scheduled on Thursday, September 26th, 2024, and whereas the Finance Committee also recommended that the public hearing be conducted by a presiding member, and whereas the RPB accepted said application as complete and scheduled said application for public hearing in accordance with Special Act 77-98 as amended in the RPB bylaws and Rules of Practice, now therefore be it resolved that the RPB accepts the Authority's application and determined to hold a public hearing to be conducted by a presiding member on September 26th, 2024 at 7:00PM, and resolved further that the chairperson is hereby directed to give notice of said hearing in accordance with Section 11 of the Rules of Practice as amended.

Bob:

Thank you, Jamie. Do we have a motion?

Tim:

Second.

Bob:

Tim, yes. All those in favor of accepting the application or... I'm sorry, accepting the resolution, please say "aye".

RPB members:

Aye.

Bob:

Any opposed? Thank you very much. While we're under items for consideration in action, I would like to introduce Jim DiCarlo, who is our new representative from North Haven. I believe you'll have the chance. Welcome, Jim. We're not normally this formal, but it's a good thing.

Jim:

Thank you.

Bob:

I'll move on to reports. Finance Committee?

Vin:

Okay. All right. The Finance Committee met at a special meeting on Wednesday, July 31st, 2024 at 5:00PM. The committee discussed the completeness, mode and date of public hearing for the application, the Authority's application, for the acquisition of Aquarion Water Company. And the committee reviewed the application and recommended that the application be accepted by the RPB chair on behalf of the RPB under the expedited process. And that was the only business of the Finance Committee on that date. There was some discussion with Attorney Donofrio regarding special components of the RPB Rules of Practice and the nature and uniqueness of the application, and after that discussion, the committee adjourned.

The committee met again on Monday, August 12 at 5:00PM, and during that meeting, a regular meeting, the Finance Committee considered it and acted on a recommendation to the RPB regarding the completeness, mode and date of public hearing for the Authority's 2025 rate application. The committee reviewed that application and recommended the application be accepted by the RPB. That resolution was unanimously adopted by the Finance Committee and there was no further business of the body at that point and we adjourned. The next meeting of the Finance Committee is September 9th at 5:00.

Bob:

Are there any questions? Hearing none. We'll move on to Land Use.

Mark:

Hi, everybody. We met on August 14th, 2024. We met at the well fields in Seymour and we had a update on what's going on there as far as the replacement of the generator, demolition of one of the existing buildings and building another building to house the new generator and stuff. The committee discussed project delays and bidding schedule and finding other miscellaneous improvements there. It was a very interesting... It's very beautiful there. We did see a plane go up the river there and as to everybody's light, nobody ever seen a plane go up the river over there including Mr. Clifford.

And the rest of the report is about water supplies, which is in the packet if you want to read the Land Use minutes. But that's about it and we're going to meet next month, I think, at Furnace Pond and see what they've done for the invasive species in the water. Any questions? Thank you.

Bob:

Thank you, Mark. Next would be Consumer Affairs Committee. Naomi?

Naomi:

Good evening. We met on Monday, August 19th. We had Prem attend, who went over our cybersecurity update in executive sessions so I can't say very much about that. Other than that we are just up for our next meeting, which will be in September.

Bob:

Thank you. Any questions of Naomi? Hearing none. We'll move on to reports from the Authority and Management.

David:

Hello, board members. Thank you for hearing us tonight. We met this afternoon at our monthly meeting and the first item of business was meet as the sole member of the Claire C. Bennitt Watershed Fund. And as that, we reappointed three members whose terms were up. Mr. Clifford from this August body

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that's done a great job, Brian Stone who is head of the Watershed Fund, and Elizabeth Moore who's been on for many, many years and done yeoman's service. We do have a vacancy because there is a person who chose to retire from there, so if anybody knows somebody who might be interested in that, please let us know. We also met as the Environmental, Health and Safety Committee, and Mario is Chairman of that.

Mario:

You very much, Mr. Chair and members. So our topic today was the lead and copper rule, which you've been hearing about for quite some time and the updates and the revisions to that. And so, as part of the requirements, we're supposed to do the potholing, which is the investigation of small holes to look at different service lines. So we're looking at about 2,600 total. We've already done to date 2000 throughout the service area. So the rest of them will be done over the next couple of months. Most towns have already been completed. We only found a handful of galvanized lines and also some couple of lead lines in there, and this is both the services from the main to the curb box and the curb box up to the house. So that's much lower than we anticipated at the early onset of this. So hopefully this continues this trend and therefore there'll be fewer that we need to replace.

For those properties who did have either galvanized or a lead line that was located or potentially led, we did correspond with them to give them bottles to collect samples, so we're doing sample collection. Our corrosion inhibitor that we use in the water treatment has been working well so that we've been able to, even though there might be a potential there, the corrosion inhibitor is keeping any lead from leaching into the water so the water is still safe and good to use at those locations. The field people are utilizing their laptops in the field so that they can immediately update the database and we're going to start very soon in doing the predictive modeling so that we can get a good handle on how big an effort this is going to be over the next few years and refine our costs that we're anticipating, so. Unless there's any questions, I want to thank you.

Rich:

Mario, I had a question.

Mario:

Okay, go ahead.

Rich:

I'm sorry. Mario, do we know we're doing these random samples? Do we extrapolate from that anything beyond the houses? So if we go down a street and we find copper in house A and B, are we making any assumptions about the other houses? And we've probably addressed this question before and I apologize, but what kind of extrapolation, if any, are we doing in terms of copper occurrence in a bigger universe?

Mario:

So it becomes a combination of several factors, one of which is the age that the houses were built. And so, if we're finding consistency in houses built in the '50s, let's say that they're all galvanized in one community, then the odds are that the ones that we don't know of, and we do know of many of them, will also be galvanized. Recognized that out of the 200,000 or so customers, there's only about 26,000 that we don't know. We don't have enough of a record and in some cases we're actually able to go into

the houses and inspect at the meter so we can see the pipe coming in. So we're not doing all the holes, and as we go into the... The predictive modeling will extrapolate the data as you said, but then the next step will probably involve, let's do some investigations in the homes that we anticipate may be an issue and then take it from there, and before we start digging up the streets.

Rich:

Right.

Mario:

Okay.

Rich:

Thank you.

Bob:

I think Steve also had a question.

Stephen:

Yes, Mario, are we still getting good cooperation from residents on this?

Mario:

We've had very good cooperation from the residents and their good feedback. I don't think we've gotten many complaints at all about the grass isn't growing fast enough in the little hole that's created.

Stephen:

Yes, it's always a restoration issue.

Mario:

It's usually a restoration issue, but we haven't heard negatives on that, so. Okay?

Stephen:

Yes.

Mario:

Thank you very much. It's done by vacuum excavation, so if you're familiar with a septic system and they go out there with a hose and they dump that in, it's the same hose. It's a big vacuum cleaner that's just going down and taking all the earth in and then, you can expose the pipe. So it's minimal disruption.

Stephen:

Are they mostly aware of the program already? Has the outreach been good in terms of them understanding what's going on?

Mario:

The outreach involves blanket letters and then, involves specific contacts with the places that we've targeted for doing the best bits, and all the work is being done in the right of way as opposed to on private property.

Stephen:

Okay, thanks.

Mario:

Thank you.

David:

Thank you. We also met as the Compensation Committee and Chairman Curseaden is entranced here, so unless he's here... Okay, so I'll give his report. At the Compensation Committee we reviewed for fiscal year 24, the CEO's accomplishments and discussed his performance. We also saw how they tied back to the benchmarks of the organization, most materially, the financial and the critical operations matters and gave him a very positive review, and you're all aware that we believe the company is in very good shape and that comes from the top down.

We reviewed his eight personal strategic priorities for fiscal year 24, and they include fiscal health, commercial growth, water system needs, workplace culture, leadership development, community engagement, automation and technology and board relations. So those were the main topics. We also approved his fiscal year 25 personal priorities, which then go down to the senior executive team and the whole organization and we approved those to move on, as well. And we also reviewed each division head and their discuss compensation considerations for those. And then we also met... Oh, I should note we did not send you an application. We also would... Thank you. We also would ask Larry, our president, if he would give the business report.

Larry:

Thank you. Ladies and gentlemen, I'm pleased to report that after two months of actual results through July 31st operating revenues are under budget by about \$164,000, and that's due to total water revenues, including metered sales being under budget by about \$964,000 due to metered water being lower than what we had budgeted.

Other revenues are above budget by about \$746,000, primarily due to jobbing and early contribution of the safety valve business that we recently purchased from Aquarium Company. Operating and maintenance expenses are about \$1 million under budget, and most of that at this point in time and this early in the fiscal year, most of that is due to timing at this point. When you do the puts and takes on all of those different factors in the expense budget, we are projecting coverage of 117% with no shortfall, and that's compared, as you know, to our required coverage of 114%. So we're doing better after the first two months of operations. As of August the 19th raw water storage was at 89% compared to a long-term average of 78% for the same period. That concludes my business report unless there's any questions. Thank you very much.

Bob:

Thank you. We have 10 minutes. There's some information I guess I'd like to share, and that is that during the public hearing, everyone has microphones here in front of them, so please let there be no conversations to disrupt whatever the main person talking is going to be saying.

Also, that there's going to be two sessions during the public hearing. One of those is open to the public and the next portion of it will then go to confidential executive session, so certain items cannot be discussed during the public portion and at that time we'll be asking the public to leave so that we can evaluate what is going to be shared.

Again, we'll go back to the special meeting on Thursday, September 5th, and that is to actually see how we do with the hearings and our conclusion. Jennifer will need a head count for those attending, so if you could please get together with Jennifer by email and let her know how you'll be attending the meeting. Again, we spoke earlier about the Nominating Committee for the five member authority. The members are Tom Clifford, Brian Eitzer, Jay Jaser, Jamie Young and Mark Levine. We did not receive any interest from any of the RPB members seeking to be on the Authority. I guess that's all I have to share at this time. Greg? I believe it'll probably be a 6:30 meeting and that will... Like I say, share with Jennifer how you're going to attend, whether it be in person or through Teams. I believe we're going to do Teams also for that?

Bob:

Does Jeff have anything to share?

Jeff:

No, but you'll be hearing from me shortly.

Bob:

Okay, thank you. I think we're doing well. I didn't think we'd be done this soon, but it's a good thing, so I guess we all have a little reprieve before the public hearing. Those of you who are attending via virtually remote through Teams, you'll stay on until at what point in time we go into executive session and those members of the RPB will know how to then sign off and come back into the meeting through executive session. I think we'll take a short break for about six minutes and at that time I'll turn it over to Cheshire's representative, Tim Slocum, to be the presiding member for the public hearing. Thank you, everyone.