

**Representative Policy Board
South Central Connecticut Regional Water District**

Application for Approval of a Project to Construct Electrical Improvements at the Lake Gaillard Water Treatment Plant and the Lake Saltonstall Water Treatment Plant : : **July 24, 2025**

**Final Decision, Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law
of the Representative Policy Board**

A. The Applicant’s Request

On April 24, 2025, the South Central Connecticut Regional Water Authority (“RWA” or the “Applicant”), through its Five-member Authority, submitted an application to the Representative Policy Board (“RPB) for approval of a project to construct electrical improvements at the Lake Gaillard Water Treatment Plant in North Branford, Connecticut, and the Lake Saltonstall Water Treatment Plant, in East Haven, Connecticut (“Application” or “Project”).

The Lake Gaillard Water Treatment Plant (LGWTP), established in 1986, is a direct filtration facility that processes water from the Lake Gaillard surface water supply. It serves the New Haven and Branford areas directly, while also supplying additional service areas through multiple pump stations and pressure reducing facilities. Currently, the LGWTP supplies an average of 32 million gallons of water per day to over 265,000 customers, via approximately 72,400 service connections, accounting for approximately 60% of the average flow transported daily by the RWA, making it the largest treatment plant under operation.

In 2015, Tighe & Bond recommended replacing critical electrical distribution equipment within the next five years. In addition, the electrical equipment serving the hydroelectric building at the LGWTP is at the end of its useful life and will be replaced as part of this project.

The Lake Saltonstall Water Treatment Plant (LSWTP), established in 1974 in East Haven, Connecticut, is a critical component of the Regional Water Authority's system. It treats water from Lake Saltonstall, supplied by the Farm River Diversion, and typically provides 6 MGD of treated water to approximately 50,000 customers in the service area, including portions of East Haven, Branford, and New Haven.

In 2013, Tighe & Bond recommended replacement of the remaining original electrical equipment, as well as incoming electrical service from the utility, and including high service (distribution) pumps and associated discharge piping and valves, which are original to the facility and were refurbished over a decade ago.

The Project consolidates projects across two facilities to enhance capital efficiencies through economies of scale by merging multiple projects into a single application. This strategy enables the RWA's management to implement upgrades at both water treatment plants without seeking separate approvals from the RPB. This approach aims to streamline the RWA's capital program by minimizing time, costs, and impacts associated with managing individual projects.

The goal of the Project is to invest capital resources into facilities that will allow the RWA to continue to provide water reliably and efficiency to its customers.

The proposed Project cost is approximately \$14 million (\$3.91 million for the LGWTP and \$10.173 million for the LSWTP) and includes a 10% contingency on the un-escalated estimated construction costs. The estimated Project costs are based on 90% complete design level, prepared in October 2024. In accordance with cost-estimating principles, the Project costs have been adjusted for inflation.

The Application for approval of the Project was filed pursuant to the statutory authority set forth in Section 19 of Special Act No. 77-98, as amended.

B. Participants

In addition to the Representative Policy Board (“RPB”) and the RWA, the Office of Consumer Affairs (“OCA”) participated in this proceeding. The OCA is authorized by Section 15 of Special Act No. 77-98, as amended, to act as the advocate for consumer interests in all matters that may affect water customers in the RWA’s District (“District”).

C. Statutory Standard

Pursuant to the legislation cited in paragraph A above, the RWA is required to obtain approval from the RPB prior to commencing any Project costing more than \$3.5 million dollars to repair, improve, construct, reconstruct, enlarge, or extend any of its properties or systems.

D. Notice and Procedures

Effective July 1, 2021, Senate Bill 1202, Section 163, permitted the RPB to hold the public hearing on the Application using electronic equipment or technology that facilitates real-time public access to meetings, including, but not limited to, telephonic, video, or other conferencing platforms. Other procedural requirements were also met. On May 22, 2025, the RPB voted unanimously to accept the Application as complete and called a public hearing on Thursday, June 26, 2025 at 7:00 p.m., at the office of the South Central Connecticut Regional Water Authority, 90 Sargent Drive, New Haven, and via remote access. The RPB designated Jamie Mowat Young (Killingworth) to serve as Presiding Member at the public hearing.

As required by Section 10 of Special Act. No. 77-98, as amended by Public Act No. 02-85, the RPB published in the *New Haven Register* and the *Connecticut Post* the date, time, and place of the public hearing to be held by the RPB to consider the Application for approval. The date of publication was May 30, 2025. A copy of this notice was filed with the Office of the Clerk

of each city and town within the district. The notice was posted on the RWA's website, including information about electronic participation for the meeting.

The Application also contained confidential information subject to protection under C.G.S. Section 1-200(6)(E), for matters covered by Section 1-210(b)(19)(i)(ii), pertaining to safety risk.

E. Public Hearing

At the public hearing on June 26, 2025, the Applicant provided sworn testimony from Victor Benni, the RWA's Director of Engineering, and Orville Kelly, the RWA's Manager of Design and Construction. Messrs. Benni and Kelly provided a presentation that addressed the project background, approach, scope, need, alternatives analysis, budget, schedule, and permitting.

The OCA provided a summary of his analysis of the Application as noted in his memorandum to the RPB dated June 18, 2025. Attorney Donofrio stated that based on his review of the confidential information provided with the Application, including recommendations from Tighe & Bond in 2013 and 2015, he concluded that the original equipment is near or at the end of its useful life. The combined projects are necessary and appropriate to maintain reliability, and for these reasons and reasons stated in his memorandum, the OCA recommended approval of the Application.

Members of the RPB asked questions of the Applicant regarding spending to date, contingency, new technology, energy efficiency, and salvage.

F. Analysis

After considering all the evidence presented, the RPB believes that the Application is necessary and advances the policies and goals of the South Central Connecticut Regional Water Authority, is included in the five-year plan of capital improvements, and is in the best interest of

the RWA and its customers. The presentation at the public hearing reinforced the need for and importance of the Project.

G. Conclusion

We therefore conclude that the Application for approval to construct electrical improvements at the LGWTP and the LSWTP should be approved. Separately stated findings of fact and conclusions of law are attached hereto as Exhibit A.

Exhibit A
Representative Policy Board
South Central Connecticut Regional Water District

Application for Approval of a Project to :
Construct Electrical Improvements at the :
Lake Gaillard Water Treatment Plant and : **July 24, 2025**
the Lake Saltonstall Water Treatment Plant :

Findings of Fact

1. The South Central Connecticut Regional Water Authority (“RWA”), through its five-member Authority, submitted an Application to the RPB for approval to construct Electrical Improvements at the Lake Gaillard Water Treatment Plant (“LGWTP”) and the Lake Saltonstall Water Treatment Plant (“LSWTP”) (“Application” or “Project”) on April 24, 2025.
2. The Project is included in the FY 2026 Capital Improvement Project budget. The Project located in North Branford and East Haven, Connecticut will commence in FY 2026, with completion planned in FY 2028, at a total Project cost of approximately \$14 million.
3. The LGWTP is the RWA’s largest and most critical water asset. The LSWTP is an integral part of the RWA’s water system. Replacement of electrical equipment should be given the highest priority at critical facilities such as these water treatment plants to reduce risk and provide reliable service to over 265,000 customers in RWA’s service territory.
4. Proactive replacement of electrical equipment will provide assurance of long-term reliability for RWA to provide water to its customers.
5. The LSWTP’s existing 2400V main switchgear is a critical component of the WTP as it provides power to the facility’s motor control centers, yet it is over 45 years old and must be replaced. It poses an increased risk of failure that could result in facility shutdowns, service interruption to customers and safety hazards to treatment plant staff.

6. The 2400V switchgear at LSWTP violates National Electrical Code workspace requirements due to a lack of sufficient space in front of the equipment and is therefore a safety hazard.
7. With the replacement of the switchgear at the LSWTP, UI will discontinue supporting the existing utility service, thus requiring a new service. This new electric service will eliminate the need for the main service to cross the Amtrack ROW.
8. 2400V transformers, similar to those at the LSWTP are no longer standard and must be replaced with more common voltage equipment to allow for property operation and maintenance.
9. The LSWTP high service pumps are more than 50 years old and no longer operate efficiently or cost effectively.
10. The LGWTP's MCC-1, MCC-2, MCC-3, Filter Plant Main Switchboard, T-5 transformer, main circuit breakers, ATS, and hydro-generator equipment are either nearing or have exceeded their recommended service life. This equipment is at an increased risk of causing significant damage to the surrounding equipment and a safety risk to treatment plant employees and have the potential to result in prolonged facility shutdowns.
11. Installing power distribution panelboards and stand-alone motor starts at the LGWTP in lieu of a new MCC-1 and 3 will reduce cost, space needed for equipment, and fill allow for more flexibility during construction.
12. Aging electrical equipment is susceptible to breakdowns requiring numerous repairs, and replacement parts can be difficult to find, have long lead times, and cannot be easily refurbished since many parts are obsolete.
13. The proposed Project is consistent with, advances the policies and goals of the RWA, and is in the public interest.
14. The OCA recommended approval of the Application.

Conclusions of Law

1. The South Central Connecticut Regional Water Authority's ("RWA") application for approval to conduct Electrical Improvements at the Lake Gaillard Water Treatment Plant and the Lake Salstonstall Water Treatment Plant ("Application") on April 24, 2025, was filed pursuant to the statutory authority set forth in Section 19 of Special Act No. 77-98, as amended.
2. Notice of the public hearing to consider the Application and to allow interested persons, including water users and property owners, within the South Central Connecticut Regional Water Authority District, to be heard was properly made on May 30, 2025, pursuant to Section 10 of Special Act No. 77-98, as amended.
3. Pursuant to Sections 10 and 19 of Special Act 77-98, as amended, the public hearing was held on June 26, 2025.
4. Based upon the above Findings of Fact, the Representative Policy Board concludes that the RWA's Application meets all requirements for approval.