

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

Application for Approval of the Lake Whitney Water Treatment Plant Chemical Improvements Project located in Hamden, Connecticut : : **May 23, 2024**

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

A. The Applicant’s Request

On January 25, 2024, the South Central Connecticut Regional Water Authority (“RWA” or the “Applicant”), through its five-member Authority, submitted an application for approval of the Lake Whitney Water Treatment Plant Chemical Improvements Project located in Hamden, Connecticut (“Application” or “Project”). The Application also includes the replacement of the potassium permanganate and caustic chemical feed systems.

The Water Treatment Plant utilizes potassium permanganate as an oxidant for pretreatment and sodium hydroxide (caustic) for pH control to prevent corrosion and allow for the efficient use of other treatment chemicals. These systems are necessary to deliver a reliable and quality supply of water to the RWA’s customers. The original designed potassium permanganate system is not operational, and a temporary system has been constructed to meet the current manganese demands. Improvement is needed to effectively manage higher manganese levels and maintain compliance with regulatory standards.

The existing caustic system was part of the original treatment plant construction. One of the two bulk storage tanks is currently out of service due to a tank failure, which reduces the

amount of chemical inventory storage. This then results in partial delivery costs and enhanced concern of the potential of overfilling the caustic bulk tank during chemical deliveries.

The goal of the Project is to improve the reliability of plant operations and improve safety for plant operations.

The proposed Project cost is approximately \$3.1 million and includes a 20% contingency. The Project costs are based on 30% complete design drawings, prepared in November 2023. 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 South Central Connecticut Regional Water Authority 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 two 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 February 22, 2024, the RPB voted unanimously to accept the Application as complete and called a public hearing on Thursday, April 25, 2024 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 April 2, 2024. 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 April 25, 2024, the Applicant provided sworn testimony from Sunny Lakshminarayanan, the RWA's Vice President of Engineering & Environmental Services, and Orville Kelly, the RWA's Manager of Design and Construction. Mr. Kelly provided a presentation that addressed the Project background, scope, need, alternatives analysis, budget and schedule, permitting, and unusual circumstances.

Members of the RPB asked questions of the Applicant regarding shut down, necessity, initial construction, salvage opportunities, redundancy, resiliency, and life expectancy of upgrades.

The OCA provided a summary of his analysis of the Application as noted in his memorandum to the RPB dated April 18, 2024. Attorney Donofrio concluded that the original

potassium permanganate system has reached the end of its useful life and is no longer operational, leaving the Authority to rely on a temporary system. In addition to experiencing challenges, the structure is now a safety risk. The Application is necessary and appropriate and budget estimates and contingency are reasonable. Overall, the Project is a prudent investment and for the reasons set forth in his memorandum, the OCA recommends approval of the Application.

F. Analysis

After considering all of 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 of the Lake Whitney Water Treatment Plant Chemical Improvements Project 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 the Lake Whitney Water Treatment Plant Chemical Improvements Project located in Hamden, Connecticut : : **May 23, 2024**

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 of the Lake Whitney Water Treatment Plant Chemical Improvements Project, located in Hamden, Connecticut (“Application” or “Project”) on January 25, 2024.
2. The Project improves reliability and safety by replacing aging chemical feed system and building equipment/components.
3. The Project improves consistency with other RWA facilities and safety for RWA staff.
4. The Project maintains operations and operating capacity of the Lake Whitney Water Treatment Plant facility, a critical source of potable water for New Haven and surrounding areas.
5. The Project is included in the FY 2024 Capital Improvement Project budget. The Project located in Hamden, Connecticut will commence in FY 2024, with completion planned in FY 2025, at a total Project cost of approximately \$3.1 million.
6. The proposed Project is consistent with, advances the policies and goals of the RWA, and is in the public interest.
7. The OCA recommended approval of the Application.

Conclusions of Law

1. The South Central Connecticut Regional Water Authority's ("RWA") application for approval of the Lake Whitney Water Treatment Plant Chemical Improvements Project located in Hamden, Connecticut ("Application") on January 25, 2024, 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 April 2, 2024, 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 April 25, 2024.
4. Based upon the above Findings of Fact, the Representative Policy Board concludes that the RWA's Application meets all requirements for approval.