

REPRESENTATIVE POLICY BOARD

**FINANCE COMMITTEE**

DECEMBER 9, 2024

MEETING TRANSCRIPTION

Vin:

All right. It's five o'clock. It's five o'clock. I'm going to call this meeting of the Finance Committee of the Water Authority to order. And we're going to slightly go out of order because I'm making my way in and I'm a little delayed. But can we start with the approval of the minutes of the November 4th meeting?

Tom:

So moved.

Vin:

Is there a second?

Jay:

Second.

Vin:

Is there any comments? Hearing none. All those in favor?

Committee members:

Aye.

Vin:

Any opposed? Any abstentions? The ayes have it. Thank you. All right, next we're going to go into executive session to have a discussion regarding the Authority member compensation. But before we do so, I believe Mr. Borowy wanted to be heard. So, but can we have the issue move to the table first, for discussion purposes only? Is there a motion to discuss?

Tom:

So moved.

Vin:

Thank you. Is there a second?

Tim:

Second.

Vin:

All right, so the matter has been moved to the table for discussion. I believe Mr. Borowy wanted to be heard.

David:

Thank you Mr. Chairman and members. I greatly appreciate that you even put this on the agenda. That's thoughtful and we appreciate that you did that and that you're considering whether you want to adjust the compensation for the Authority members. I wanted to bring to your attention that we've had a lot of special meetings. So not only have we continued to do our regular work, there's been a significant amount of additional work that we've had to do. And some of the almost dozen special meetings that we've had in the last year or so have been dealing with PFAS and dealing with other litigation matters, not just acquisitions that some are large and some, in perspective now don't seem as large, but were large at the time and so we've had quite a change in the workload to the authority members.

So I would... Well, I appreciate that you're going to look at this. I know, having been in your seat that you're going to look at the adjustments for inflation and Consumer Price Index and all that and we would greatly appreciate it if you would look at that and would consider making an adjustment in that range. But we would ask that maybe you consider also from the perspective of the job has changed significantly in terms of the amount of work that's necessary. So with that, I really don't want to do anything other than [inaudible 00:03:51]-

Tim:

If I may?

David:

Yes.

Tim:

Before David disappears, this is strictly a question that may help us in our deliberation and it has to do with what would you estimate generally on a monthly basis, the hours you guys commit to the office, including these extra meetings. Is there any way to be reasonable about that? I know how long your day is on a Thursday once a month. No question about that, but I know you have your other meetings and your special meetings if you think there's anything you could help us with that on or it helps me I just get a sense of maybe what goes into it.

David:

I hadn't thought about it, so I'm not sure that I could give you a number of hours, but I could tell you the percentage of increase, I would say is at least 30% to 40% more time spent now than when I first joined the Authority.

Tim:

So within the last few years then the last few years, you feel like-

David:

Yes. Last few seven years since I've been on, the workload has gone up almost 50% in terms of the amount of time that we have to spend, and the knowledge and the depth of information. Yes. Sorry. Yes, Jamie? Well Tim, did that answer your question as best... I could-

Tim:

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No, it puts it in a ballpark for me.

David:

Okay, thank you. Jamie? If it's all right. Mr. Chairman?

Jamie:

Shall I proceed, Vince?

Vin:

Go ahead. Yes.

Jamie:

Thank you. Can you tell me how much of that is respective to Blue Drop as opposed to the other acquisitions? I know we've seen an increase with the business acquisitions, but Blue Drop was atypical, obviously.

David:

It was. And I know that that's all consuming. It was, but as I even mentioned at the beginning, PFAS was a significant time and so was Lead and Copper Roll and the information and the time that we've had to spend on being more involved in that issue. You've got issues now that we didn't have before and the acquisitions pipeline has been much more aggressive now than it was six years ago, six or seven years ago when I first joined the authority. So there's significant time spent on that. And it isn't just in the meetings or reading the actual data that comes, it's following other things.

Now, the three newspapers I get all allow me to follow what other municipalities that don't have our pipe safe that maybe we can partner with because we're being aggressive about increasing what municipalities we're trying to partner with that. So we do have the need to be involved in knowing a little bit about plumbing companies, which we really didn't have to do much before because now we've got three and some other things. So Blue Drop is significant and we hope we're successful and therefore that significant time doesn't go away. But it's the other acquisitions, it's now the fact that we're going to be looking for a new leader, then that's not going to be a quick decision. That's going to be a while with how we have to deal with that issue as well. So...

Vin:

All right. Are there any other inquiries, and I see Mr. Ricoszi has joined us and I want to give him an opportunity like Mr. Borowy had. Mr. Ricoszi, is there anything you'd like to say to the body before we go into executive session regarding the discussion regarding Authority member compensation?

Mario:

Thank you. I appreciate you deliberating this, obviously, it's an important topic. It certainly is a lot more involvement than even when I first got involved, which is only a year and a half ago, although it seems like much longer. And as David said, some of the activity has been more intense, much more research outside of the meeting to understand and bring ourselves up to speed on things like PFAS. You know, I've been following the lead and copper rule just because of what I've done professionally, but I think everyone else has tried to come up to speed on that and also to understand how it affects us as an

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organization from the public perception side because we are getting once again involved into just about every property, every homeowner, at least from a data collection point of view.

And how are we going to be looked upon as we say to someone, "Oh yeah, by the way, you may have a lead pipe or you have a galvanized pipe and we're going to have to dig up your front yard." So there has been much more time spent, a lot more in executive session, both with senior staff and without senior staff. So that we've had to strategize obviously in how we're going to look for an executive director [inaudible 00:09:37] CEO moving forward. And so those discussions will continue. But I do appreciate the time that you spend on this and I know that you give it due thought. So thank you and happy to answer any questions.

Vin:

All right, does anyone have any questions for Mr. Ricoszi before I entertain a motion to go into executive session? And again, to go into executive session, it will require two thirds vote of the members of the Finance Committee. All right, hearing none, do I hear a motion to go into executive session?

Jay:

I'll make the motion.

Jamie:

I'll second it.

Vin:

Thank you. All right. And we'll be going into executive session pursuant to Connecticut General Statute 1-200(6)(E) to discuss matters covered by Section 1-210(b)(2), pertaining to personnel matters. And just to make it clear for the record, I'm going to say we're going to exclude Authority members but include all other members present except anyone who might be of the public. I don't think there are any, but it would be members of the public and Authority members.

David:

With that, I'll excuse myself. Thank you folks and have a good rest of your meeting.

Tim:

Thank you, David. Thank you.

Vin:

Thank you.

Tim:

Thank you.

Vin:

And if either of you gentlemen like to reconvene, we'll call you back. Or not. Okay? Okay, I think we're secure.

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David:

All right.

Vin:

Stop recording.

[EXECUTIVE SESSION FROM 5:15 P.M. TO 5:57 P.M.]

Vin:

Okay. Thank you. We are out of executive session at 5:57, and we're back in public session. Okay. We are going to come back to our agenda, and we are discussing the Authority member compensation. And is there a motion to be had?

Tom:

Yes, Vin. I will make a motion that the Authority member's compensation be increased by \$1,500 for the chairperson of the Five-member Authority. And also, by \$1,500 for the various members of Five-member Authority.

Bob:

Okay. Mr. Slocum, is there a second?

Tim:

I will second that.

Vin:

Thank you. Is there any discussion? Hearing none, all those in favor?

Committee members:

Aye.

Vin:

Are there any opposed? Any abstentions? The ayes have it.

Tim:

For the record, we spent at least 50% more time on this determination than we did last year.

Vin:

We did. Well, yes. This was a robust and healthy discussion.

Tim:

This is important. It sure was.

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Vin:

Yes.

Tim:

Well worth it.

Vin:

And, okay. Now, just to go back, since we were going out of order to accommodate my delay caused by that dastardly school bus, let us go back to our safety moment, top 10 holiday safety tips. Inspect electrical decorations for damage before used, cracked or damaged sockets. Loose or bare wires and loose connections may cause a serious shock or start a fire. Do not overload electrical outlets. Chevy Chase, be warned. Never connect more than three strings of incandescent lights.

Keep the tree fresh by watering daily. Just get a fake one please and use battery-operated candles. Keep combustibles at least three feet from heat sources. Protect cords from damage. Checked decorations for certification labels. Who does that? Stay in the kitchen when something is cooking, please! You've got to see what I do with deep-fried turkeys. Turn off, unplug, and extinguish all decorations when going to sleep or... you got to see what holidays are like at my house. Anyway, read this. Be warned. Don't come to my house. Okay. All right let's go on to item number four. Review of fiscal year 2026. Budget schedule. Rochelle.

Rochelle:

Okay. This schedule does follow the normal format, giving both boards approximately two weeks in advance of having the meeting versus getting the package. So, based on how the schedule looks, we would send out on April 2nd the preliminary budgets. We did want input if you feel that it would be okay to send electronically or if you want to stick to the binders that we've done in the past.

And then the meetings would be between April 14th and April 18th. To make the dates, you can pick the dates that works best. And then the idea as it has been in the past that the input would come into the finance committee for their meeting on the 12th and then on May 22nd, would be after the RBB meeting, would be the final meeting of the authority to approve the budgets. So, we have to decide when the special meetings would be and I guess what committees would actually come together.

Vin:

Do you need any action by us to accept this schedule or were you just letting us know?

Rochelle:

No, they actually need this with....

Jeff:

Electronic or binders?

Vin:

Oh, okay. Well I prefer electronic, personally. So, duly noted for me. Anyone prefer to have... how about anyone who wants to have a hard copy, let Jennifer know. Otherwise, it'll be sent to you electronically.

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Tim:

That's sure, absolutely.

Vin:

All right, so unless you let Jennifer know, you will receive it electronically.

Tim:

That's fine.

Vin:

How's that?

Jamie:

That's great.

Vin:

Put the burden on you, not her.

Tim:

I hate grinding up those binders.

Vin:

Okay, so all right, let's move on then, to the quarterly report on the RPB approved projects.

And just for those who are just trying to catch up on, who's that? Our friend from North Haven catching in? Our meetings are normally five minutes long.

Tim:

Sometimes.

Vin:

Go ahead, Rochelle.

Rochelle:

Did you want to pick a date that you would want the special meeting to review the budget?

Bob:

What would you prefer?

Jeff:

Why don't we do what we did last year? Like what, first of all, the Finance Committee meets, and then there's one that [inaudible 00:05:34].

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Vin:

Keep us in order.

Jeff:

Yeah. Do the same thing. Just adjust it to the calendar. That's all.

Rochelle:

We'll have to look at that because...

Vin:

Is there any...

Rochelle:

I don't think we could use the standard meetings, otherwise that's what we would've done.

Vin:

Right. So we normally meet on the [inaudible 00:05:52]?

Rochelle:

I think it was done last year for Finance.

Jeff:

Yes.

Rochelle:

Yeah, right? The meetings fell differently though.

Vin:

So we're going to be meeting April 7th.

Rochelle:

So, that's going to be...

Vin:

Recall it.

Rochelle:

That would be early, unless you all... [inaudible 00:06:08]

Tim:

Too early.



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Vin:

Well, let's see. We're going to send it on the...

Rochelle:

On the 2nd.

Vin:

2nd? Wait for you to tell us everything we need to know. Right. And then the meeting is going to be, let's see there, bringing the...

Jamie:

Does April 22nd work?

Vin:

Well, what about the [inaudible 00:06:39]?

Tim:

Is it a regular meeting?

Vin:

Yeah, the regular meeting is the 7th.

Jennifer:

There must be a reason that it's not the 14th. So, maybe that's a holiday or a Jewish holiday?

Jamie:

The day before of the tax, the day before tax. So, maybe they don't think people will attend?

Jennifer:

No, there was a reason I didn't do the 14th. I'll have to go back and check.

Jeff:

Many use this special meeting to meet with management. 14th.

Jennifer:

I think otherwise we would've had, we would've used the regular meeting...

Rochelle:

The regular meeting. Yeah.

Rochelle:

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The schedule will work this. And I think that's why we didn't pick the date of meeting for our Consumer Affairs, because I think it would've been probably on the 1st.

Charles:

Yes.

Rochelle:

Right?

Jamie:

Yes.

Tim:

Well, we have one on a Monday and another on a Wednesday to accommodate people.

Jamie:

April 7th was moved for Passover.

Bob:

All right, 7th.

Rochelle:

So, we could do the 14th and the 16th.

Jamie:

Not the 14th.

Tim:

The 14th is 21st or 23rd, it's Passover.

Jamie:

Passover. Right, right, because it was...

Vin:

So, the seventh was Passover?

Jennifer:

No, if it was moved to the 7th, the 14th must have been Passover, I think. I'll check.

Jamie:

15th and the 16th.

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Rochelle:

Passover starts on Saturday evening on April 12th.

Jeff:

Oh, okay.

Tim:

Yeah, so we could do the 7th and the 9th, or the 16th.

Jennifer:

9th is Land Use committee meeting.

Tim:

Right, so we could do the 7th and the 16th.

Charles:

The 16th.

Rochelle:

You could, if you're comfortable only having a few dates between when you get the package, and the meeting, that's really late.

Vin:

Those who are uncomfortable would have until the 16th.

Rochelle:

Yes.

Vin:

Right. So, the speed readers will have until the 7th and the 16th, the slow ones would have until the 16th. And those who need to appear twice can go twice.

Rochelle:

You have executive... [inaudible 00:09:03]

Bob:

The Executive Committee. The Executive Committee will be meeting on the 16th.

Vin:

Okay, so the 16th, well, what's up? Unless we meet immediately following.

Bob:

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Yeah, I don't know how long the meeting... yeah.

Jamie:

What if we did it on the same time Thursday? You know what, I should be thinking of my other municipal school meeting schedule while I'm doing this. Just add it to the [inaudible 00:09:38]...

Tim:

You guys can all get back to me on this.

Vin:

Got it. Let me get a 17th. The 17th actually is pretty good.

Rochelle:

Let's do the 7th and the 17th.

Vin:

The 17th would work well for me. So, I don't have select meeting in Bethany, or Orange, or Stratford. The PCA. Yeah.

Rochelle:

Which date is that? The 17th?

Jeff:

17th.

Charles:

The RPB. Maybe it's the 24th.

Vin:

24th. [inaudible 00:10:14]

Rochelle:

22nd, I thought. May 22nd. in the, RPB... [inaudible 00:10:22]

Vin:

My Tuesdays are zoning and wetlands every week. [inaudible 00:10:25] meets every Wednesday.

Jamie:

6:30 or...?

Vin:

What time?

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Jamie:

I guess that's what I'm asking. 6:00, 6:30, 7:00, what time works?

Vin:

Five o'clock.

Rochelle:

I think it should be 5:00 or 5:30.

Vin:

How about we say, what was it, was it was five o'clock? So, we get time from home, and then we can do it... And we can do it hybrid?

Jamie:

Yes.

Bob:

Okay. All right.

Rochelle:

Trying to do the...

Vin:

Is there anything else before I get [inaudible 00:11:22]?

Rochelle:

Not on the budget schedule.

Bob:

Okay. All right, Rochelle, now are we safe to move on?

Rochelle:

I'm going to just highlight a couple things. So, the first project is the Lake Gaillard Water Treatment Plant clarifier project. This project is underway, and just as a reminder, the clarifier portion of this project is going to be DWSRF funded and they'll be getting that resolution in the distant future for the Lake Gaillard Water Treatment Plant, HVAC, and electrical improvements that this project is now underway.

And also the Lake Gaillard water treatment plant HSC component of this is actually one of our three congressional directed spending, so we'll be getting a grant for that. The Lake Whitney Dam and Spillway implementation. This is for the initial phase. This is really nearing completion with the design being at approximately 90% and the work will be progressing to get the documents towards %100. For the CIS, as we previously reported, the anticipated completion is fourth quarter of fiscal 2025.

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The project is progressing, and it's being monitored closely. The Derby Wellfield Facility Chemical Improvements. This project is in its early stages. Comox has been awarded the agreement and the contract and the anticipated completion is May of 2025 and the Lake Whitney Water Treatment Plant, Chemical Feed Improvement Project. This project is in its early stages of these documents being completed and we're anticipating advertising later this month.

Vin:

Excellent.

Rochelle:

Any questions?

Vin:

Thank you. Anyone have any questions?

Vin:

All right. Thank you for your reports and your assistance. All right, is there any new business to come before the body? Hearing none. Our next meeting is on Monday, January 13th, 2025 at 5:00 PM. It will be a hybrid meeting. I expect to see everyone at the monthly meeting, but if I don't, I wish everyone a happy holidays and a happy year and be safe out there and make sure you plug your cords in properly. And is there a motion to adjourn?

Greg:

So moved.

Brian:

Second.

Vin:

Hear second. We stand adjourned at 6:12.