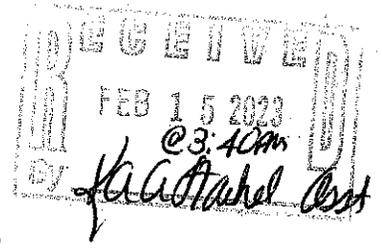


**WATER POLLUTION CONTROL AUTHORITY
TOWN OF SOUTH WINDSOR**



**REGULAR MEETING
SOUTH WINDSOR TOWN HALL
MADDEN ROOM**

**DRAFT MINUTES
FEBRUARY 7, 2023 AT 7:00 PM**

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A. Roll Call

Members Present: Stephen Wagner, David Basile, Joseph Botti, Toby Lewis, Michael Lyon, James Murray, and Bala Ramasamy

Members Absent:

Alternates Present: Vicki Paliulis

Alternates Absent:

Staff Present: Ether Diaz, Recording Secretary
Jeff LeMay, Plant Supervisor
Tony Manfre, Superintendent of Pollution Control

B. Acceptance of Minutes of Previous Meetings

1. January 3, 2022 Regular Meeting

Motion to accept the minutes of the January 3, 2023 Regular Meeting as amended.

The motion was made by Mr. Toby Lewis and seconded by Mr. Joseph Botti. Chairman Stephen Wagner had one revision for clarification. The motion carried unanimously.

C. New Business

1. Assisted Living Facility Sewer Use Billing (Discussion)

Mr. Tony Manfre, Superintendent of Pollution Control explained that last year the Water Pollution Control Authority approved billing commercial residential apartments 50% of the sewer user rate per unit or based on consumption, whichever is higher. The WPCA requested to open the discussion to impose the same billing practices on assisted living facilities. Mr. Manfre distributed a spreadsheet identifying the assisted living facilities, the projected sewer user fee for the upcoming billing and the projected sewer user fee if they were to be billed 50% of the user fee per unit. There's six properties that this change would Effect; there's a total of 608 units. This does not include the South Windsor Housing Authority apartments as they are a Town entity and they don't get charged for sewer. This would generate an additional revenue totaling \$21,916 (see Exhibit A).

Mr. James Murray asked what have been done in the past. Chairman Wagner explained that prior history is that the apartments were billed based on water consumption with a minimum of 74,000 gallons. Last year the WPCA reviewed its billing structure and determined that the apartments were roughly generating half of the consumption of the single family houses. Therefore, it was approved to bill the apartments 50% off the sewer user fee per unit or based on consumption, whichever is greater.

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Mr. Toby Lewis asked what the original agreement was with the management of the assisted living facilities. Mr. Manfre responded that their sewer fee is currently based on flow consumption. Chairman Wagner added that the WPCA set the sewer rates and it is a policy not an agreement. In reviewing the spreadsheet, Mr. Joseph Botti asked what the reason is for some of the facilities having a greater percentage than others. Mr. Manfre explained that it could be due to a number of occupancy; if all the units are full versus 50% occupancy. Chairman Wagner expressed that this spreadsheet does not include Harbor Chase; Mr. Manfre will look into it to see if it needs to be included.

Chairman Wagner was seeking a consensus from the Authority as to whether or not they want to ask Mr. Manfre to include this approach in the budget. Mr. Toby Lewis expressed that he has diverse feelings. It seems that the motive of changing the billing structure for these facilities is for making more revenue. I don't think that's fair, he said and added that fair would be to base the fee based on usage.

Mr. Michael Lyons asked what the thought process was last year of deciding to bill the apartments 50% off the sewer rate or based on flow whichever has higher versus whichever was lower. It was to generate more revenue, said Mr. Manfre and explained that the more revenue generated from the commercial side would lower the overall sewer user rate for the residential side. However, that does shift more the burden over to the commercial side which is a variable income revenue source. The residential side is a fixed income as the sewer user rate is \$425 and there's 8,600 sewer accounts.

Mr. Joseph Botti asked if any concern was raised from the public after the rate was changed for the apartments last year. Mr. Manfre responded that he did not receive any feedback on it and there was not any comment during the Public Hearing. However, the commercial bills reflecting the change to the apartment's sewer accounts are going out soon.

Ms. Vicki Paliulis expressed that she actually knows a resident that lives at Berry Patch who's a single woman; she's 87 years old and on a fixed income. Ms. Paliulis does not believe they use much water as a family in an apartment with one bathroom. The 50% off the sewer rate sounds reasonable, however, she'll err to whichever is lower.

Mr. James Murray expressed that they should be billed the minimum; that seems fair.

Mr. David Basile expressed that is a tough call as they can obtain more revenue by changing the rate, however, he expressed that they should be consistent across the board. Mr. Bala Ramasamy agreed that there needs to be consistency. Chairman Wagner responded that consistency was the motivation for reviewing the sewer user rates for these facilities. However, this change would only generate an additional \$22,000 in revenue. Is it worth going through a change, he asked. He asked again if the Authority wants to instruct Mr. Manfre to include this in his budget proposal.

Mr. Toby Lewis expressed that he likes the consistency factor but asked to be consistently fair or consistent by asking for more money. So why not hedge towards consistency fair, he asked. Mr. Joseph Botti expressed that the matrix is good to keep and revisit in the future. However, at this point he feels is not probably worth changing the fees. Ms. Vicki Paliulis and Mr. James Murray agreed. Mr. David Basile expressed that he's fine with either

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decision. Mr. Ramasamy as well is fine with either decision. The Authority agreed to not include the projected additional revenue in this year budget calculation.

2. 24L Amato Drive – Condominium Fire

Mr. Tony Manfre explained that he received a letter from the property owner of 24L Amato Drive explaining that her condominium unit was destroyed in a fire. Last month, the WPCA issued a refund of sewer user fees totaling \$283.33 for the months of November 2022 through June 2023. The property it's been removed from the billing list until the Building Department issues a Certificate of Occupancy (CO). At the last meeting the WPCA asked Mr. Manfre looking into any other units that were destroyed. Mr. Manfre explained that Units I, J, and K were also displaced from the damage and all the owners are current with their sewer user fees. Therefore, he recommended refunding these three units \$283.33 and removing them from the sewer user billing list until the Building Department issues a CO.

Motion to approve refunding 24 Amato Drive, units I, J, and K, \$283.33 in sewer use fees for the months of November 2022 to June 2023 and to remove the property from the billing list until the Building Department issues a Certificate of Occupancy at which time the property will be added back to the billing list and billed any applicable prorated sewer use fees.

The motion was made by Mr. Toby Lewis and seconded by Mr. David Basile.

Chairman Wagner expressed that Authority may be setting up a precedence here; at some point the Authority may want to look at the regulations to set a policy for this matter.

The motion carried unanimously.

D. Communications and Reports

1. Superintendent Report

Mr. Tony Manfre followed up on Mr. James Murray's question from last meeting which was if the Town pull bonds for sewers for private projects in Town. Mr. Manfre previously responded to the Authority via an email, however, he followed up for public record and to answer any questions. Mr. Manfre's email stated that the Engineering Department holds a drain layer permit bond when a licensed P-1 or P-7 pulls the permit. Similarly the Planning Department requires a variety of bonds that mainly cover drainage, landscaping, and Erosion & Sedimentation for privately owned projects. If there is a project such as a residential subdivision where the town will take ownership of the roads, drains and sewers a site bond is required. The bonds are held until the project is completed and requested to be release. As far as sewer are concerned for both public and private projects, the Engineering Department inspects the sewer lines to ensure they are installed properly and to the design plans. Without the inspection the Building Department will not release the Certificate of Occupancy. Sewer mains are subject to mandrel and pressure tests which make sure the pipe retained its shape and joint connections after being buried. For sewer mains that we are taking ownership of are required to be inspected with CCTV as well.

Included with the Agenda was a copy of the Superintendent's report (see Exhibit B). Mr. Tony Manfre presented his report. Regarding the collection of sewer user fees and delinquent

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accounts, Mr. Manfre reported that the Collector of Revenue is utilizing State Marshals to serve Alias Tax Warrants; contacting lenders and monitoring payment plans has increased revenue, last month collections were \$66,570.97. The Commercial/Industrial Sewer Collection Rate for the 2022 Grand List is 99.60%, the total delinquent from 2008 is \$6,715.63. Also, the Residential Collection Rate for the 2023 Grand List is 95.74% and the total delinquent from 2008 is \$260,740.25. Chairman Wagner recommended to Mr. Manfre including in his report the Collector of Revenue.

Motion to accept the Superintendent's Report as presented.

The motion was made by Mr. Toby Lewis and seconded by Mr. Bala Ramasamy.
The motion carried unanimously.

2. State Bonding Update

Mr. Tony Manfre explained that he has met with Chairman Stephen Wagner, Senator Saud Anwar and Representative Maryam Kahn to discuss the state bonding application process to seek state funding to correct odor control problems at the treatment facility. Representative Tom Delnicki is also giving his full endorsement for the application, said Mr. Manfre. Mr. Manfre distributed copies of the letter addressed to Governor Ned Lamont (see Exhibit C) and Secretary Jeffrey Beckham (see Exhibit D) which were signed by Mayor Pendleton, Town Manager Maniscalco, and Chairman Wagner. The letters include supporting statements obtained from town residents, the Wood Memorial Library, and the Historical Society. Mr. Manfre also distributed a copy of the Draft Bond Request Form (see Exhibit E) for review.

Mr. Toby Lewis recommended revising the first bullet in the response to Question 14 of the Bond Request Form, "Who will benefit from this project and how: Residents living within a mile of the plant....". This response needs to be more specific; this project benefits all South Windsor residents but more specifically those who are in that immediate community. All other members of the Authority agreed. Ms. Vicki Paliulis stated also the language needs to be changed so as to make reference to the restoration of air quality to the betterment of human health. Mr. Bala Ramasamy asked how the bond is going to be repaid if received. Chairman Wagner responded that the State bonds a number of projects, however, for South Windsor point of view this is a grant. Therefore, they don't need to pay the grant. He also stated that he's been invited to talk about this issue in front of the Town Council on February 21st.

3. Odor Control Improvement Update

Mr. Tony Manfre reported in regards to the gravity thickeners, pads were poured for the Pure Air carbon units. The units are expected to arrive and be operational in early March. Regarding the sludge storage he explained that the Vapex trial system is operating. Some challenges were experienced early on; the unit was working well until a water line froze during the cold temperatures. Also, the storage tanks have been disconnected from the biofilter and the mixers have been running.

E. Public Participation (Items not on the agenda)

None

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F. Bills, Change Orders, Disbursements

1. Collector of Revenue Refund Batch #13

Included with the Agenda was a request from the Tax Office for two refunds totaling \$332.46 for overpaid sewer user fees (see Exhibit F).

Motion to approve two refunds of overpaid sewer use payments as presented.

The motion was made by Mr. Toby Lewis and seconded by Mr. David Basile.
The motion carried unanimously.

G. Unfinished Business

1. Budget (Discussion)

Mr. Tony Manfre reported that he's continuing to receive project and equipment estimates for the security camera upgrade; these figures will be included in the next month budget.

The Operation and Maintenance (O&M) budget has been updated to include \$84,000 for automated security gates at the treatment plant (see Exhibit G). Mr. Manfre explained that they had a couple of scenarios with people driving through the facility and not checking in at the office. Also, this budget includes the projected revenues for next year. Mr. Manfre will continue to revise the budget over the next two months. The WPCA Operating Budget remains unchanged from last month budget (\$3,200).

H. Executive Session

None

I. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:25 p.m.

The motion was made by Mr. Toby Lewis and seconded by Mr. James Murray.
The motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ether Diaz
Recording Secretary