

**CITY OF NORWALK
WATER POLLUTION CONTROL AUTHORITY
March 15, 2010**

Attendance: Darren Oustafine, Chairman
Lewis Clark, Vice Chairman
Mayor Moccia
Fred Wilms
Andrew Conroy

Staff: Hal Alvord, DPW Public Works Director
Lisa Burns, DPW Operations Manager
Ralph Kolb, DPW Wastewater Systems Manager
Tom Hamilton, Finance Director

Others: Rick Lavoie, CH2MHill, OMI
Julie Burton, Resident
Mr. Wilson, Resident
Mr. Brown, Resident

**1. PUBLIC HEARING ON THE PROPOSED SEWER USE RATES TO BE EFFECTIVE JULY
1, 2010 (NOTICE INCLUDED)**

Chairman Oustafine opened the public hearing at 5:40PM
Ms. Burton said that she opposes the increase in the sewer use fee, and said that she understands the challenges to the operating budget and asked why the upgrade of the Wastewater Treatment Plant is not be covered in the capital budget. She also asked if the fees would increase in future years. Mayor Moccia said that Norwalk currently has one of the lowest sewer use fees of all surrounding towns. Ms. Burns said that the upgrade to the Wastewater Treatment Plant is included in the capital budget, and is primarily funded through the State's Clean Water Fund and that approximately 30% of the cost is grant money, and the remainder is a 2% low interest loan. She said that the reason the Board had adopted an incremental rate increase is so that down the road when the debt service comes to fruition that there is not a huge rate increase that year. She said that the upgrade to the Wastewater Treatment Plant is a very important project for water quality to the Norwalk Harbor and to the Long Island Sound. Mayor Moccia said that the upgrade is also a State mandated project. Ms. Burton asked how operating funds can be used to pay for debt service on a loan. Mr. Hamilton said that is the only way to do it and that the capital budget is financing the construction, and that generates debt from the 2% low interest loan that was issued which now has to be repaid over a 20 year period. He said it is that repayment that needs to appear in the budget for the WPCA.

Mr. Wilson asked how much the sewer use fee will increase. Mayor Moccia said 15 dollars. Mr. Wilms said that Norwalk is being mandated by the State Department of Environmental Protection to reduce pollution into Long Island Sound, and that the increase in the sewer use fee is to cover repaying the debt service so that the Wastewater Treatment Plant can be upgraded.

**** MAYOR MOCCIA MOVED TO CLOSE THE PUBLIC HEARING**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

The public hearing closed at 5:54PM

2. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Oustafine called the meeting to order at 5:54PM

3. APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM WPCA MEETING HELD ON FEBRUARY 22, 2010. (COPY INCLUDED)

Chairman Oustafine requested that when changes are made to the minutes that they be noted.

- ** MR. CLARK MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES**
- ** MOTION PASSED**
- ** ONE ABSTENSION- MR. CONROY**

4. APPROVE THE SEWER USE RATES EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2010.

Mayor Moccia asked in order to go to consumption based billing what would be needed in addition to meters. Ms. Burns said that the consumption data would be needed which has been problematic in obtaining from the First District Water Department. She said that she has requested the water consumption data for this year and that she had received a reply from the General Manager stating they were not allowed to provide the consumption data under the Freedom of Information Act. Mr. Alvord said that they have provided the consumption data for commercial properties but not for the residential. Mr. Conroy said that the WPCA must be enjoying lower costs to capital projects, and he would like to see those savings reflected in fees and at a minimum the fee not be increased particularly this year. He said he will not be supporting the increase. Mr. Hamilton said that there can either be increases in the next five to ten years of this magnitude or delay the increase but said when the debt service needs to be paid there will be big increases and suggested that Mr. Conroy refer to the updated financial model.

- ** MAYOR MOCCIA MOVED TO APPROVE THE ITEM**
- ** MOTION PASSED**
- ** ONE OPPOSED- MR. CONROY**

5. APPROVE THE PROPOSED FY 2010-11 OPERATING BUDGET (COPY ATTACHED)

Ms. Burns said that she has revised the replacement reserve based on changing the rate for single family residence from \$247 to \$250, and it has increased the replacement reserve account by \$140,000

- ** MAYOR MOCCIA MOVED TO APPROVE THE ITEM**
- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

6. APPROVE THE PROPOSED FY 2010-11 CAPITAL BUDGET (COPY ATTACHED)

Ms. Burns said that the approval is for \$900,000 which will be general obligation debt. She said that the Clean Water debt is what she will request a special bond authorization for if the next phase of construction is done, which is not included in the capital budget request. Mr. Hamilton said that the Clean Water Fund authorizations will only move forward when something from the State is received committing to the funds.

**** MAYOR MOCCIA MOVED TO APPROVE THE ITEM**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

7. REPORTS

- a. FY 09/10 Revenues/Expenditures Report (MUNIS Report Included)
No discussion.
- b. WWTP Phase I Upgrade Project Update (report Attached)
Mayor Moccia asked when the pile driving will begin. Mr. Kolb said that the sheeting comes in next week, and that the pile driving will begin in April and will last for approximately 2 ½ months. Mr. Alvord said that staff has met with the residents of Maritime Yards, and will also be meeting with the Association of the Maritime Garage Condominiums. Mayor Moccia asked how the meeting went at Maritime Yards. Ms. Burns said that the meeting went very well.
- c. Sewer Use Bill Appeals/Adjustments Update
 1. Appeal Status
Mr. Kolb said that the adjustments to date are \$87,632.
- d. Information Copies
 1. OMI Monthly Operating Report- February 2010 (copy included)
Mr. Kolb said that the look up value on the chart for nitrogen performance was 1,584 pounds per day, and the Wastewater Treatment Plant averaged 679 pounds per day for the month of January. He said that the Wastewater Treatment Plant continues to have excellent nitrogen performance through February and March.
 2. Estimated 2009 Nitrogen Credit (copy included)
Mr. Kolb said that the DEP estimates that Norwalk will owe \$59,656.00.
 3. Nitrogen Credit Response Letter (copy included)
Mr. Kolb said there was an error in the amount from the letter received from the DEP, and that he sent them a letter stating they will be overbilling Norwalk approximately \$1,600.
 4. 6 Redwood Road (letter included)
No discussion.

5. Request for Qualifications- FOG Regional Facility (copy included)
No discussion.
6. DEP Letter- Engineering Amendment #5 Approval (copy included)
No discussion.

7. ADJOURNMENT

**** MR. CONROY MOVED TO ADJOURN**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

The meeting adjourned at 5:50PM

Respectfully Submitted,

Dilene Byrd

